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Fact Sheet #3: How Do Parents Rate Dental Services for Children in MaineCare?

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The Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is committed to promoting the oral health of children served by MaineCare, the state of Maine's Medicaid and Child Health Insurance (CHIP) Program. As part of this effort, DHHS routinely monitors the availability and quality of MaineCare's pediatric dental services.

The annual Survey of Children Served by MaineCare, which collects an abundance of data on the experiences of MaineCare families, provides important information on how parents evaluate the dental care that their children receive.[1]

Key Messages

- The 2013 Survey of Children Served by MaineCare indicated that most MaineCare children who receive dental services are satisfied with their care and report receiving high-quality dental services.
- The CAHPS survey is an important source of data on oral health access and quality for MaineCare children.

Findings on Children's Dental Services from the 2013 Survey

The majority of MaineCare families report that their children have access to dental care.

- Rates of access and utilization of dental services remained stable between years 2012 and 2013.
- Nearly two-thirds (62%) 2013 Survey respondents reported that their children received dental services in the past six months.
- One in five (20%) reported that their children had had more than one visit with a dental provider.
- By comparison, in a study using 2008 Medicaid administrative data from nine states, 34% of children had a dental preventive service and 19% had used a dental treatment service provided by Medicaid in the past year; survey results indicate that rates of access to dental services in Maine are higher than in other parts of the country.[2]

Parents give their children's dental care high ratings for quality.

- Among parents whose children received dental care in 2013, 68% assigned ratings of 9 or 10 on a scale of 1 (very poor quality) to 10 (excellent quality).
- The average rating for dental care quality was 8.9.

Most parents of children served by MaineCare report that their children have a usual source of dental care.

- Seventy seven percent (77%) of MaineCare families surveyed reported that their children had a usual source of dental care.
- Reports for having a usual source varied by children's age: rates were 61% for children aged 5 or younger, 84% for children aged 6 to 12, and 85% for children age 13 or older.

About the 2013 Survey of Children Served by MaineCare

- The 2013 survey included a representative sample of families with children aged 17 or younger who were enrolled in MaineCare for at least 5 months between September 2012 and February 2013. Of the total 2,413 eligible families who were contacted, 1,077 interviews were completed, for an overall response rate of 44.6%.
- The survey used a standardized instrument – the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS 4.0H) – to examine the experiences of families with children in MaineCare.[3] In addition, the survey included supplemental items addressing areas of high priority for DHHS. One of these priority areas was consumer perspectives on oral health access and quality.

For more information about the Survey of Children Served by MaineCare, contact Mary Lindsey Smith at mlsmith@usm.maine.edu

The full report can be accessed at http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oms/provider/ihoc.shtml

1 Talbot JA, Thayer D, Croll Z, Fox K. *2013 survey of children served by MaineCare.* Portland, ME: Muskie School of Public Service, University of Southern Maine; 2013. http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/oms/provider/ihoc.shtml.
2 Bouchery, E. Utilization of dental services among Medicaid-enrolled children. Medicare and Medicaid Research Review, 2013; 3:E1-E15. Available at http://www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Computer-Data-and-Systems/MedicaidDataSourcesGenInfo/Downloads/MAX_IB9_DentalCare.pdf. [Retrieved 12/14/2013.]
3 For more information on CAHPS, see http://www.cahps.ahrq.gov/Surveys-Guidance/HP.aspx.

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