

The State of Children's Dental Health: Making Coverage Matter New Hampshire

B

2011 GRADE

New Hampshire meets five of the eight policy benchmarks aimed at addressing children's dental health needs. Although the state's grade was unchanged from 2010, Medicaid-enrolled children's use of dental services has increased since 2007. New Hampshire now provides dental care to over half of its Medicaid-enrolled children. Although Medicaid payment rates slipped as a percentage of dentists' usual fees, these rates still exceed the national benchmark.

In 2010, New Hampshire passed a law authorizing its Medicaid program to reimburse medical providers for preventive dental services, but the state had not yet begun paying claims when Pew compiled this report.¹ The Pew Children's Dental Campaign is supporting an effort to improve access to care by helping the state develop a new kind of dental provider.

HOW WELL IS NEW HAMPSHIRE RESPONDING?

2011: **B**

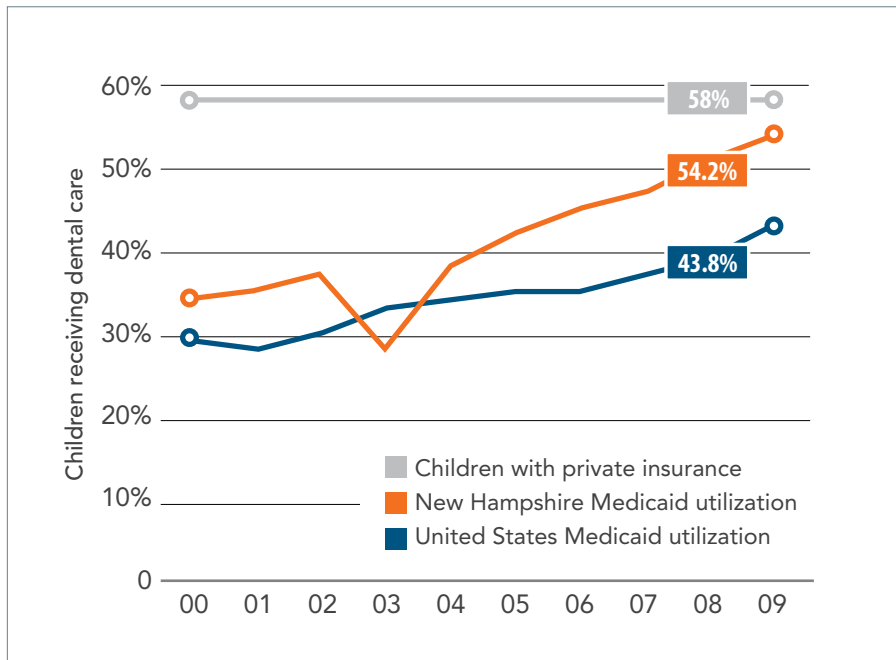
2010: **B**

DATA YEAR	MEASURED AGAINST THE NATIONAL BENCHMARKS FOR EIGHT POLICY APPROACHES	STATE	NATIONAL	MEETS OR EXCEEDS	MET OR EXCEEDED
2010	Share of high-risk schools with sealant programs	75-100%	25%	✓	✓
2010	Hygienists can place sealants without dentist's prior exam	YES	YES	✓	✓
2008	Share of residents on fluoridated community water supplies	42.6%	75%		
2009	Share of Medicaid-enrolled children getting dental care	54.2%	38.1%	✓	✓
2010	Share of dentists' median retail fees reimbursed by Medicaid	61.8%	60.5%	✓	✓
2010	Pays medical providers for early preventive dental health care	NO	YES		
2010	Authorizes new primary care dental providers	NO	YES		
2010	Tracks data on children's dental health	YES	YES	✓	✓
Total score				5 of 8	5 of 8

Grading: A = 6-8 points B = 5 points C = 4 points D = 3 points F = 0-2 points

HOW BAD IS THE PROBLEM?

Too many children lack access to dental care. While more than half of the state's children on Medicaid received care in 2009, they were less likely to be treated than kids with private insurance.



SOURCE: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS-416.

SOURCES FOR BENCHMARKS: (1, 2, 7) Pew Center on the States survey of states; (3) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; (4) Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, CMS-416; (5, 6) Medicaid/SCHIP Dental Association and American Academy of Pediatrics; (8) National Oral Health Surveillance System.

1. Pew and MSDA survey of state Medicaid programs. See also New Hampshire House Bill 1537, <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/legislation/2010/HB1537.html> (accessed March 4, 2011).