



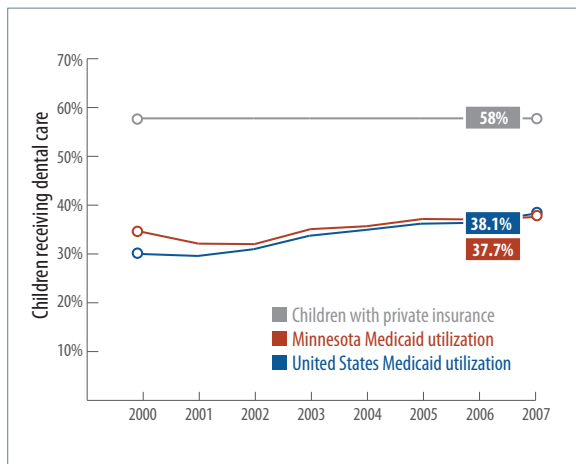
The Cost of Delay: State Dental Policies Fail One in Five Children Minnesota



MINNESOTA meets just half of eight policy benchmarks aimed at addressing children's dental health needs. The state reimburses dentists for Medicaid at a level that falls short of the national average, and only 37.7 percent of Medicaid-enrolled children received care in 2007, just shy of the national target. However, Minnesota ranks fourth in the nation in community water fluoridation, with nearly 99 percent of its population receiving optimally fluoridated water. And in 2009, the state became the first in the country to authorize a new primary care dental provider, which may help improve access to care in underserved areas. Dental therapists and advanced dental therapists will be authorized to provide routine preventive and restorative care. While dental therapists will require the on-site supervision of dentists, advanced dental therapists will not—although they will maintain “collaborative practice” relationships with dentists to whom they can refer complex cases.

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 MINNESOTA 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	98.7%	75%	✓
Share of Medicaid-enrolled children getting dental care, 2007	37.7%	38.1%	
Share of dentists' median retail fees reimbursed by Medicaid, 2008	42.9%	60.5%	
Pays medical providers for early preventive dental health care, 2009	Y	Y	✓
Authorizes new primary care dental providers, 2009	Y	Y	✓
Tracks data on children's dental health, 2009	N	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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