October 2020

Oral Health Policy Fact Sheet

- 2018, 72.0% of Utah adults reported visiting a dentist or dental clinic in the past year.¹

- 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.¹

- 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.¹

- 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.²

- 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. ²

- Only 39.6% of Utah dentists participate in Medicaid or CHIP³

- In 2017, $2.7 billion was spent on hospital ER visits for dental conditions⁴

- 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 cost⁴

- About 41% of the need for dentists in UT is unmet, making access to dental care difficult⁵
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).