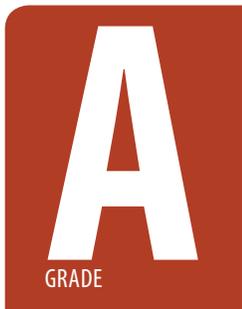




The Cost of Delay: State Dental Policies Fail One in Five Children

Iowa

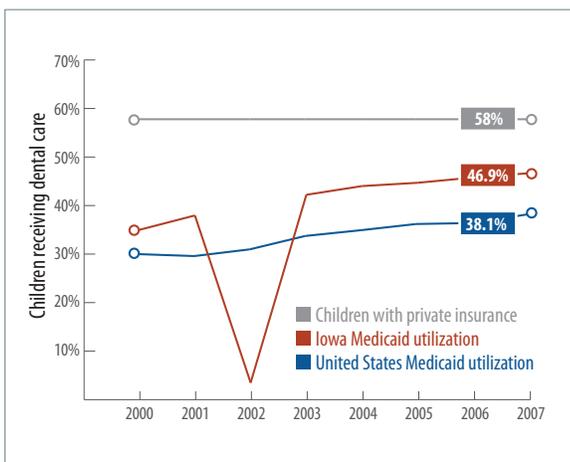


IOWA is a national leader, meeting six of eight policy benchmarks aimed at addressing children's dental health needs. More than 90 percent of its population receives fluoridated water, and 50 percent of its high-risk schools have sealant programs. Nearly 47 percent of Medicaid-enrolled children received dental services in 2007, the latest year for which data are available. Iowa's innovative I-Smile program requires that every child under 12 must have a "dental home"—a primary site where the child is connected to dental care delivery—by the end of 2010.¹ The state is believed to be the first to take advantage of the newly instituted option under the federal Children's Health Insurance Program allowing states to extend dental benefits to children in families with medical, but not dental, coverage.

Iowa estimates this will provide care to 11,000 children without dental insurance during fiscal year 2010. Iowa plans to increase funding for the program from \$500,000 in 2010 to \$1.45 million in 2011, which will cover nearly 25,000 kids.²

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. Iowa submitted data in 2002 that appear to be abnormally low, indicating possible problems with the submission. Please use caution when interpreting the data in question for this year.

¹ Iowa Department of Public Health, Oral Health Bureau, "Inside I-Smile: A Look at Iowa's Dental Home Initiative for Children," December 2008, 6.
² Brafton Inc., "Iowa Expands Dental Insurance Coverage to Uninsured Children," May 20, 2009.

HOW WELL IS IOWA RESPONDING?

MEASURED AGAINST THE NATIONAL BENCHMARK FOR EIGHT POLICY APPROACHES

	STATE	NATIONAL	MEETS OR EXCEEDS
Share of high-risk schools with sealant programs, 2009	50-74%	25%	✓
Hygienists can place sealants without dentist's prior exam, 2009	Y	Y	✓
Share of residents on fluoridated community water supplies, 2006	92.4%	75%	✓
Share of Medicaid-enrolled children getting dental care, 2007	46.9%	38.1%	✓
Share of dentists' median retail fees reimbursed by Medicaid, 2008	51.3%	60.5%	
Pays medical providers for early preventive dental health care, 2009	Y	Y	✓
Authorizes new primary care dental providers, 2009	N	Y	
Tracks data on children's dental health, 2009	Y	Y	✓
Total score	A		6 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.



The Pew Center on the States is a division of The Pew Charitable Trusts that identifies and advances effective solutions to critical issues facing states. Pew is a nonprofit organization that applies a rigorous, analytical approach to improve public policy, inform the public and stimulate civic life.

901 E Street NW | 10th Floor | Washington, DC 20004 | www.pewcenteronthestates.org