

# REINSTATING HAWAII ADULT MEDICAID DENTAL BENEFITS IN 2021

Oral health is more than just teeth



Hawaii has received a failing grade for oral health since 2010 according to the Pew Center of the States

209,081

adult Medicaid beneficiaries have NO dental coverage

3,000

ER visits for acute oral health conditions in 2016

\$17 mil

in direct ER costs

56%

of all dental ER visits are Medicaid beneficiaries

Significant disparities exist in Hawaii



Rural and low-income families experience poorer oral health and higher ER utilization for dental issues

Poor oral health is associated with acute and chronic health issues including:

- Heart disease
- Depression
- Ventilator-Associated Pneumonia & COVID-19
- Diabetes
- Low birth weight

A study found that COVID-19 patients on mechanical ventilation were more susceptible to ventilator-associated pneumonia (VAP), which is the leading cause of hospital-acquired infection (HAI) deaths among critically ill patients. However, patients are 22% less likely to develop VAP if they received preventive dental care within the last 3 years.\*

\*September 2020 report from the DentaQuest Partnership for Oral Health Advancement

Improved oral health is associated with:

↑ social interactions  
↑ employment opportunities

GOOD ORAL HEALTH IS ESSENTIAL TO OVERALL HEALTH

## A WISE INVESTMENT

While reinstating benefits is a SOCIAL JUSTICE issue, improving oral health can SAVE in other health care costs:

- Lower usage of ER  
79% of ER visits could be diverted to a community setting, saving 48% of the cost per visit
- Improved chronic conditions  
HPI-ADA estimates a cost savings of up to \$1.7 mil for the diabetic population each year with adult Medicaid dental benefits
- Reduced risk for pregnancy complications  
Birth costs for a premature/underweight newborn range from \$200,000-2 mil



34 states offer comprehensive or limited preventive and restorative benefits to adults



HAWAII CAN DO BETTER

The federal government will match up to 50% of the State's investment



In a 2018 survey conducted by Ward Research for HIPHI, 9 in 10 registered Hawaii voters (89%) STRONGLY AGREED that preventative dental benefits should be included in adult Medicaid coverage.

Join the many organizations State-wide that support

# REINSTATING PREVENTIVE AND RESTORATIVE DENTAL BENEFITS FOR ALL ADULTS ON MEDICAID

- AlohaCare
- Aloha Independent Living Hawaii
- Aloha Medical Mission
- Bay Clinic
- Catholic Charities Hawaii
- Easterseals Hawaii
- Family Support Hawaii
- Hawaii Action Coalition
- Hawaii- American Nurses Association
- Hawaii Association of Professional Nurses
- Hawaii Children's Action Network
- Hawaii Dental Association
- Hawaii Dental Service
- Hawaii Dental Service Foundation
- Hawaii Disability Rights Center
- Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center
- Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition, a program of the Hawai'i Public Health Institute
- Hawaii Self Advocacy Advisory Council
- Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Hawaii State Rural Health Association
- HMSA Foundation
- Hui Mālama Ola Nā 'Ōiwi
- Hui No Ke Ola Pono Maui
- John A. Burns School of Medicine-UH-Manoa
- Ka'u Rural Health Community Association Inc
- Kalihi Palama Health Center
- Kokua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Services
- Lāna'i Community Health Center
- Na Pu'uwai NHHCS (Molokai and Lanai)
- Papa Ola Lokahi
- Puna Kamali'i Flowers/ Employment Network Hawaii
- Responsive Caregivers of Hawai'i
- Save Medicaid Hawaii
- University of Hawaii at Manoa School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene
- Wahiawa Health
- Waikiki Health
- Waimanalo Health Center
- West Hawaii Community Health Center

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