

HB 26

Adult Dental Program Facts

Prepared by Representative Mike Hawker's Office
Information Provided by DH&SS

1. How many recipients have taken advantage of the program?

The unduplicated count of adult Medicaid recipients receiving these services since implementation of the services on April 1, 2007 – September 30, 2008 is approximately 9,300 adults. 283 dental providers participated in the program during this time period.

2. How much has been expended so far?

The expenditure information on preventative and restorative dental services for adult Medicaid recipients (in thousands of dollars) is:

Fiscal Year 2007 (4th Quarter): \$418.5

Fiscal Year 2008: \$4,640.5

Providers have up to 12 months to submit Medicaid claims and the listed expenditures are based on the date the claims are paid.

3. What services were the funds spent on?

The expenditures for categories of dental services for the period of April 1, 2007 – September 30, 2008 are:

- ♦ Fillings (1 and 2 surface amalgam and resin restorations): 9,313 procedures - \$1,015.196
- ♦ Root canal therapy on permanent teeth: 1,027 procedures (including 289 on front teeth) - \$435,412. *These are situations that would have often resulted in extracting teeth under the previous Medicaid Adult Dental program, which was limited to emergent care.*
- ♦ Dentures (includes full & partial dentures): 2,343 procedures - \$2,227,288. *Please note that the Medicaid program restricts denture coverage to every five years for adults, however procedures to adjust the fit of the dentures would be covered. The denture procedures and expenditures listed do not include repairs and/or adjustments to dentures.*

Since providers have up to 12 months to submit Medicaid claims, these figures are based on claims that were processed by the 2nd week of November 2008 and could change based on future claims.

Adult Dental

New Adult Dental Services

On March 29, 2007, Alaska's Medicaid for adults began covering \$1,150 worth of preventive dental care, such as exams and cleanings, each year for Alaskans 21 and older who receive Medicaid services.

New services also include fillings, root canals and dentures.

In the past, adult dental Medicaid only treated emergency pain relief and acute infection.

For a full list of new services in the state regulations passed last year authorizing the changes, [click here](#).

The limited amount of preventive and restorative coverage, as well as limited access to dentists who accept Medicaid patients, means patients will need to

- plan carefully with their dentists what to do first, and when it can be scheduled;
- keep their appointments.

Missed appointments are a primary complaint among dentists. The state recently clarified that when dentists charge patients for missed appointments, that policy includes Medicaid patients. Medicaid will not cover the cost of missed appointments.

For help finding a dentist who takes new Medicaid patients, call the recipient helpline: 1-800-780-9972.

Funding

The state investment of \$1.3 million in general funds is being matched with federal funds and \$1.425 million a year from the [Mental Health Trust Authority](#), for a total annual cost of \$10.2 million, an eight-fold return on state general fund dollars.

The coverage expansion was added because infections in the mouth are no different than infections in other parts of the body. Dental infections cause pain, lost time at work and missing teeth can affect employability. Waiting for dental emergencies often results in more expensive dental care and limits the dentist's ability to address dental problems that will result in future dental emergencies.

Recommended Reading:

- [press release](#)
- [fact sheet](#) (PDF)
- [letter to dentists explaining new regulations](#) (PDF)
- [state regulations authorizing the new services](#) (PDF)

Questions:

- Recipient helpline: 1 (800) 780-9972



LAWS OF ALASKA

2006

Source

SCS CSHB 105(FIN)

Chapter No.

AN ACT

Relating to coverage for adult dental services under Medicaid; and providing for an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

THE ACT FOLLOWS ON PAGE 1

AN ACT

1 Relating to coverage for adult dental services under Medicaid; and providing for an effective
2 date.

3
4 * **Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section
5 to read:

6 PURPOSE; INTENT. (a) The purpose of this Act is to increase adult dental care
7 services for an eligible recipient of Medicaid under AS 47.07 to ensure that services critical to
8 a recipient are implemented first, while controlling the overall growth of the costs of the
9 increase in services.

10 (b) It is the intent of the legislature that the Department of Health and Social Services
11 implement the increase in adult dental care services authorized by this Act through the
12 adoption of regulations consistent with the department's obligation to contain the costs of the
13 increased services in order to provide the services within appropriation limits. It is further the
14 intent of the legislature that the Department of Health and Social Services implement

1 mechanisms to contain costs, which may include establishing a maximum amount of benefits
2 for each eligible recipient in a fiscal year for the services and specifying the scope of the
3 services.

4 * **Sec. 2.** AS 47.07 is amended by adding a new section to read:

5 **Sec. 47.07.067. Payment for adult dental services.** (a) Subject to
6 appropriation, the department shall pay for minimum treatment and for preventative
7 and restorative adult dental services provided under AS 47.07.030(b) and under
8 regulations adopted by the commissioner in conformity with applicable federal
9 requirements and this chapter. Regulations adopted under this section must include the
10 following:

11 (1) a maximum amount of benefits for preventative and restorative
12 adult dental services of \$1,150 for each eligible recipient in a fiscal year; and

13 (2) specification of the scope of coverage for preventative and
14 restorative adult dental services.

15 (b) On or before June 30 of each year, the department shall review
16 appropriations available for the purposes of this section for the following fiscal year,
17 and estimate the scope of services to be used and the number of eligible recipients
18 anticipated to be served during the following fiscal year. Notwithstanding the
19 maximum amount of benefits specified in (a)(1) of this section, the department shall
20 reduce, by regulation, the specified maximum amount of benefits for the following
21 fiscal year if the department's estimates under this subsection would exceed
22 appropriations available for that fiscal year.

23 (c) Notwithstanding any contrary provision of AS 44.62, the department may
24 adopt emergency regulations to implement (b) of this section.

25 (d) As used in this section, "minimum treatment" means the application or
26 prescription of a medication or material deemed necessary by a licensed dentist for the
27 immediate relief of pain or to reduce the spread of infection.

28 * **Sec. 3.** AS 47.07.900 is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

29 (20) "adult dental services" means minimum treatment for the
30 immediate relief of pain and acute infection provided by a licensed dentist.

31 * **Sec. 4.** AS 47.07.900(1) is repealed.

1 * **Sec. 5.** AS 47.07.067, as added in sec. 2 of this Act, is repealed June 30, 2009.

2 * **Sec. 6.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
3 read:

4 TRANSITION: REGULATIONS. The Department of Health and Social Services may
5 proceed to adopt regulations necessary to implement the changes made by this Act. The
6 regulations take effect under AS 44.62 (Administrative Procedure Act), but not before the
7 effective date of the statutory changes.

8 * **Sec. 7.** Section 3 of this Act takes effect July 1, 2009.

9 * **Sec. 8.** Section 6 of this Act takes effect immediately under AS 01.10.070(c).

10 * **Sec. 9.** Except as provided in secs. 7 and 8 of this Act, this Act takes effect July 1, 2006.

Bill History/Action for 24th Legislature**BILL:** HB 105**BILL VERSION:** SCS CSHB 105(FIN)**CURRENT STATUS:** CHAPTER 52 SLA 06**SPONSOR(s):** RULES BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR**SHORT TITLE:** MEDICAID FOR ADULT DENTAL SERVICES**STATUS DATE:** 06/02/06**TITLE:** "An Act relating to coverage for adult dental services under Medicaid; and providing for an effective date."

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01/24/05	0151	(H) HES, FIN
01/24/05	0151	(H) FN1: (HSS)
01/24/05	0151	(H) GOVERNOR'S TRANSMITTAL LETTER
02/11/05	0287	(H) HES RPT CS(HES) 4DP 1NR
02/11/05	0287	(H) DP: CISSNA, GARDNER, ANDERSON, WILSON;
02/11/05	0287	(H) NR: KOHRING
02/11/05	0288	(H) FN1: (HSS)
04/10/06	3060	(H) FIN RPT CS(FIN) 4DP 3NR
04/10/06	3060	(H) DP: HAWKER, WEYHRAUCH, KERTTULA, JOULE;
04/10/06	3060	(H) NR: KELLY, STOLTZE, MEYER
04/10/06	3060	(H) LETTER OF INTENT WITH FIN REPORT
04/10/06	3061	(H) FN2: (HSS)
04/20/06	3228	(H) RULES TO CALENDAR 4/20/2006
04/20/06	3228	(H) READ THE SECOND TIME
04/20/06	3228	(H) FIN CS ADOPTED UNAN CONSENT
04/20/06	3228	(H) ADVANCED TO THIRD READING UNAN CONSENT
04/20/06	3228	(H) READ THE THIRD TIME CSHB 105(FIN)
04/20/06	3228	(H) PASSED Y40
04/20/06	3229	(H) EFFECTIVE DATE(S) SAME AS PASSAGE
04/20/06	3229	(H) ADOPTED FIN LETTER OF INTENT UC
04/20/06	3235	(H) TRANSMITTED TO (S)
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04/21/06	2843	(S) READ THE FIRST TIME - REFERRALS
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05/05/06	3196	(S) DP: WILKEN, GREEN, HOFFMAN, OLSON, DYSON, STEDMAN
05/05/06	3196	(S) FN3: (HSS)
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05/06/06	3235	(S) READ THE SECOND TIME
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