

Ohio's State Oral Health Plan

2021-2022

Goal: Equitable systems and access to care



POLICY OPPORTUNITY 1

Preserve the Adult Dental Benefit under the Medicaid Program

An adult dental benefit is critical to maintaining the oral and overall health of Ohio Medicaid beneficiaries.

POLICY OPPORTUNITY 2

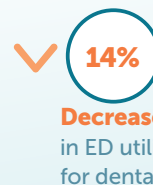
Preserve Medicaid Expansion

Medicaid expansion has dramatically reduced the uninsured rate among Ohioans with the lowest incomes.

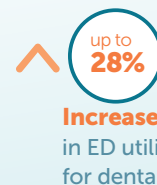
526,100 people were covered under Medicaid expansion in 2018. Medicaid expansion has been especially important for those who have lost their jobs during the pandemic with 250,000 enrolled since the start of the pandemic.

A recent study has found that the combination of Medicaid expansion coverage with dental coverage in Medicaid can reduce the number of low-income adults who visit the emergency department (ED) for dental care.

States with Expanded Medicaid with Dental Coverage:



States that Did Not Expand Medicaid:



POLICY OPPORTUNITY 3

Increase Medicaid Providers

Medicaid dental reimbursement levels make it extremely difficult for a dentist to participate in the program. And Ohio dental fees have not changed for 20 years—with the exception of a modest increase in 2016 for extractions and denture repairs, and a 5% fee increase for all dental procedures in 52 rural counties.

Research has shown that adjusting Medicaid payment rates closer to “market” levels in conjunction with other reforms has a significantly positive effect on access to dental care.

Other reforms include incorporating dental hygiene in nontraditional practice settings, including primary care, nursing homes and schools can help expand access to underserved populations.

Ohio Medicaid Reimbursement Fees are far below “market” levels charged by dentists:



Medicaid Fee-For-Service Reimbursement as a Percentage of Private Dental Insurance Reimbursement, Adult Dental Services, 2016

POLICY OPPORTUNITY 4

Ohio Needs a State Dental Director at the Ohio Department of Health

This role provides leadership in developing and implementing innovative strategies and policies to reduce oral health disparities. This includes working across systems and agencies to elevate the value of oral health in overall health and well-being.