

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

Florida

F

2011 GRADE

Florida meets two of the eight policy benchmarks for strengthening children's dental health. Florida was the worst performer with regard to ensuring low-income children's access to care. Fewer than one in three Medicaid-enrolled kids received any dental services. During 2010, newspaper articles highlighted several challenges, such as the number of Florida communities that lack fluoridated water¹ and the fact that 32 counties have no pediatric dentists who accept Medicaid.^{2,3}

There are signs of potential improvements. The Florida Board of Dentistry voted in June 2010 to move forward with proposed rules to permit dental hygienists to apply sealants without supervision in Health Access settings, but as of July 1, 2010, when this survey was conducted, the rule had not been put into effect.⁴

HOW WELL IS FLORIDA RESPONDING?

2011: **F**

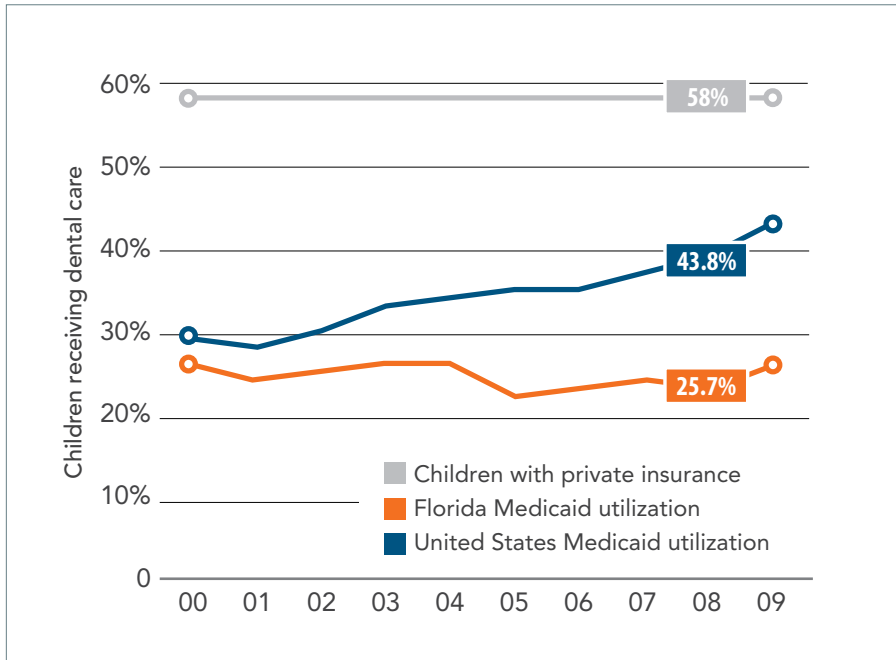
2010: **F**

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	<25%	25%		
2010	Hygienists can place sealants without dentist's prior exam	NO	YES		
2008	Share of residents on fluoridated community water supplies	78.3%	75%	✓	✓
2009	Share of Medicaid-enrolled children getting dental care	25.7%	38.1%		
2010	Share of dentists' median retail fees reimbursed by Medicaid	27.5%	60.5%		
2010	Pays medical providers for early preventive dental health care	YES	YES	✓	✓
2010	Authorizes new primary care dental providers	NO	YES		
2010	Tracks data on children's dental health	NO	YES		
Total score				2 of 8	2 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, with severe outcomes. One measure of the problem: more than half of the children on Medicaid received no dental service in 2009.



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. K. Moore, "Fluoride Helps, Officials Say, But Fears Persist," The Ledger, August 9, 2010; <http://www.theledger.com/article/20100809/NEWS/8095105/1374?Title=Fluoride-Helps-Officials-Say-But-Fears-Persist>, (accessed December 3, 2010,)
2. K. Moore, "Rural Youths' Teeth Neglected," The Ledger, August 8, 2010; <http://www.theledger.com/article/20100808/NEWS/8085049/1410?Title=Rural-Youths-Teeth-Neglected>, (accessed December 3, 2010,)
3. K. Moore, "Gaps in Florida's pediatric dental care," The Ocala Star-Banner August 8, 2010; <http://www.ocala.com/article/20100808/ARTICLES/8081011>, (accessed December 3, 2010,)
4. Pew Center on the States survey of state boards of dentistry, communication with Sue Foster, August 20, 2010.