

The State of Children's Dental Health: Making Coverage Matter

Maine

A

2011 GRADE

Maine meets six of eight policy benchmarks aimed at addressing children's dental health needs, one more than it met in 2010. The state surpassed the benchmark for the percentage of Medicaid-enrolled children receiving dental services. However, the state still faces significant obstacles to providing care to all of its residents.

It is estimated that almost 40 percent of the state's population – more than 500,000 people – live in federally-designated Dental Health Professional Shortage Areas.

HOW WELL IS MAINE RESPONDING?

2011: **A**

2010: **B**

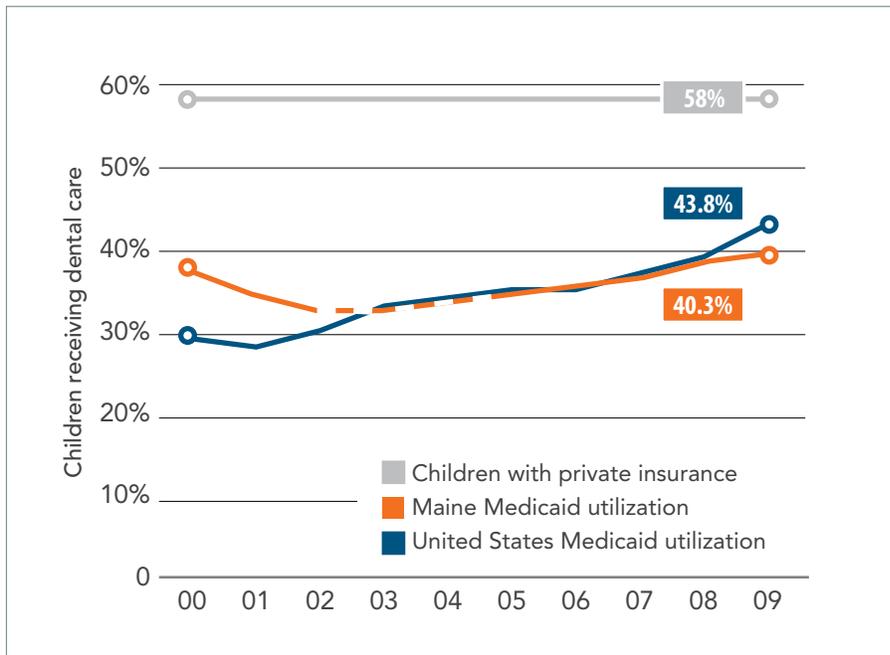
DATA YEAR	MEASURED AGAINST THE NATIONAL BENCHMARKS FOR EIGHT POLICY APPROACHES	STATE	NATIONAL	MEETS OR EXCEEDS	MET OR EXCEEDED
2010	Share of high-risk schools with sealant programs	50-74%	25%	✓	✓
2010	Hygienists can place sealants without dentist's prior exam	YES	YES	✓	✓
2008	Share of residents on fluoridated community water supplies	79.7%	75%	✓	✓
2009	Share of Medicaid-enrolled children getting dental care	40.3%	38.1%	✓	
2010	Share of dentists' median retail fees reimbursed by Medicaid	46.5%	60.5%		
2010	Pays medical providers for early preventive dental health care	YES	YES	✓	✓
2010	Authorizes new primary care dental providers	NO	YES		
2010	Tracks data on children's dental health	YES	YES	✓	✓
Total score				6 of 8	5 of 8

Grading: A = 6-8 points B = 5 points C = 4 points D = 3 points F = 0-2 points

In 2010, the state made an important investment in dental health by voting in favor of a \$5 million dental care bond, which will fund a new dental school at the University of New England and expand the presence of dental clinics around the state.¹ The Pew Children’s Dental Campaign is supporting an effort to help Maine build on that progress by introducing a new type of dental provider.

HOW BAD IS THE PROBLEM?

Too many children lack access to dental care, with severe outcomes. One measure of the problem: more than half of the children on Medicaid received no dental service in 2009.



SOURCE: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS-416. Maine did not submit Medicaid data in 2003, 2004 and 2005.

SOURCES FOR BENCHMARKS: (1, 2, 7) Pew Center on the States survey of states; (3) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; (4) Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS-416; (5, 6) Medicaid/SCHIP Dental Association and American Academy of Pediatrics; (8) National Oral Health Surveillance System.

1. “UNE Steps Up Fundraising Efforts to Make College of Dental Medicine a Reality: Passage of Question #2 Sets the Stage,” University of New England news release (November 5, 2010) <http://www.une.edu/news/2010/stepupfundraisingcollegeofdentalmedicine.cfm> (accessed February 24, 2011).