



Oral Health Investments to Improve Care and Reduce Costs

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Why is oral health care an issue?

- Preventable but highly prevalent chronic disease
- Significant disparities, long-standing, persistent barriers to low-income people accessing care
- 108 million Americans without dental coverage
- Effects on nutrition, education, employability, quality of life
- Linked to avoidable emergency room visits, systemic conditions like cardiovascular disease, stroke, diabetes

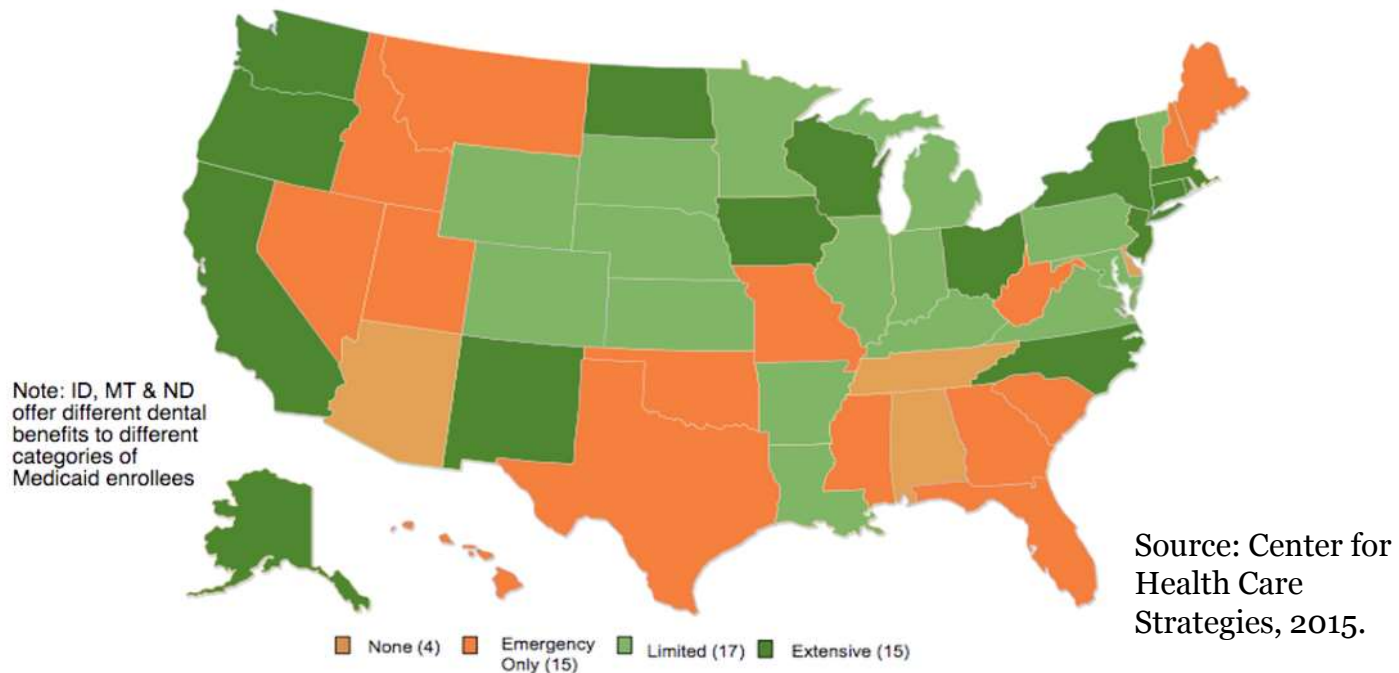
Key investment areas

- Coverage in public programs
- Integration with primary care
- Innovations in oral health care delivery
- Public health strategies



Dental benefits in Medicaid

- Required coverage for Medicaid/CHIP kids
- Optional coverage for adults; highly variable benefits



Adult dental: State innovations

- “Earned benefits” in Iowa’s Dental Wellness Plan
 - Higher reimbursement rates
 - Individuals who establish regular care qualify for more benefits.
 - Leverages *I-Smile* dental care coordinators
 - 115,000 adults; fully federally financed
- Virginia: incremental expansion to pregnant women
 - 45,000 women; \$3M state funding for first 2 years

Children's dental benefits

- Medicaid utilization has been improving over last 10 years
 - Many innovations to learn from: CT, MD, others
- Dental and health insurance exchanges
 - Pediatric dental is “essential health benefit”, but no federal requirement to purchase
 - Kentucky, Washington and Colorado require purchase

Integrating oral health and primary care

- Opportunities to leverage medical delivery system
 - Fluoride varnish programs (NC, WA)
 - Hennepin Health (MN): ER diversion program
 - Marshfield Clinic (WI): diabetes co-management
- Integration into delivery system reform plans
 - Virginia's SIM model design teams include oral health workgroup
 - Oregon's Coordinated Care Organizations responsible for physical, behavioral, and oral health

Innovations in care delivery

- Leveraging technology:
 - Virtual Dental Home pilots in CA, CO
- Broadening workforce
 - Dental therapy in MN, ME
 - Community Dental Health Coordinator pilots in several states
 - Use of CHWs for oral health?
- State loan repayment programs
- Interprofessional education

Public health interventions

- School-based sealant programs
 - Highly cost-effective when targeted to low-income schools
 - States can facilitate with funding, Medicaid policies, and simplifying exam requirements
- Community water fluoridation
 - CDC estimates \$38 saved for every \$1 invested
 - AR (2011): legislation guaranteed fluoridated water to communities over a certain size

NASHP resources

- Briefs, reports, and an online toolkit at http://nashp.org/category/oral_health/
 - Adult Dental Benefits in Medicaid
 - Oral Health and the Triple Aim
 - Dental and Health Insurance Marketplaces

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Thank you!