

Recent and Proposed Changes to the Dental Program

Many of the citizens of Connecticut, dentists and their office staff sent letters to the Department of Social Services (DSS) to make their opinions known regarding the proposed 5% reduction to the *Children's Dental Reimbursement Rates that was supposed to occur on July 1, 2016*. The Department is committed to ensuring that the Connecticut Dental Health Partnership (CTDHP) provides ample access to dental services for the people we serve.

The Department reviewed all of the comments very carefully. There were many commenters who believe the reduction will impact access to care and proposed alternative means by which the state could control expenditures without affecting access points. Many of the letters contained constructive suggestions such as eliminating routine coverage for premolar sealants suggested reducing the reimbursement level for specific procedure codes and services and mechanisms to reduce fraud and waste. Although no one wishes to see reductions, it is necessary to explore ways to reduce expenses in the current challenging fiscal climate. The Department examined the recommended alternatives and was able to use some of the suggestions to utilize certain substitute actions that would impact providers and members the least and ensure that the CTDHP continues to provide full access to dental services for Medicaid members.

Effective for August 1, 2016, as suggested by several commenters, the greatest savings will come from the elimination of routine coverage for premolar sealants and from holding providers responsible for the longevity of certain restorative procedures. A policy bulletin has been issued by Hewlett – Packard Enterprises (PB16-18) providing greater details. The policy bulletin can be accessed at www.ctdssmap.com.

Routine coverage for premolar sealants means the Department will no longer reimburse for sealants on premolar teeth unless there is a reason of medical necessity. In addition to this broad policy change, four procedure codes will undergo a reduction in their rate of reimbursement for the **children's fee schedule only**. These codes are:

Code	Description	Fee
D2930	Prefab Stainless Steel Crown	\$200.00
D2931	Stainless steel crown, permanent tooth	\$200.00
D2934	Aesthetic Coated Stainless Steel Crown	\$300.00
D8670	Periodic Orthodontic Treatment	\$87.13

Other cost saving measures put in place are a result of holding providers responsible for the treatment rendered to members. For example, the Department will no longer reimburse for replacement sealants or indirect restorations, also called fillings, when performed by the same provider or if a member seeks care elsewhere and defective sealants and restorations are observed. In the latter instance, the member will be sent back to the original provider or the fee may be recouped, depending upon the circumstance.

Effective for September 1, 2016, the Department will reduce the **Children's Dental Fee Schedule by 2% instead of the 5% that was originally planned in the state budget**. **The Adult Reimbursement Rate will NOT change**. A notice was published in the Connecticut Law Journal on July 19, 2016 describing the changes. Anyone may send the Department written comments about this State Plan Amendment

(SPA16-0028), including comments about access to services affected by the SPA. Written comments must be received at the below contact information no later than August 25, 2016.

Ms. Ginny Mahoney
Department of Social Services
Medical Policy Unit
55 Farmington Avenue,
Hartford, CT 06105
Ginny.mahoney@ct.gov

Donna Balaski, D.M.D.
Department of Social Services
Integrated Care – Dental Unit
55 Farmington Avenue
Hartford, CT 06105
donna.balaski@ct.gov

The Department and the CTDHP staff sincerely thank you again for taking an interest in the Connecticut Dental Health Partnership and the services the state provides to our most vulnerable population. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact CTDHP's Customer Relations Center at: 1-866 – 420 – 2924 or 1 – 888 CT – Dental.