

Medical Assistance Dental Benefit Changes

- Adult dental benefits are optional services under Medicaid; federal rules do not require states to cover these services for adult Medicaid recipients.
- Adult dental benefits are among the most costly optional benefits, in terms of expenditures, under Pennsylvania’s Medicaid program.
- Although the adult dental benefits are optional, and Pennsylvania could eliminate the full scope of the adult dental benefit, dental benefit changes end or limit coverage only for specific high-cost services/items within the larger scope of the adult dental benefit, while still preserving a core preventive adult dental service benefit.
- The benefit changes apply only to adults (age 21 and older), NOT to children.
- We recognize that eliminating/limiting these services could result in serious health complications for some adults, and for that reason we are also implementing an exceptions process whereby the Department may approve services affected by the dental limits.
- Additionally, the dental benefit changes do not apply to adults receiving their dental services in the nursing facility, ICF/MR and ICF/ORC settings.
- The Department will also allow specific exceptions for periodontal services, to recipients who are pregnant, have diabetes or coronary artery disease, and individuals meeting certain special needs criteria.
- Even with the adult dental benefit changes, there will be a substantial “safety-net” available through the exceptions process, to minimize health complications and unintended cost-shifts to other services.

- The adult dental benefit changes:
 - Dental exams and prophylaxis are limited to 1 per 180 days, per recipient
 - Elimination of crowns, endodontic and periodontal services
 - Coverage of dentures limited to one upper arch or partial and one lower arch or partial, or one full set of dentures per lifetime
 - Changes apply to dental services provided in all settings except nursing facilities, ICFs/MR and ICFs/ORC

Number and percentage of MA recipients affected:

Eligible Adult MA Recipients in FY 09-10:	1,211,574
Dental Eligible Adults in FY 09-10:	978,251
MA Adult Recipients Receiving Dental Services in FY 09-10:	276,681
Percentage of Dental Eligible Adults Who Received Dental Services FY 09-10:	28.28%