

Advancing Prevention and Reducing Childhood Caries in Medicaid and CHIP Affinity Group, July 2021–December 2022

Affinity group: Reducing cavities in young children

Through this affinity group, we intend to reduce cavities in young children so they can be ready to learn at school and be healthy all day long!

Join the Oregon Health Authority, Coordinated Care and Dental Care Organizations as we work together to **increase the spread of topical fluoride varnish application in primary care and connect kids with dental homes**. OHA is looking for stakeholders to join the Oregon Affinity Group. This working group will meet monthly from July 2021 through December 2022.



Background

Cavities, also called tooth decay or dental caries, are a common and preventable chronic disease among U.S. children. Children and adolescents from low-income families, including those covered by Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), are about twice as likely to have untreated tooth decay as their higher-income peers.

State Medicaid programs are required to cover Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) services, including comprehensive oral health care, for all members under age 21. These programs play an important role in paying for, providing, and managing oral health services, including developing approaches to integrating oral health care with other health services.

CMS Oral Health Affinity Group

The Advancing Prevention and Reducing Childhood Caries in Medicaid and CHIP

Affinity Group will provide technical assistance (TA) to state Medicaid and CHIP agencies and their partners as they design, test, implement, and assess strategies to improve

Quality improvement (QI) training opportunity

Participants in the Affinity Group are required to take seven free MAC QI training courses from the Institute for Healthcare Improvement. It's also a great opportunity to receive additional free QI and health leadership courses. Required courses are:

1. [QI 101: Introduction to Health Care Improvement](#)
2. [QI 102: How to Improve with the Model for Improvement](#)
3. [QI 103: Testing and Measuring Changes with PDSA Cycles](#)
4. [QI 104: Interpreting Data: Run Charts, Control Charts, and other Measurement Tools](#)
5. [QI 105: Leading Quality Improvement](#)
6. [QI 201: Planning for Spread: From Local Improvements to System-Wide Change](#)
7. [L 101: Introduction to Health Care Leadership](#)

pediatric oral health. QI advisors and subject matter experts will provide state teams with individualized guidance on using QI tools to: (1) improve the delivery of fluoride varnish by primary or community care providers; and (2) connect members with ongoing sources of dental care. States will also learn from one another through regular individual state calls and all-state workshops.

The Affinity Group's overall improvement target is increasing rates of topical fluoride varnish (TFV) for ages 1 to 6. Each state determines the rate increase based on baseline data.

Oregon affinity group's DRAFT aim statement

The State of Oregon will increase the rate of topical fluoride varnish (TFV) applications in primary care offices for members in participating Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs) age 1-6 from 21.4% to $\geq 31.7\%$ by December 31, 2022. Our long-term goal is to improve kindergarten readiness.

Oregon's baseline data

Between 2018 and 2019, the rate of TFV for CCO enrollees age 1-20 at elevated risk of dental caries who received at least 2 applications within the reporting year decreased 32.5 percent. One key challenge is a lack of dentists and other dental providers in the state's large rural and frontier areas. In addition, Oregon faces challenges shared with other states in providing this and other dental services because of the current public health emergency.

Starting in 2020, OHA began to incentivize CCOs to provide preventive dental visits for children age 1-5 and 6-14. In 2021, the measure began including TFV administered by non-dental providers in the denominator, creating an opportunity to work with primary care to improve performance on this important measure of oral health.

The commitment

OHA will:

- Staff the Oregon Affinity Group
- Provide technical assistance
- Adjust workplans to address emerging issues
- Work with partners to encourage and facilitate project spread
- Look for opportunities to reduce policy barriers to implementation

Affinity Group members will:

- Learn from one another: Participate in monthly Oregon Affinity Group meetings
- Take required, high quality and versatile IHI courses free of charge
- Develop pilot projects to reduce childhood caries and improve kindergarten readiness
- Spread innovation: share results of pilots with OHA, Affinity Group, and the health system

To participate in the July 14 kick-off meeting, contact:

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