



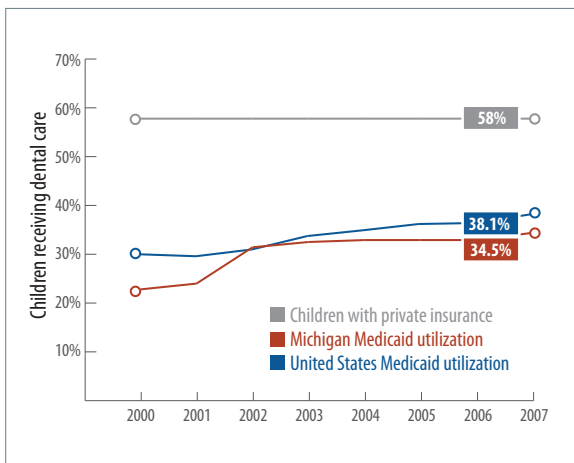
The Cost of Delay: State Dental Policies Fail One in Five Children Michigan



MICHIGAN meets just half of eight policy benchmarks aimed at addressing children's dental health needs. Among other accomplishments, the state provides access to optimally fluoridated water to nearly 91 percent of residents on community systems, and reimburses medical providers for offering basic preventive services to Medicaid-enrolled children. The state's Healthy Kids Dental program has helped increase access to care for low-income children in rural areas of the state. The program, which provides higher reimbursement rates and is administered through a private dental insurance plan, has greatly increased access in those areas.¹ But because it is not available in populous areas like Detroit, only 35 percent of Medicaid-enrolled children across the state received any dental services in 2007, the latest year for which data are available.

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.

¹ American Dental Association, "State and Community Models for Improving Access to Dental Care For the Underserved—A White Paper," (Chicago, IL: American Dental Association October 2004) 3, http://www.ada.org/prof/resources/topics/topics_access_whitepaper.pdf (accessed November 23, 2009).

HOW WELL IS MICHIGAN 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	90.9%	75%	✓
Share of Medicaid-enrolled children getting dental care, 2007	34.5%	38.1%	
Share of dentists' median retail fees reimbursed by Medicaid, 2008	40.8%	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	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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