

BETTER CARE, LOWER COST

Consortium for Medically Necessary Oral Health Coverage

*For Immediate Release
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Public Statement on Medicare Coverage of Medically Necessary Oral and Dental Health Therapies

The Consortium for Medically Necessary Oral Health Coverage is pleased to commend the Biden Administration for finalizing regulatory policy that will have a direct and meaningful impact in the lives of many Medicare beneficiaries. With today's action, the Medicare program is taking an important step towards much-needed coverage of medically necessary oral and dental care.

Specifically, the final Physician Fee Schedule for 2023 codifies Medicare coverage for dental services that are inextricably linked and substantially related and integral to organ transplant surgery, cardiac valve replacement, valvuloplasty procedures, and head and neck cancers. The final rule also creates the opportunity for further coverage expansion by establishing “a process to identify for [the Medicare program’s] consideration and review submissions of additional dental services that are inextricably linked and substantially related and integral to the clinical success of other covered medical services.” Finally, the rule codifies Medicare coverage for the wiring of teeth related to covered medical services, the reduction of jaw fractures, the extraction of teeth in preparation for radiation treatment of neoplastic disease, dental splints for covered treatment of certain medical conditions, and oral or dental examinations relating to renal transplant surgery.

Founded in 2016, the Consortium has undertaken educational, community-building, and advocacy efforts for Medicare coverage of medically necessary oral and dental treatment. Our membership – which includes leading dental, medical, and nursing groups, patient and consumer advocates, and care delivery providers – is guided by documented evidence that medically necessary treatment of oral microbial infections is essential to combatting and preventing a wide range of costly chronic conditions. Just as important, Consortium members have been motivated in their efforts by the knowledge that the lack of medically necessary oral and dental coverage has precluded, delayed, and jeopardized the delivery of covered medical treatments, heightening the risk of costly medical complications and increasing the financial burden on Medicare, beneficiaries, and taxpayers.

We are grateful to the Biden Administration for recognizing these facts and taking this important step to extend Medicare coverage to dental services that are integral to the delivery of covered medical services. By broadening coverage of medically necessary dental services and opening an important opportunity for stakeholders to suggest clinical scenarios to which medically necessary oral and dental services should be extended in the future, the Physician Fee Schedule makes meaningful progress to improve the clinical success of covered medical services.

“This regulatory action is the start of a new era for integrated health in America,” said Dr. Michael Alfano, D.M.D., Ph.D., cofounder of the Santa Fe Group and the Consortium. “On behalf of the hundreds of organizations who have worked for this policy change, we thank the Administration for expanding access to Medicare-covered medically necessary oral and dental treatment.”

Dr. Cheryl Lee-Butler, President of the National Dental Association said, “This policy change represents significant progress on multiple fronts. It will greatly expand access to needed care, improve outcomes, reduce hospitalizations, achieve program savings, and promote a more equitable delivery system for a healthier future.”

“Medicare beneficiaries have long suffered from lack of access to medically necessary dental care,” said Center for Medicare Advocacy Executive Director Judith Stein. “Thanks to the determined efforts of so many advocates and the Administration’s thoughtful response, 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. The Consortium will now turn to the important process of expanding coverage of medically necessary oral and dental services to all medical conditions for which such services are documented to be of clinical, fiscal, and human value.

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

AARP	American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association
ABLE NH (Advocates Building Lasting Equality in NH)	American College of Cardiology
ACA Consumer Advocacy	American College of Emergency Physicians
Acuity Specialists	American College of Gastroenterology
Adenoid Cystic Carcinoma Research Foundation	American College of Physicians
AIDS Foundation of Chicago	American College of Rheumatology
Alliance for Retired Americans	American Dental Assistants Association
Allies for Independence	American Dental Education Association
ALS Association	American Dental Hygienists’ Association
American Academy of Nursing	American Diabetes Association
American Academy of Periodontology	American Geriatrics Society
American Academy of Developmental Medicine and Dentistry	American Head and Neck Society
American Association for Community Dental Programs	American Heart Association
American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research	American Institute of Dental Public Health
American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists	American Kidney Fund
American Association of Colleges of Nursing	American Liver Foundation
American Association of Diabetes Educators	American Medical Association
American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons	American Muslim Health Professionals (AMHP)
American Association of Kidney Patients	American Nephrology Nurses’ Association
American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons	American Network of Oral Health Coalitions
American Association of Nurse Practitioners	American Nurses Association
American Association of Public Health Dentistry	American Parkinson Disease Association
American Association on Health and Disability	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
 GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare
 GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ Equality
 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 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
 Scleroderma Foundation
 Senior Charity Care Foundation
 Senior Mobile Dental
 Sepsis Alliance
 Sjögren's Foundation
 Smiles To Go, LLC
 Social Security Works
 Society for Transplant Social Workers
 Special Care Dentistry Association
 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 Central Initiative
 Western Center on Law and Poverty
 Winters Elder Day Council
 WomenHeart, The National Coalition for Women with
 Heart Disease