

# BETTER CARE, LOWER COST

## *Consortium for Medically Necessary Oral Health Coverage*

*For Immediate Release  
March 27, 2023*

### **Consortium Statement on Nominations for Medicare Coverage of Medically Necessary Oral and Dental Health Therapies**

The Consortium for Medically Necessary Oral Health Coverage is proud to applaud the Santa Fe Group and the Sjögren's Foundation for their leadership in crafting and submitting nominations for extended medical coverage of medically necessary oral and dental health therapies in the Medicare program. Made possible by the Physician Fee Schedule for 2023, the annual nominations process builds on the Final Rule's clarification of much-needed medical coverage of medically necessary oral and dental care.

The Physician Fee Schedule for 2023 codified medical coverage in the Medicare program for dental treatment related to organ transplant surgery, cardiac valve replacement, valvuloplasty procedures, and head and neck cancers. Recognizing the clinical, fiscal, and human importance of medically necessary treatment, the Final Rule also established a novel process for stakeholders to propose additional clinical scenarios in which dental treatment is demonstrated by clinical evidence as being inextricably linked and substantially related and integral to the clinical success of other covered medical services.

Since promulgation of the Final Rule, the Consortium's members have worked to formulate evidence-based nominations for consideration by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The current result of this nationwide effort was the formulation and submission of these nominations:



- Medically necessary coverage of **diabetes**, consistent with extensive evidence of the linkage between untreated oral infection and diabetes, as well as the Final Rule's solicitation of clinical scenarios including "management of chronic conditions such as diabetes."
- Medically necessary coverage of **blood and solid tumor cancers**, due to the close association between cancer, cancer treatment, immunosuppression, and the heightened risk of oral health-related complications during chemotherapy and radiation adjuvant therapies.



- Medically necessary coverage of complications related to **systemic autoimmune disease**, consistent with extensive evidence that impacted persons are at much higher risk of advanced dental decay, tooth loss, and gum disease, as well as extensive evidence linking periodontitis to the development of rheumatoid arthritis and other autoimmune diseases.

“The nominations process for medically necessary coverage represents a vital opportunity to advance integrated health in America, and we are grateful for the opportunity to participate in it,” said Dr. Michael Alfano, D.M.D., Ph.D., cofounder of the Santa Fe Group and the Consortium.

Dr. Marlon D. Henderson, President of the National Dental Association, agreed. “This process creates the potential for meaningful progress on multiple fronts, expanding access to needed care, improving outcomes, reducing Medicare program costs, and promoting a more equitable delivery system for a healthier future.”

“Medicare beneficiaries have long suffered from lack of access to medically necessary dental care,” added Center for Medicare Advocacy Executive Director Judith Stein. “Thanks to the determined efforts of so many advocates and the Administration’s continuing openness to medically necessary coverage, we look forward to a future of better health, improved quality of life, and greater program equity.”

In support of transformative change, more than 240 leading organizations joined as signatories of the Consortium’s Community Statement to urge Congress and the Administration to explore options for extending evidence-based coverage to all Medicare beneficiaries. With the Santa Fe Group and Sjögren’s Foundation’s nomination of coverage related to diabetes, blood and solid tumor cancers, and systemic autoimmune diseases, the Consortium is now actively seeking favorable consideration of this year’s nominations to achieve continued evidence-based expansion of medically necessary coverage.

*Founded in 2016, the Consortium spans more than 240 leading dental, medical, and nursing groups, patient and consumer advocates, and care delivery providers who engage in educational, community-building, and advocacy efforts in support of Medicare coverage of medically necessary oral and dental care. Extensive evidence demonstrates that medically necessary coverage is essential to combatting and preventing a wide range of costly chronic conditions. For decades, however, medically necessary oral and dental care was not covered by the Medicare program, causing the delivery of covered medical treatments to be precluded, delayed, and jeopardized, while heightening the risk of costly medical complications, and increasing the financial burden on Medicare, beneficiaries, and taxpayers.*

The signatories of the Consortium's Community Statement are listed below:

AARP  
ABLE NH (Advocates Building Lasting Equality in NH)  
ACA Consumer Advocacy  
Acuity Specialists  
Adenoid Cystic Carcinoma Research Foundation  
AIDS Foundation of Chicago  
Alliance for Retired Americans  
Allies for Independence  
ALS Association  
American Academy of Nursing  
American Academy of Periodontology  
American Association for Community Dental Programs  
American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research  
American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists  
American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American Association of Diabetes Educators  
American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons  
American Association of Kidney Patients  
American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons  
American Association of Nurse Practitioners  
American Association of Public Health Dentistry  
American Association on Health and Disability  
American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association  
American College of Cardiology  
American College of Emergency Physicians  
American College of Gastroenterology  
American College of Physicians  
American College of Rheumatology  
American Dental Assistants Association  
American Dental Education Association  
American Dental Hygienists' Association  
American Diabetes Association  
American Geriatrics Society  
American Head and Neck Society  
American Heart Association  
American Institute of Dental Public Health  
American Kidney Fund  
American Liver Foundation  
American Medical Association  
American Muslim Health Professionals (AMHP)  
American Nephrology Nurses' Association  
American Network of Oral Health Coalitions  
American Nurses Association  
American Parkinson Disease Association  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Psychiatric Nurses Association  
American Public Health Association  
American Society for Radiation Oncology  
American Society of Clinical Oncology  
American Society of Nephrology  
American Society of Transplant Surgeons  
American Society of Transplantation  
American Thoracic Society  
Arcora Foundation  
Arizona Oral Health Coalition  
Arthritis Foundation  
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)  
Association of Community Cancer Centers  
Association of Oncology Social Work  
Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors  
Autistic Self Advocacy Network  
Be a Hero  
Brain Injury Association of America  
California Dental Association  
California Medical Association  
CareQuest Institute for Oral Health  
Carlson Foley Enterprises  
Catholic Health Association of the United States  
Center for Advocacy for the Rights and Interests of the Elderly (CARIE)  
Center for Elder Law & Justice  
Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation  
Center for Medicare Advocacy  
Center for Popular Democracy  
Champaign County Health Care Consumers  
Children's Dental Health Project  
Coalition for Oral Health for the Aging  
Coalition of Texans with Disabilities  
Colgate Palmolive Company  
Colorado Consumer Health Initiative  
Community Catalyst  
Community Dental Health NPO  
Connecticut Oral Health Initiative  
Cornerstone Dental Specialties  
Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America  
Culpeper Wellness Foundation  
Davis Phinney Foundation for Parkinson's  
Delaware Dental Hygienists' Association  
Dental Lifeline Network  
Dental Trade Alliance  
Dentsply Sirona  
Dialysis Patient Citizens  
Dientes Community Dental Care  
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund  
Eating Disorders Coalition  
Elderly Housing Development & Operations Corporation  
Epilepsy Foundation  
EXCELth, Inc.

Families USA  
 504HealthNet  
 Florida Health Justice Project  
 Georgia AIDS Coalition  
 Georgians for a Healthy Future  
 Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association  
 GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality  
 Haleon  
 Hartford Institute for Geriatric Nursing  
 Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition  
 Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!  
 Head and Neck Cancer Alliance  
 Health Care For All (MA)  
 Health Care Is a Human Right WA  
 Health Care Voices  
 Healthy Living and Learning Center  
 Heartland Alliance  
 Henry Schein Cares Foundation  
 HIV Medicine Association  
 Hispanic Dental Association  
 International Pemphigus and Pemphigoid Foundation  
 Island Liaison, Inc.  
 John A. Hartford Foundation  
 Jon C Burr Foundation  
 Justice in Aging  
 Kentucky Oral Health Coalition  
 Klamath Basin Oral Health Coalition  
 Lakeshore Foundation  
 Leukemia and Lymphoma Society  
 Louisiana Primary Care Association  
 Lupus and Allied Diseases Association, Inc.  
 Lupus Foundation of America  
 Maryland Dental Action Coalition  
 Massachusetts ME/CFS and FM Assoc  
 Medicaid|Medicare|CHIP Services Dental Association  
 Medicare Rights Center  
 Mended Hearts  
 Mental Health America  
 Metro New York Health Care for All  
 Michigan Primary Care Association  
 Minnesota Dental Therapy Association  
 myNEXUS  
 National Alliance of State & Territorial AIDS Directors  
 National Alliance on Mental Illness  
 National Association of Area Agencies on Aging  
 National Association of Chronic Disease Directors  
 National Association of Community Health Centers  
 National Association of Dental Plans  
 National Association of Nutrition and Aging  
 Services Programs  
 National Association of Social Workers  
 National Association of States United for Aging  
 and Disabilities  
 National Coalition of Dentists for Health Equity  
 National Comprehensive Cancer Network  
 National Committee to Preserve Social Security  
 and Medicare  
 National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care  
 National Consumers League  
 National Council for Behavioral Health  
 National Council on Aging  
 National Dental Association  
 National Forum for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention  
 National Hispanic Medical Association  
 National Health Law Program  
 National Interprofessional Initiative on Oral Health  
 National Kidney Foundation  
 National League for Nursing  
 National Medical Association  
 National Multiple Sclerosis Society  
 National Network for Oral Health Access  
 National Osteoporosis Foundation  
 National Rural Health Association  
 National Scleroderma Foundation  
 National Stroke Association  
 North American Transplant Coordinators Organization  
 Northwest Harvest  
 Nurses for America  
 Nursing Interventions for Health System Elders  
 NYU Rory Meyers College of Nursing  
 Ohio Alliance for Retired Americans Educational Fund  
 Oklahoma Policy Institute  
 Oncology Nursing Society  
 Oral Cancer Foundation  
 Oral Health Kansas  
 Oral Health Nursing Education and Practice Program  
 Oral Health Ohio  
 Oral Health Progress and Equity Network (OPEN)  
 Our Mother's Voice  
 PA Coalition for Oral Health  
 Pacific Dental Services Foundation  
 Parkinson's Foundation  
 Patient-Centered Primary Care Collaborative  
 Pennsylvania Health Access Network  
 PEW Dental Campaign  
 Piedmont Regional Dental Clinic  
 PRC  
 Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association  
 Pride At Work - WA North, Mt. Kulshan Chapter  
 Procter & Gamble  
 ProHEALTH Dental  
 Project Accessible Oral Health  
 Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action (PSARA)  
 Renal Healthcare Association  
 Renal Physicians Association  
 Research!America

Santa Fe Group  
School-Based Health Alliance  
Senior Charity Care Foundation  
Senior Mobile Dental  
Sepsis Alliance  
Sjögren's Foundation  
Smiles To Go, LLC  
Social Security Works  
Society for Transplant Social Workers  
Statewide Poverty Action Network  
Support for People with Oral and Head and Neck Cancer  
Texas Oral Health Coalition, Inc  
Texas Parent to Parent  
The AIDS Institute  
The Arc of the United States  
The Bingham Program  
The CornerStone Community Development Center  
The Gerontological Society of America  
The Michael J. Fox Foundation  
The National Forum of ESRD Networks  
The Society for Thoracic Surgeons  
The TMJ Association  
Third Way  
Tri-Area Community Health  
Trust for America's Health  
United Health Organization  
United Network for Organ Sharing  
UUFHCT  
Virginia Community Healthcare Association  
Virginia Health Catalyst  
Virginia Organizing  
Virginia Rural Health Association  
Washington Healthcare Access Alliance  
Wayne County Oral Health Organization  
Wesley Living Woodland Homes  
West Centra Initiative  
Western Center on Law and Poverty  
Winters Elder Day Council  
WomenHeart, The National Coalition for Women  
with Heart Disease