



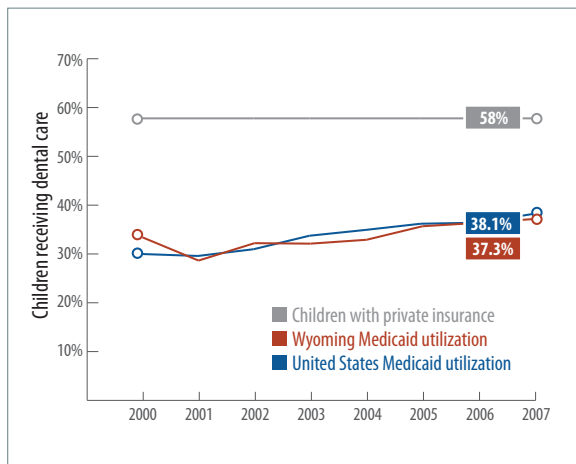
The Cost of Delay: State Dental Policies Fail One in Five Children Wyoming



WYOMING meets just two of eight policy benchmarks aimed at addressing children's dental health needs. Like their neighbors in other Mountain West states, Wyoming residents often travel long distances over difficult terrain to get to their doctors and dentists. But unlike some other neighboring states, including Montana, Wyoming is one of just seven states that require a dentist to supervise as hygienists apply sealants to children's teeth. The state also lacks a school-based sealant program for its high-risk schools. And although Wyoming reimburses physicians for providing basic, preventive dental health services, most kids are not receiving regular fluoride in their drinking water; the state provides fluoridated water to just 36.4 percent of its population on community water supplies. Wyoming does not report data to the National Oral Health Surveillance System. The state's percentage of Medicaid-enrolled children receiving dental services in 2007, the latest year for which data are available, fell just shy of the national average.

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 WYOMING RESPONDING?

MEASURED AGAINST THE NATIONAL BENCHMARK FOR EIGHT POLICY APPROACHES

	STATE	NATIONAL	MEETS OR EXCEEDS
Share of high-risk schools with sealant programs, 2009	0%	25%	
Hygienists can place sealants without dentist's prior exam, 2009	N	Y	
Share of residents on fluoridated community water supplies, 2006	36.4%	75%	
Share of Medicaid-enrolled children getting dental care, 2007	37.3%	38.1%	
Share of dentists' median retail fees reimbursed by Medicaid, 2008	67.8%	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	N	Y	
Total score	F		2 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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