



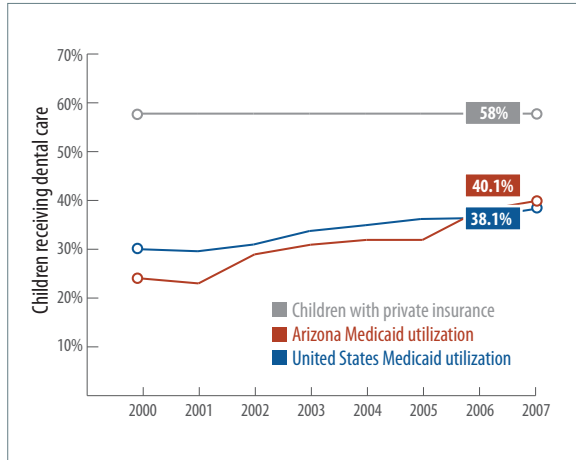
The Cost of Delay: State Dental Policies Fail One in Five Children Arizona



ARIZONA meets just half of the eight policy benchmarks aimed at addressing children's dental health needs. The state reimburses dentists for Medicaid at a level that exceeds the national average, and the number of Medicaid-enrolled kids who receive care has increased in recent years—although it continues to lag behind that of privately insured children. Approximately 40 percent of Arizona's children on Medicaid saw a dentist in 2007, the latest year for which data are available, up from only 24 percent in 2000. How can the state improve? For starters, Arizona does not reimburse medical providers for offering basic preventive dental services to Medicaid-enrolled children, and the state's sealant program reaches less than one-quarter of high-risk schools.

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 2007.



SOURCES FOR NATIONAL BENCHMARKS: 1) Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors; 2) American Dental Hygienists' Association; 3) Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS-416; 4) American Dental Association; 5) Pew Center on the States, National Academy for State Health Policy and American Academy of Pediatrics; 6) National Oral Health Surveillance System.

HOW WELL IS ARIZONA RESPONDING?

MEASURED AGAINST THE NATIONAL BENCHMARK FOR EIGHT POLICY APPROACHES

	STATE	NATIONAL	MEETS OR EXCEEDS
Share of high-risk schools with sealant programs, 2009	<25%	25%	
Hygienists can place sealants without dentist's prior exam, 2009	Y	Y	✓
Share of residents on fluoridated community water supplies, 2006	56.1%	75%	
Share of Medicaid-enrolled children getting dental care, 2007	40.1%	38.1%	✓
Share of dentists' median retail fees reimbursed by Medicaid, 2008	76%	60.5%	✓
Pays medical providers for early preventive dental health care, 2009	N	Y	
Authorizes new primary care dental providers, 2009	N	Y	
Tracks data on children's dental health, 2009	Y	Y	✓
Total score	C		4 of 8

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

Download the full report and explanatory notes by visiting www.pewcenteronthestates.org/costofdelay.



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