

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

A
2011 GRADE

Maryland is a national leader—the only state to meet seven of eight policy benchmarks for addressing children's dental health needs. The state satisfied one more benchmark by providing dental services to nearly 42 percent of Medicaid enrollees ages one to 18. This improvement reflects the commitment by state officials and Maryland's Dental Action Coalition to use a variety of policy tools to improve dental health.

HOW WELL IS MARYLAND RESPONDING?

2011: **A**

2010: **A**

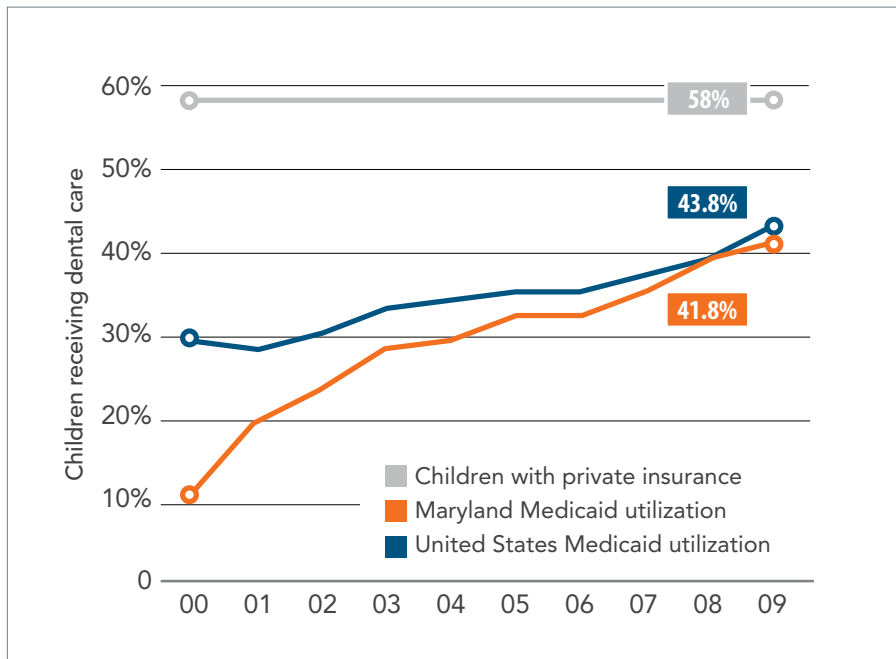
DATA YEAR	MEASURED AGAINST THE NATIONAL BENCHMARKS FOR EIGHT POLICY APPROACHES	STATE	NATIONAL	MEETS OR EXCEEDS	MET OR EXCEEDED
2010	Share of high-risk schools with sealant programs	25-49%	25%	✓	✓
2010	Hygienists can place sealants without dentist's prior exam	YES	YES	✓	✓
2008	Share of residents on fluoridated community water supplies	99.8%	75%	✓	✓
2009	Share of Medicaid-enrolled children getting dental care	41.8%	38.1%	✓	
2010	Share of dentists' median retail fees reimbursed by Medicaid	70.7%	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				7 of 8	6 of 8

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

In a 2010 report, the state health department noted, “Maryland continues to confront barriers to providing comprehensive oral health services to Medicaid enrollees. Barriers include low [dentist] participation due to, among other things, low reimbursement rates, missed appointments, and a lack of awareness among enrollees about the benefits of basic oral health care. As Medicaid’s population continues to increase each year, these barriers remain significant impediments to increasing access to dental services.”¹

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.

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. Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, “Maryland’s Annual 2010 Legislative Report (2010).”