

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

F

2011 GRADE

New Jersey meets two of the eight policy benchmarks aimed at addressing children's dental health needs. Although the state surpassed the threshold for use of dental services by Medicaid-enrolled children, the state supplied information on payments by its managed care contractors (which cover 98 percent of children in the state) showing reimbursements that fall significantly below dentists' usual fees.

As for water fluoridation, data from 2008 show that the state is doing worse than in 2006—now offering optimally fluoridated water to only 14 percent of its residents on community systems, a decline from its previous mark of 23 percent.

HOW WELL IS NEW JERSEY RESPONDING?

2011: **F**

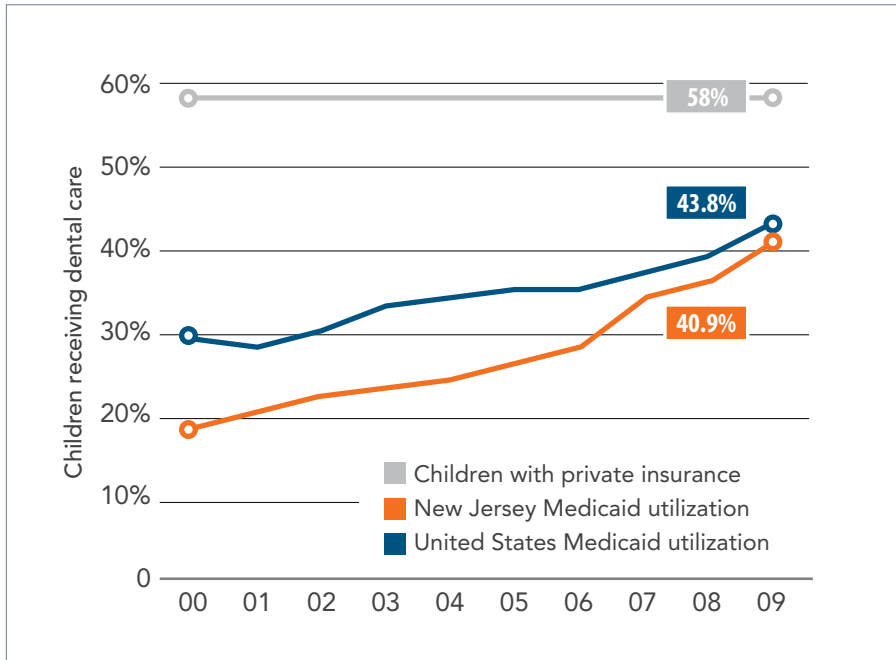
2010: **F**

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	0%	25%		
2010	Hygienists can place sealants without dentist's prior exam	NO	YES		
2008	Share of residents on fluoridated community water supplies	13.6%	75%		
2009	Share of Medicaid-enrolled children getting dental care	40.9%	38.1%	✓	
2010	Share of dentists' median retail fees reimbursed by Medicaid	42.8% ¹	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	1 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. Weighted average of fee-for-service and managed care payment rates.