

Oral Health & Oregon's 1115 Waiver Renewal

Oral health is vital to complete health

During summer and fall 2021, the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) received feedback from Dental Care Organizations (DCOs) and the public about oral health needs and services for Oregon Health Plan (OHP) members. OHA would like to thank everyone who provided this valuable input. After reviewing the feedback, OHA has determined that most proposals are best addressed outside of the 1115(a) Medicaid Demonstration Waiver renewal process.

Ways we make change

Using the waiver

One way we make change is through the 1115 Medicaid Waiver Demonstration Renewal process. Here in Oregon, we apply for this waiver every 5 years, and, our next waiver will cover 2022 through 2027.

States must apply for a Medicaid waiver when they want to make changes from normal federal guidelines, and so **only certain things can be changed through the waiver process**. For example, a state can ask to waive certain regulations for greater flexibility around things like:

- Who is eligible for Medicaid
- What benefits they receive
- How health care is delivered to Medicaid members

Using other routes

Some improvements we want to make aren't related to waiving federal requirements, so these changes are made outside the waiver. For example, OHA has received feedback about supporting the oral health workforce. This doesn't require waiving federal regulations, but it can be addressed through programs like Oregon's Health Care Provider Incentive Program. This program provides loan repayment incentives to encourage oral health providers to work in underserved areas. From 2018 to June 2020, the Health Care Provider Incentive Program has made loan repayment awards to 28 Dentists (DMD) and 3 Expanded Practice Dental Hygienists (EPDH). These awardees are required to accept a percentage of Medicaid patients proportionate to the surrounding community.

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How the waiver will touch on oral health

In the upcoming Oregon's 1115 Medicaid Demonstration Waiver, OHA will propose the following change to the incentive metrics program that may address oral health.

Oregon is proposing to restructure the Quality Incentive Program into two complementary components: upstream and downstream.



Component 1: Continue including an upstream metric integrating oral health.

OHA proposes to continue inclusion of a metric that incentivizes timely assessments for children in foster care, specifically the early identification of physical, oral, and behavioral health needs.

Component 2: Consider adding a downstream metric integrating oral health.

While the CMS Adult Core set does not include measures of adult oral health, Oregon is considering one or two adult oral health measures from Dental Quality Alliance (or similar) to address this gap.

Contact Us

- You can visit our website with regularly updated information at oregon.gov/1115waiverrenewal
- You can email your input at any time to 1115Waiver.Renewal@dhsoha.state.or.us

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Alternate Formats

You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer. Contact the us via email at 1115Waiver.Renewal@dhsosha.state.or.us or by calling 1-833-647-3678. We accept all relay calls or you can dial 711.