MACPAC

Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission

# Coverage of Medicaid Dental Benefits for Adults

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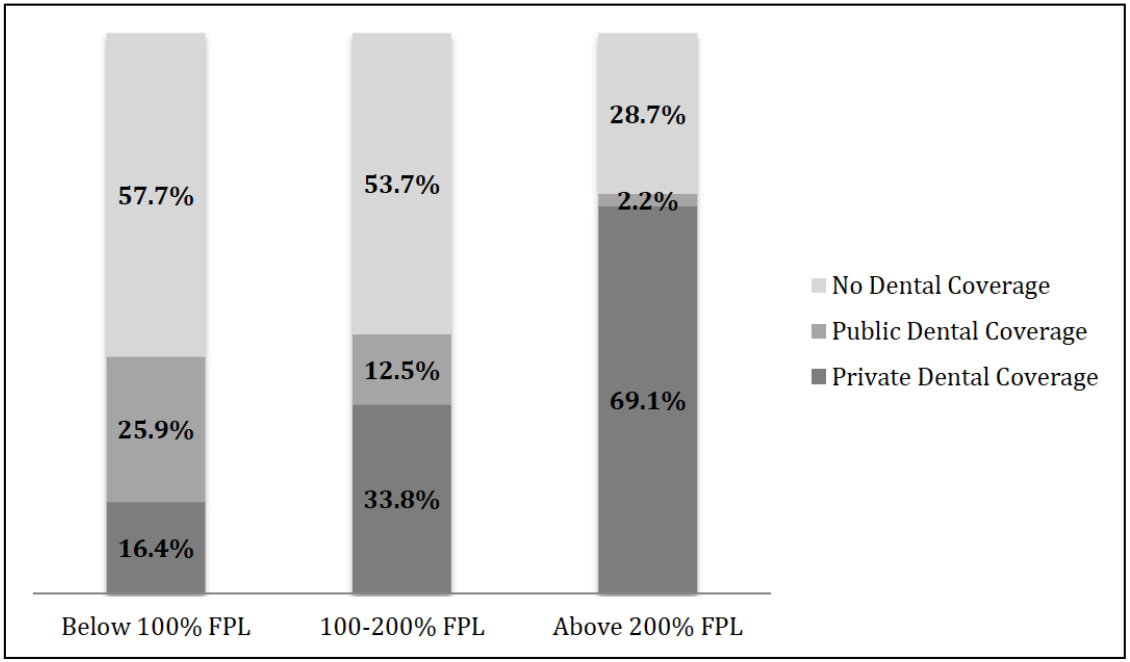
# Overview

- The impact of poor oral health
- Dental coverage
- Current adult dental benefits in Medicaid
- Recent trends in dental benefits
- Use of dental care
- Current and possible future Commission work

# The Impact of Poor Oral Health

- 85% of adults age 18+ are affected by dental caries (cavities)
- Adults with incomes <100% FPL more than 3 times as likely to have untreated dental caries as those with incomes >400% FPL
- May be cause and consequence of several conditions
- Other negative effects

# Percentage of Adults Ages 19 to 64 Who Have Private Dental Coverage, Public Dental Coverage, or No Dental Coverage by Income, 2012




**Source:** Rodhe, F., Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality, analysis of MEPS 2012 data. 2014.

Note: FPL is federal poverty level.

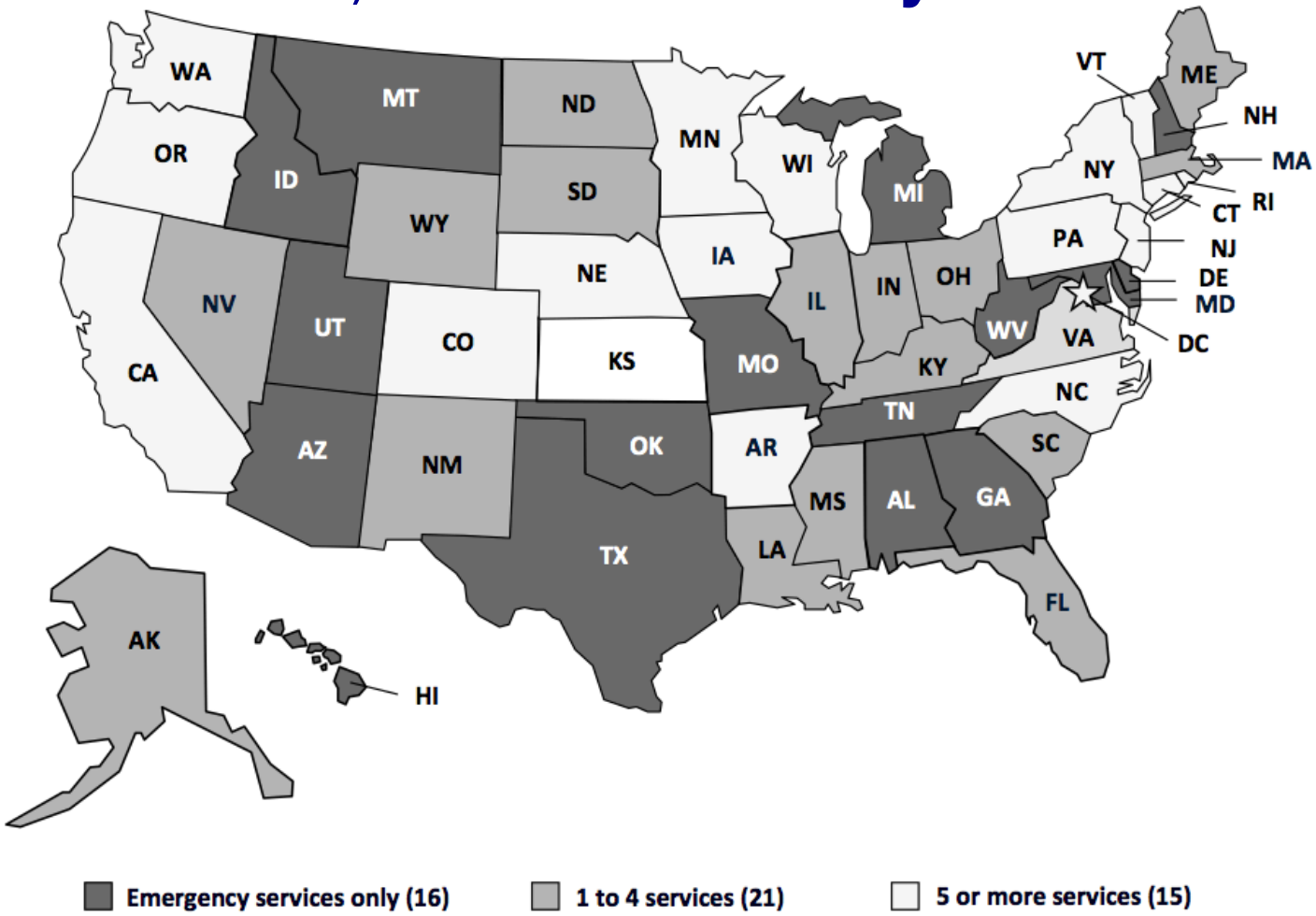
# Types of Services Offered under Medicaid Adult Dental Benefits, as of February 2015

| Type of service | Number of states |
|---|---|
| Emergency Only | 16 |
| More extensive | 35 |
| Preventive | 28 |
| Restorative | 26 |
| Periodontal | 19 |
| Dentures | 27 |
| Oral Surgery | 27 |
| Orthodontia | 2 |

**Note:** Federal Medicaid regulation defines dental services as "diagnostic, preventive, or corrective procedures provided by or under the supervision of a dentist in the practice of his profession, including the treatment of – (1) the teeth and associated structures of the oral cavity; and (2) disease, injury, or impairment that may affect the oral or general health of the recipient" (42 CFR §440.100).

**Source:** MACPAC analysis of state Medicaid websites, provider manuals, billing manuals, and informational pamphlet.

# Medicaid Dental Benefits for Adults by State, as of February 2015




**Source:** MACPAC analysis of state Medicaid websites, provider manuals, billing manuals, and informational pamphlet.

# Recent Trends in Dental Benefits

Between 2003 and 2012:

- 7 states increased from emergency only or no coverage to more comprehensive coverage
- 3 states decreased from more comprehensive coverage to emergency only
- 10 states experienced more than one change, both increasing and decreasing

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation. Medicaid Benefits: Dental Services. http://kff.org/medicaid/state-indicator/dental-services/.

# Use of Dental Care

- Dental care utilization is lower than other medical care for people across all income levels
- Use of dental services among Medicaid enrollees and low-income populations is particularly low
- For Medicaid enrollees, two possible reasons are:
  - Medicaid does not cover dental care in many states
  - The inability to find a provider who takes Medicaid

# Current and Possible Future MACPAC Work

- Current:
  - Updating dental measures in MACStats and looking at changes over time
  - Focus groups with dually eligible beneficiaries
- Possible Future Work:
  - Use of emergency room for dental services
  - Environmental scan of provider network issues