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

Colorado

Colorado meets five of the eight policy benchmarks aimed at addressing children's dental health needs. The state meets all of the same benchmarks that it did in 2010, but there are mixed signs of progress.

Between 2007 and 2009, access to dental care for children enrolled in Medicaid grew by 6 percentage points. However, the proportion of the state's population receiving optimally fluoridated water decreased slightly, from 73.6 to 70.6 percent. And Medicaid payment rates slid from 58.3 percent of dentists' median fees to 51.1 percent.
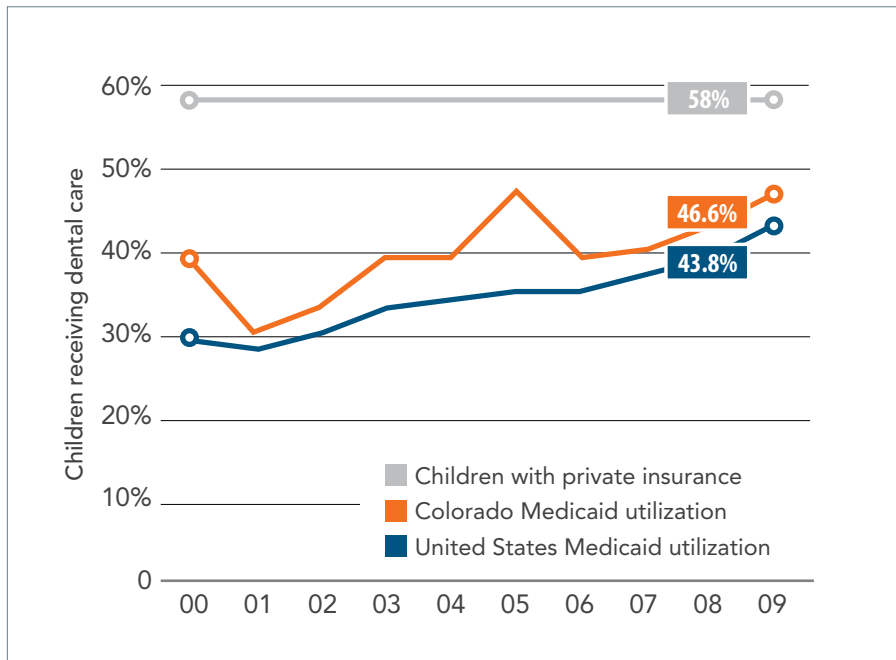
HOW WELL IS COLORADO RESPONDING?

DATA YEAR	MEASURED AGAINST THE NATIONAL BENCHMARKS FOR EIGHT POLICY APPROACHES	STATE	NATIONAL	2011: B MEETS OR EXCEEDS	2010: B MET OR EXCEEDED
2010	Share of high-risk schools with sealant programs	25-49%	25%	✓	✓
2010	Hygienists can place sealants without dentist's prior exam	YES	YES	✓	✓
2008	Share of residents on fluoridated community water supplies	70.6%	75%		
2009	Share of Medicaid-enrolled children getting dental care	46.6%	38.1%	✓	✓
2010	Share of dentists' median retail fees reimbursed by Medicaid	51.1%	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	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,
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.