

Iowa's dental Medicaid program has been significantly underfunded over the last two decades, negatively impacting access to care for Iowa's underserved citizens. **In 2020, Iowa only invested \$30.2 million—1.6% of the state's total Medicaid budget—into the Dental Wellness Plan (DWP).**

Fast Facts

- Oral healthcare affects overall health. Poor oral health can be associated with diabetes, cardiovascular disease, stroke, and Alzheimer's disease.
- Without regular cleanings and dental examinations, minor dental issues can lead to costly and preventable procedures such as tooth extractions, root canals, crowns, fillings, and other invasive procedures.
- Properly-funded Medicaid dental care can lead to **25% fewer emergency department visits in two years and 50% fewer visits in three years.**

The Bottom Line for Iowa Dentists

“The issue is Medicaid reimbursement rates don't cover the cost of materials and overhead. Dentists are charitable, but a small business can't survive on charity. We are long overdue for an increase in reimbursement to reflect the actual cost of treating patients.”

-Dr. Rachael Revell, West Des Moines pediatric dentist serving Medicaid patients.

Filling

Average customary fee.....**\$217.11**

Current Medicaid reimbursement.....**\$ 72.47**
(33% of average customary fee)

Independent small practice pays \$144.64 out of pocket or 67% of full average fee.

The care Iowa dentists provide to Medicaid patients is reimbursed at an average of 40% of their typical fee. As most Iowa dentists are small business owners, accepting such low Medicaid rates is not financially feasible, resulting in many dropping out of Medicaid altogether.



COVERED POPULATION

AGES 0-19

AGES 19+

MEMBERS

~300K

~390K

INCOME GUIDELINES

0-167%

0-133%

FPL

FPL

AVERAGE REIMBURSEMENT AS A % OF CUSTOMARY FEE

40%

40%

IOWA'S COST TO STATE TO ALIGN RATES WITH HAWKI

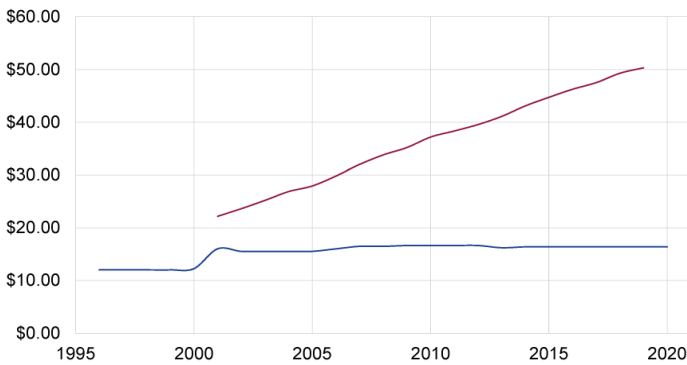
\$15M

\$16.5M

Iowa's Dental Medicaid Fees Have Not Increased in Nearly 20 Years

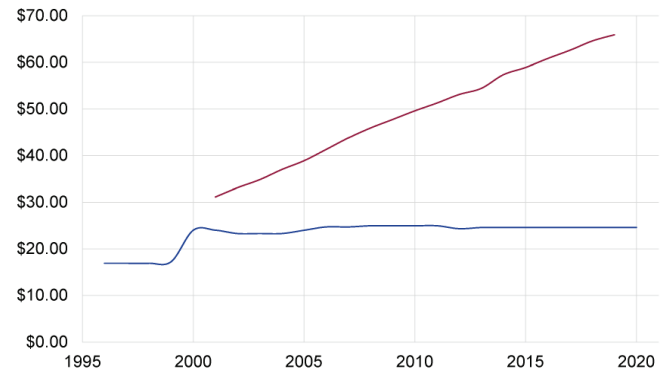
— Iowa Medicaid Reimbursement Rate — Customary Charge in Iowa

Yearly Dental Exam



Iowa's reimbursement increased \$0.37 over 19 years and is currently 33% of the customary charge.

Child Dental Cleaning



Iowa's reimbursement increased \$0.57 over 20 years and is currently 37% of the customary charge.

History of Dental Medicaid in Iowa

Pre-2013

Dental Medicaid administered by IME.

2013

Medicaid expansion implemented; creation of DWP 1.0 for adults

2014-2016

Delta Dental of Iowa and MCNA become MCOs for DWP 1.0.

2018

Adult Medicaid fee-for-service (FFS) administration transitioned from IME to MCOs; FFS and Medicaid expansion populations combined to create DWP 2.0. DWP rates **decrease** 50% to align with Medicaid FFS rates.

2021

Children's Medicaid FFS transitioned to DWP Kids administered by MCOs.

The Ask

Align Medicaid dental reimbursement rates with Hawki.

Investing \$31.5 million into the DWP program ensures Iowa families have access to quality dental care and small businesses are able to recover their costs. In turn, dentists can provide optimal care for their patients.

Supporting Partners

ADA American Dental Association®

Iowa Society of Orthodontists



IOWA ACADEMY of GENERAL DENTISTRY

American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons
Oral and maxillofacial surgeons:
The experts in face, mouth and jaw surgery®

IOWA College of Dentistry and Dental Clinics

adha Iowa Dental Hygienists' Association

IDAA Iowa Dental Assistant Association

ORAL HEALTH IOWA

United Way United Ways of Iowa

United Way United Way of Central Iowa

Delta Dental of Iowa