

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

## Ohio

# B

2011 GRADE

**Ohio** meets five of eight policy benchmarks aimed at addressing children's dental needs, yet unmet oral health needs are a major concern.<sup>1</sup>

The state continues to deliver fluoridated water to most of its residents on community systems and sealant programs to most of its high-risk schools. A 2010 law slightly eased the requirement for a prior dental exam before hygienists could apply sealants on children's teeth in school settings. Unfortunately, the statute retains an unnecessary obstacle—a dentist must review the medical and dental history for every child seen in a school sealant program.<sup>2</sup>

### HOW WELL IS OHIO RESPONDING?

2011: **B**

2010: **B**

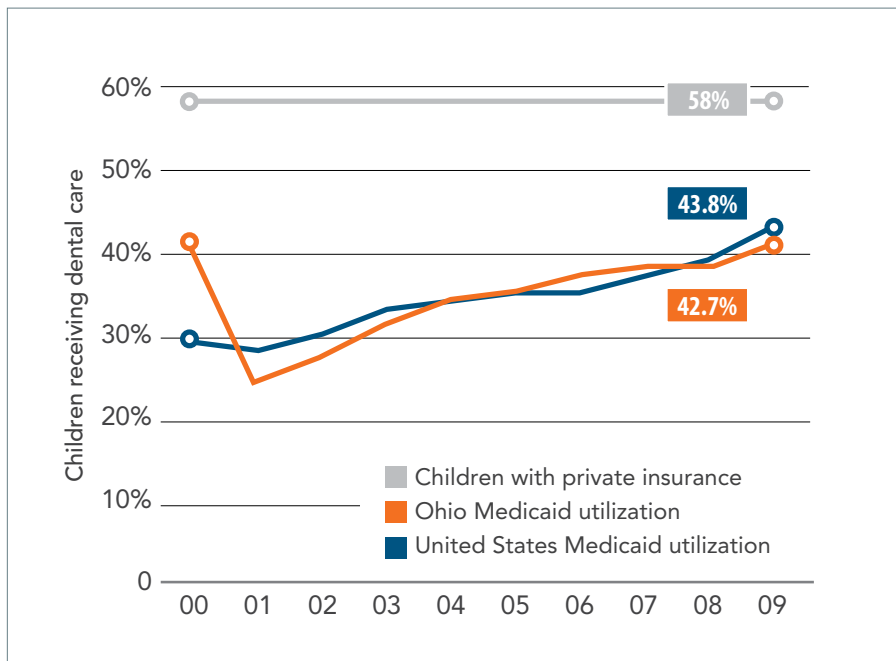
DATA YEAR	MEASURED AGAINST THE NATIONAL BENCHMARKS FOR EIGHT POLICY APPROACHES	STATE	NATIONAL	MEETS OR EXCEEDS	MET OR EXCEEDED
2010	Share of high-risk schools with sealant programs	50-74%	25%	✓	✓
2010	Hygienists can place sealants without dentist's prior exam	NO	YES		
2008	Share of residents on fluoridated community water supplies	84.1%	75%	✓	✓
2009	Share of Medicaid-enrolled children getting dental care	42.7%	38.1%	✓	✓
2010	Share of dentists' median retail fees reimbursed by Medicaid	43.9%	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	✓	✓
<b>Total score</b>				<b>5 of 8</b>	<b>5 of 8</b>

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

A budget crisis prompted Ohio to reduce its Medicaid adult dental services in 2010.<sup>3</sup> The state also faces significant challenges with its dental workforce. At least 1 million Ohioans live in 59 areas federally designated as having a shortage of dentists. Public health advocates, supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, have launched a campaign to address the state’s dental access issue by licensing dental therapists to provide care.<sup>4</sup>

## 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. Ohio Department of Health, “Oral Health and Access to Dental Care for Ohioans, 2010,” [http://www.odh.ohio.gov/ASSETS/9D4A2E944B9E46899133641ED035531B/Oral%20Health%20Access\\_2010%20exec%20sum%20update.pdf](http://www.odh.ohio.gov/ASSETS/9D4A2E944B9E46899133641ED035531B/Oral%20Health%20Access_2010%20exec%20sum%20update.pdf) (accessed March 15, 2011).

2. Ohio Revised Code 4715.366. <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/4715.366> (accessed December 7, 2010). Ohio Revised Code 4715.365. <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/4715.365> (accessed December 7, 2010).

3. V. Smith et. al., “Hoping for Economic Recovery, Preparing for Health Reform: A Look at Medicaid Spending, Coverage and Policy Trends Results from a 50-State Medicaid Budget Survey for State Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011,” Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured (September 2010); <http://www.kff.org/medicaid/upload/8105.pdf> (accessed October 20, 2010).

4. 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.