



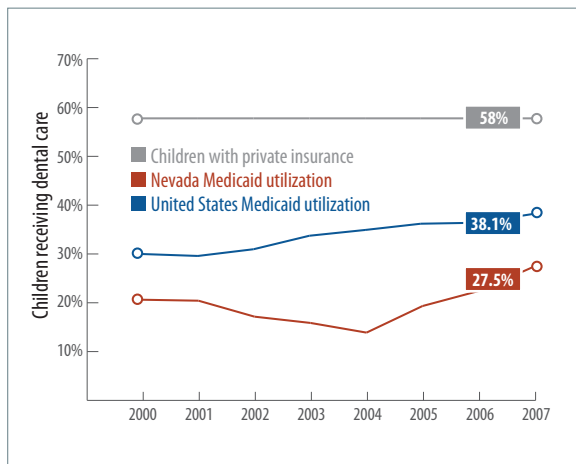
The Cost of Delay: State Dental Policies Fail One in Five Children Nevada



NEVADA meets three of eight policy benchmarks aimed at addressing children's dental health needs. The state ranks in the bottom five in the percentage of Medicaid-enrolled children who received dental care in 2007, the latest year for which data are available, with just 27.5 percent receiving services. Both its Medicaid payment rates to dentists and its fluoridation rate fell just short of the national targets. Nevada has made some progress on sealants: 41 percent of its third graders have received sealants, due in part to a grant from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that the state has received since 2001 to increase school sealant programs in elementary schools and fluoride varnish programs for preschoolers. The volunteer Seal Nevada program uses portable equipment to place sealants on second graders at schools that have 50 percent or more children on free or reduced-cost lunch.¹ These efforts are not yet widespread, however: Less than one-quarter of all high-risk schools in the state have sealant programs.

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 Nevada State Health Division, Bureau of Child, Family, and Community Wellness, "Optimal Oral Health for all Nevadans," <http://health.nv.gov/PDFs/OH/ohpdescription.pdf> (accessed December 7, 2009).

HOW WELL IS NEVADA 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	72%	75%	
Share of Medicaid-enrolled children getting dental care, 2007	27.5%	38.1%	
Share of dentists' median retail fees reimbursed by Medicaid, 2008	60.3%	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	D		3 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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