

**October 2020**

## **Oral Health Policy Fact Sheet**

- 2018, 72.0% of Utah adults reported visiting a dentist or dental clinic in the past year.<sup>1</sup>
- Utah adults with higher incomes and more education were more likely to report a dental visit in the past year than those with lower incomes and less education.<sup>1</sup>
- Utah Medicaid includes basic dental care for children, pregnant women, some individuals enrolled in Targeted Adult Medicaid, individuals 65 years and older, and blind and disabled adults.<sup>1</sup>
- For children ages 2-18, 51.3% have private dental benefits, 38.5% have dental benefits through Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and 10.3% do not have dental benefits.<sup>2</sup>
- For adults ages 19-64, 59.0% have private dental benefits, 7.4% have dental benefits through Medicaid, and 33.6% do not have dental benefits.<sup>2</sup>
- Only 39.6% of Utah dentists participate in Medicaid or CHIP<sup>3</sup>
- In 2017, \$2.7 billion was spent on hospital ER visits for dental conditions<sup>4</sup>
- In 2016, 8.9% of the US population reported that they needed dental care in the past 12 months, but could not obtain due to cost<sup>4</sup>
- About 41% of the need for dentists in UT is unmet, making access to dental care difficult<sup>5</sup>

1. Utah Data: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Office of Public Health Assessment, Utah Department of Health
2. ADA Health Policy Institute analysis of Medical Expenditure Panel Survey 2000-2015 data.
3. Analysis of the HPI's Office Database maintained by the American Dental Association (2019) and Insure Kids Now data (2019).
4. Health Policy Institute analysis of 2000-2016 National Health Interview Survey data.
5. Bureau of Health Workforce, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Designated Health Professional Shortage Areas Statistics: Designated HPSA Quarterly Summary, as of September 30, 2019 available at <https://data.hrsa.gov/topics/health-workforce/shortage-areas>.