



Dental Public Health Activities Descriptive Summaries

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Healthy Kids Dental

The *Healthy Kids Dental* program was initiated in Michigan to create access to oral health care for Medicaid beneficiaries by using Delta Dental's network of participating providers. This is a demonstration program contracted by the Department of Community Health with Delta Dental Plan of Michigan to administer the Medicaid dental benefit to all Medicaid beneficiaries under age 21 residing in selected counties. *Healthy Kids Dental* aims to address – and ameliorate – two commonly cited reasons for dentists' non-participation in Medicaid: low reimbursement rates and administrative burden. *Healthy Kids Dental* reimbursement levels are identical to Delta's commercial dental plans. Administrative processes for *Healthy Kids Dental* – including verification of enrollment – are handled through Delta in the same manner as with commercial Delta plans. The project was initiated on May 1, 2000 in 22 counties. On October 1, 2000, the project was expanded to include an additional 15 counties. Currently the project is in 37 of Michigan's 83 counties. *Healthy Kids Dental* participants can receive care anywhere in the state: eligibility is based on the children's county of residence, not the location of the dentist. The number of Medicaid-enrolled children (aged 0-20) in the 37 counties totaled approximately 100,000. A 12-month assessment of the program demonstrated that through the contract: (1) substantially more Medicaid beneficiaries are receiving dental care under the *Healthy Kids Dental* compared to the traditional Fee-For-Service Medicaid coverage; (2) more dentists are providing care to Medicaid beneficiaries under *Healthy Kids Dental* compared to the traditional Fee-for-Service Medicaid program; (3) more Medicaid beneficiaries are receiving care within their county of residence rather than traveling long distances to receive care; and (4) more Medicaid beneficiaries are receiving restorative dental treatment compared to the traditional Fee-for-Service Medicaid program.

Contact Person(s) for Inquiries:

Christine M. Farrell, RDH, BSDH, MPA, Oral Health Program Director, Division of Family & Community Health, Michigan Department of Community Health, 201 Townsend St., Lansing, MI 48913, Phone: 517-335-8388, Fax: 517-335-8697, Email: farrellc@michigan.gov