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Show Your Support for the Medicaid Adult Dental Bill

From the NH Oral Health Coalition:

NH SB422 Establishing a **Medicaid Adult Dental Benefit** is scheduled for a Public Hearing on February 2, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. in Room 101 at the NH Legislative Office Building. You are welcome to attend the meeting in person, but be aware that is a very small room for social distancing.

NH legislators have worked hard on the addition of a “extensive Medicaid Adult Dental Benefit” with strong bipartisan legislative support and the support of Governor Sununu. In addition to establishing a benefit, this bill addresses funding that has been the barrier to implementation.



Register your support now!

You can register ahead and submit email testimony at: [The New Hampshire State Senate \[gencourt.state.nh.us\]](https://gencourt.state.nh.us) Unlike last year you cannot testify remotely but you can register your support/opposition on this link and then submit emailed testimony via this link.

When you get to the website, do the following:

Select the date: February 2nd.

Select the committee: Senate Health and Human Services

Select the bill: SB422

Then indicate who you're representing and your support for the bill

Additionally, you may add, via email, your own testimony or story about the need for and importance of a NH Medicaid Adult Dental. Your Senators want to know how this impacts you, your family, your community, or your business.

You can tell your story in-person or via email. Talk about why the establishment of a Medicaid Adult Dental Benefit matters to YOU.

I am the parent of a disabled young adult with disabilities...

I am a senior in your community...

I own a dental practice in your community...

I am an adult with a disability and I...

I am on Medicaid Expansion and want to get back to work but...

I am a public dental provider and there is no payment for me to provide dental care to Medicaid-covered adults other than for an emergency...

I am a dentist and get calls for treatment of...

I am on Medicaid and in alcohol recovery...

Key Talking Points for HB422

The current NH Medicaid Dental Benefit is “Emergency Only”. This means only antibiotics for infection, narcotics/pharmaceuticals for pain, and pulling out/removal of diseased and damaged teeth. No cleanings, fillings, or restorations are covered.

As a result, many seek treatment in the hospital Emergency Departments where they receive “expensive care with no repair”. With very rare

exception, there are no dentists in the Emergency Department. Patients are then referred back out into the community where they have already been unable to find care due to cost or lack of provider availability.

Oral health is part of overall health. Over 140 diseases and conditions have been associated with poor oral health and dental disease. This increases the cost of chronic care for those with diabetes, heart disease, lung disease, arthritis, dementia, alcohol and drug treatment, and more. Infection alone can lead to costly inpatient hospitalization. When it comes to dental disease and related healthcare costs, it is all connected! Dental decay and gum infections are caused by bacteria and can be passed through saliva within families and those with close relationships. Untreated, dental disease can infect others.

There is a negative economic impact on the community and the economy due to absenteeism due to pain and infection; limited job opportunity due to poor oral appearance, bad smell, and impaired speech; and continued pain can lead to recovery relapse delaying the return to work of those in our Medicaid Expansion program.

First things first! Once we pass the establishment of the benefit, dental provider concerns about reimbursement, patient's ability to get to appointments (transportation, no time off, etc.), provider coordination can be addressed through program design and the integration of care management and navigation systems.

Please make the time to register support for this bill and then provide testimony. Your opinion matters, calls are most effective. You can leave a message at the Senate Health Committee Office at: 603-271-2104. Let me know if you have questions or if we can help you in any way.

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Register your support here



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