

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

Kansas



2011 GRADE

Kansas meets half of the eight policy benchmarks aimed at addressing children's dental health needs. In 2010, Kansas was one of two Midwestern states that failed to meet the national benchmark of providing 75 percent of its citizens with fluoridated water. In fact, as this year's report notes, Kansas lost ground in this benchmark, dropping from 65.1 percent to 44.7 percent.

Ninety-one Kansas counties no longer have enough dentists, and in 2008, 14 counties had no dentists at all.¹ To address these persistent issues, Kansas advocates, supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, established a campaign to create a dental therapist program that will help more children receive care.²

HOW WELL IS KANSAS RESPONDING?

2011: **C**

2010: **C**

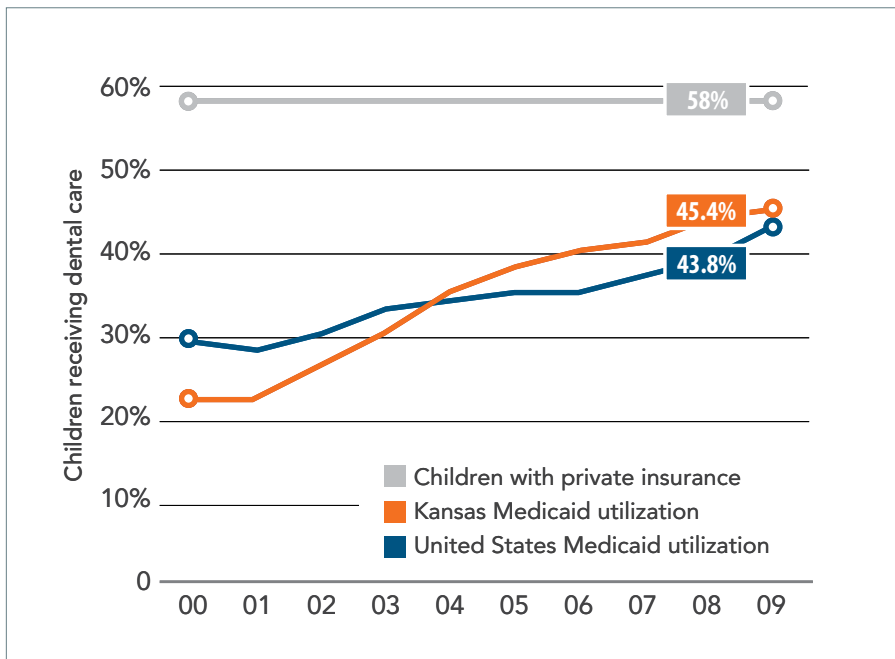
DATA YEAR	MEASURED AGAINST THE NATIONAL BENCHMARKS FOR EIGHT POLICY APPROACHES	STATE	NATIONAL	MEETS OR EXCEEDS	MET OR EXCEEDED
2010	Share of high-risk schools with sealant programs	<25%	25%		
2010	Hygienists can place sealants without dentist's prior exam	YES	YES	✓	✓
2008	Share of residents on fluoridated community water supplies	44.7%	75%		
2009	Share of Medicaid-enrolled children getting dental care	45.4%	38.1%	✓	✓
2010	Share of dentists' median retail fees reimbursed by Medicaid	55.0%	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	YES	YES	✓	✓
Total score				4 of 8	4 of 8

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

The number of Medicaid-enrolled children receiving dental services has risen for several consecutive years, up from 22 percent in 2000 to 45.4 percent in 2009. Unfortunately, only 25 percent of Kansas dentists actively participated in Medicaid in 2008.³ By comparison, 89 percent of Kansas physicians participated in Medicaid in the same year.⁴

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. D. Ranney, "Slow Going in Efforts to Solve State's Dentist Shortage," Kansas Health Institute News Service (August 30, 2010) <http://www.khi.org/news/2010/aug/30/slow-going-efforts-solve-states-dentist-shortage/> (accessed March 15, 2011).
2. K. Reincke and D. Jordan, "W.K. Kellogg Foundation supports community-led efforts in five states to increase oral health care access by adding dental therapists to the new team," W.K. Kellogg Foundation, November 17, 2010.
3. Kansas Health Policy Authority, "2008 Medicaid Transformation Program Review, Dental Services," 19-21, http://www.khpa.ks.gov/medicaid_transformation/download/2008/Chapter%203%20-%20Dental%20Services.pdf (accessed March 15, 2011).
4. Kansas Health Policy Authority, "2009 Medicaid Transformation Program Review, Professional Services," 1, http://www.khpa.ks.gov/program_improvements/downloads/Physician%20program%20review%2003%2001%202010.pdf (accessed March 15, 2011).