



HELP MINNESOTA SMILE

It's hard to smile when you're in last place.

IMPROVE ACCESS TO DENTAL CARE – SUPPORT SF 1073 / HF 1340

THE PROBLEM

Minnesota currently ranks last – 50th of the 50 states – when it comes to the Medicaid payment rate for pediatric dental services – with a rate of 26.7%.

Unfortunately, we're not doing much better when it comes to helping adults access dental care. Minnesota is near the bottom – fourth worst – in the payment rate for adult dental care services (27.1%).

Because of the low payment rate, many dental clinics – especially small clinics and clinics in Greater Minnesota – cannot afford to serve low-income patients, contributing to our state's access crisis where low-income patients with serious dental problems cannot get the treatment they need.

THE FISCALLY SMART THING TO DO

- Dental care in Emergency Rooms costs taxpayers millions and is less effective than preventive care
- From 2007-2010, the cost of dental-related ER visits in Minnesota was \$148 million
- More than 20% of dental-related ER visits in Minnesota were due to readmissions
- Three Northern Minnesota hospitals recently reported 981 dental-related ER visits in 2011, which is abnormally high given the population density in their area
- Average cost per visit was \$1,200-\$1,500 for exam, pain medication and local anesthetic
- No dental disease is being prevented or treated in the process with this model

THE RIGHT THING TO DO

Improving access to dental care will improve health outcomes for Minnesotans.

- Low income children have the highest oral disease burden in the state: 1½ times more likely to experience tooth decay and 3 times more likely to have it go untreated
- 55% of third graders assessed in 2010 had some form of oral disease
- More than 51 million school hours and 164 million work hours are lost each year due to dental disease, leading to increased educational disparities and decreased productivity
- In 2014, less than half of Minnesota children enrolled in MHCP programs received oral/dental health services
- Between 2003 and 2013, reimbursement rates for child dental services in Medicaid decreased 41.3% in Minnesota
- Adults in lower income group (\$15,000 or less) are 3 times less likely to visit a dentist than their more affluent peers

THE SOLUTION

Bipartisan bills Senate File 1073 and House File 1340 would move Minnesota from the bottom of the pack to average among the 50 states.

- This would cost approximately \$100-\$120 million over the upcoming two-year biennium
- The state's General Fund spending for FY 18-19 is projected to be approximately \$45 billion, making the funding request less than 0.3% of the state budget

For more information please visit
www.HelpMNSmile.org or email
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