

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

Vermont

B

2011 GRADE

Vermont meets five of the eight policy benchmarks aimed at addressing children's dental health needs. The state reports that its Tooth Tutor school-linked sealant program reaches more than half of its high-risk schools.¹ Yet 43 percent of children covered by Vermont's Medicaid program went without dental care. The state has received funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to improve the dental health of its citizens.²

With 62 percent of Vermont's dentists over the age of 50 and the existing shortage of dentists, the future of the state's oral health workforce remains a concern.³ Vermont health advocates, with support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, are attempting to broaden the state's workforce by introducing new practitioners known as dental therapists.⁴

HOW WELL IS VERMONT RESPONDING?

2011: **B**

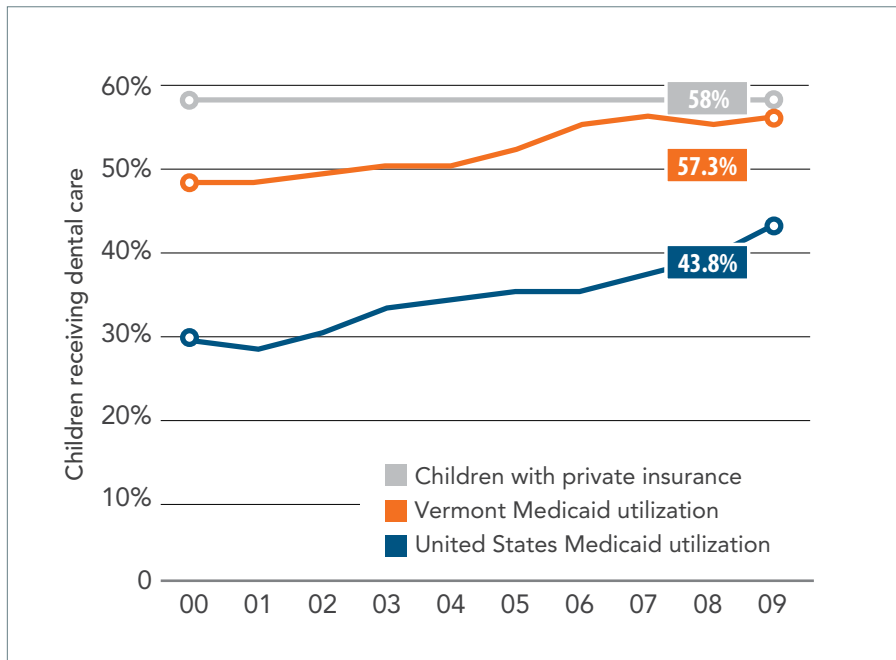
2010: **C**

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	58.5%	75%		
2009	Share of Medicaid-enrolled children getting dental care	57.3%	38.1%	✓	✓
2010	Share of dentists' median retail fees reimbursed by Medicaid	54.5%	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				5 of 8	4 of 8

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

HOW BAD IS THE PROBLEM?

Vermont reports a high level of dental utilization. Still, two in five Medicaid children 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. Pew Center on the States survey of state dental directors, communication with Dr. Patrick Rowe, December 21, 2010.
2. "CDC -Funded States" http://www.cdc.gov/OralHealth/state_programs/cooperative_agreements/index.htm, (accessed October 20, 2010).
3. Vermont Department of Health, "2009 Dentist Survey Statistical Report," 4, <http://healthvermont.gov/research/HlthCarePrvSrvys/documents/dds09bk.pdf>, (accessed March 15, 2011).
4. K. Reincke and D. Jordan, "W.K. Kellogg Foundation supports community-led efforts in five states to increase oral health care access by adding dental therapists to the new team," W.K. Kellogg Foundation, November 17, 2010.