Oral Health
Emerging Issues and Policy Options
Three Takeaways

• Oral health impacts overall health.

• Colorado is promoting effective strategies to improve oral health through public-private partnerships.

• Dental insurance coverage and access to dental providers influence use of services.
Why Oral Health?
Oral Health Impacts Overall Health

- Oral health, particularly periodontal (gum) disease, is linked to several chronic diseases, including diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

- Poor oral health in pregnant women is associated with premature births and low birth weight.
Fewer Coloradans Seeing a Dental Professional

2008-2009: 66.3%

2011: 63.4%

10,500 fewer Coloradans visited a dental professional
Regional Differences in Use of Dental Services

Percent who did not visit a dental health professional within the last year by Health Statistics Region, Colorado, 2011

Percent without a dental visit:
- 23.0% - 30.0%
- 30.1% - 35.0%
- 35.1% - 40.0%
- 40.1% - 45.0%
- 45.1% - 51.0%

Source: The 2011 Colorado Health Access Survey
Map created March 6, 2012
What is Colorado Doing About Oral Health?
Oral Health: One of Colorado’s 10 Winnable Battles

• Strategies to improve Colorado’s oral health
  • Water fluoridation
  • Infant dental checkups
  • Dental sealants
Water Fluoride: Safe, Effective, Controversial

- 70 percent of Colorado’s population receives optimally fluoridated water.
- Every dollar invested in water fluoridation saves up to $61 in dental procedures.
Recent Legislation Impacting Oral Health

- Health Care Workforce Data Collection
- Old Age Pension Dental Program
The Oral Health Equation:

Coverage + Access = Utilization
Public and Private Dental Insurance Coverage

- Dental insurance typically a separate benefit from medical insurance
- Medicaid provides a fee-for-service benefit for enrollees ages 20 and younger
- CHP+ provides a capped benefit for children through Delta Dental
Dental Insurance Coverage In Colorado

Over 2 million Coloradans did not have dental insurance in 2011.
Coverage Impacts Lower Income Coloradans Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Level</th>
<th>Had dental insurance and visited a dental professional</th>
<th>No dental insurance and visited a dental professional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0%-133% FPL</td>
<td>72.2%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>134%-250% FPL</td>
<td>70.2%</td>
<td>45.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>251%-400% FPL</td>
<td>77.4%</td>
<td>50.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 400% FPL</td>
<td>84.4%</td>
<td>64.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Policy Options to Increase Coverage

• Expanding coverage in Medicaid and CHP+
  • Impact on utilization
  • Cost considerations

• Private market options
  • Enhanced benefits for targeted, high-risk members
  • Accessing dental insurance on the Exchange
    • Potentially 57,000 additional children with coverage
The Oral Health Equation:

Coverage + \textbf{Access} = \text{Utilization}
14 Counties Without A Practicing Dentist

Number of Practicing Dentists by County, Colorado, 2011

Number of Dentists

0
1 - 10
11 - 40
41 - 150
151 - 380

Source: Peregrine Management Corporation, December 2011
Map created July 30, 2012
Insurance Alone Does Not Guarantee Access

• One in four practicing dentists accepts Medicaid

• An *additional* 66,300 Colorado children had dental insurance in 2011 than in 08-09.

• Nearly 41,500 *fewer* Colorado children saw a dental professional in 2011 than in 08-09.
Policy Options to Increase Access

• Increase loan repayment for oral health providers

• Use market reforms to make Medicaid more responsive to providers
  • Rates
  • Dental Administrative Services Organization

• Require oral health screening for school aged children
Legislative Issues on the Horizon
Policy Options

Coverage

• Leverage Medicaid and CHP+ dental benefit
• Target benefits to high-risk groups
• Create opportunities for purchasing private dental insurance

Access

• Incentives for oral health providers
• Require school-based screenings
• Expand the oral health workforce
Three Takeaways from Today

• Oral health impacts overall health

• Colorado is promoting effective strategies to improve oral health through public-private partnerships.

• Dental insurance coverage and access to dental providers influence use of services.