



# Update on Medicaid Adult Dental Benefit

September 14, 2021

# Update on Adult Dental Benefit Implementation

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- New benefit took effect on July 1, 2021.
  - Original date was January 1, 2021; delayed as a result of the fiscal implications of the Coronavirus pandemic.
- Provides a dental benefit to 870,000 adults on Medicaid.
  - Previously only children and pregnant women had a comprehensive dental benefit; **adults were limited to emergency dental care only.**
- Provides comprehensive benefits for both preventative and restorative care.

# Adult Dental Benefit Coverage

Specialty Area	Description	Services Covered	Limitations
Diagnostic and Preventive Care	Services that are used to detect and recognize caries and periodontal disease. Up to three routine cleanings may be permissible.	Exams, Routine cleanings, X-rays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non routine X-rays such as imaging and cone beam technology would require prior authorization.</li> </ul>
Restorative Care	Specialty allows dentists to restore teeth to proper function.	Fillings and crowns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Crowns are covered when a root canal is done while member is under the adult dental program.</li> <li>Bridges</li> </ul>
Endodontics	Specialty allows dentists to perform root canals on teeth that are sound below the gum structure (root) yet the above gum structure is compromised (decay or trauma).	Root canals Pulpal Debridement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Endodontic retreatment and surgical procedures that have a questionable success rate.</li> </ul>
Periodontics	Specialty focuses on keeping gums and the bone below the gums healthy.	Scaling and Root Planing Gingivectomies Periodontal maintenance procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Periodontal flap procedures, crown lengthening procedures, bone replacement grafts.</li> </ul>
Dentures and Partials	Specialty focuses on replacing teeth with removal appliances.	Dentures, Partials, and Repair procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partials are covered as a part of a definitive treatment plan .</li> </ul>
Oral Surgery	Specialty routinely extracts teeth and performs extractions requiring surgical methods such as removing bone.	Extractions Alveoplasty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-tooth extraction procedures</li> <li>Surgery necessitated by trauma</li> <li>Implants</li> </ul>
Adjunctive General Services	This area while not a specialty is important in that it allows coding for anesthesia services and many other dental procedures not listed elsewhere.	Anesthesia Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-anesthesia services may require prior authorization</li> </ul>

# Financial Summary and 60-Day Status

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- Claims paid in first 60 days = \$9.5 million (Total Funds).
  - \$85.2 million (Total Funds) budgeted in FY 2022.
- Over 36,000 adult members have received care.
- 34 percent of the state's practicing dentists are participating in the program.
  - 1,882 dental providers are in the network.
  - 7,252 licensed dentists in Virginia.
  - 66 new providers have been enrolled.

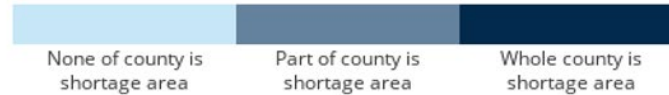
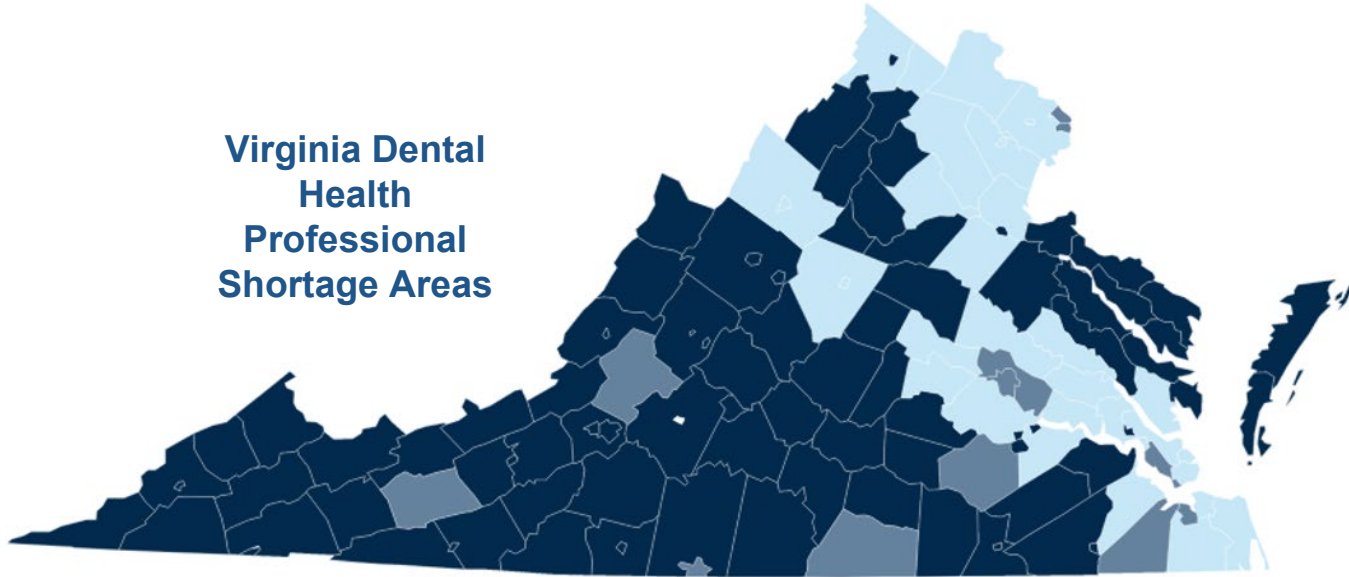
# Implementation Challenges

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- Adequate Dental Network
  - Only 34 percent of practicing dentists participate.
  - Recruitment efforts underway.
  - Specialists are still needed.
  - Targeted populations (i.e. developmental disabilities) priority for outreach.
  - Provider shortage in rural areas.
- Provider Rates
  - Last rate increase was in 2005.

# Dental Provider Shortage Mainly in Rural Areas

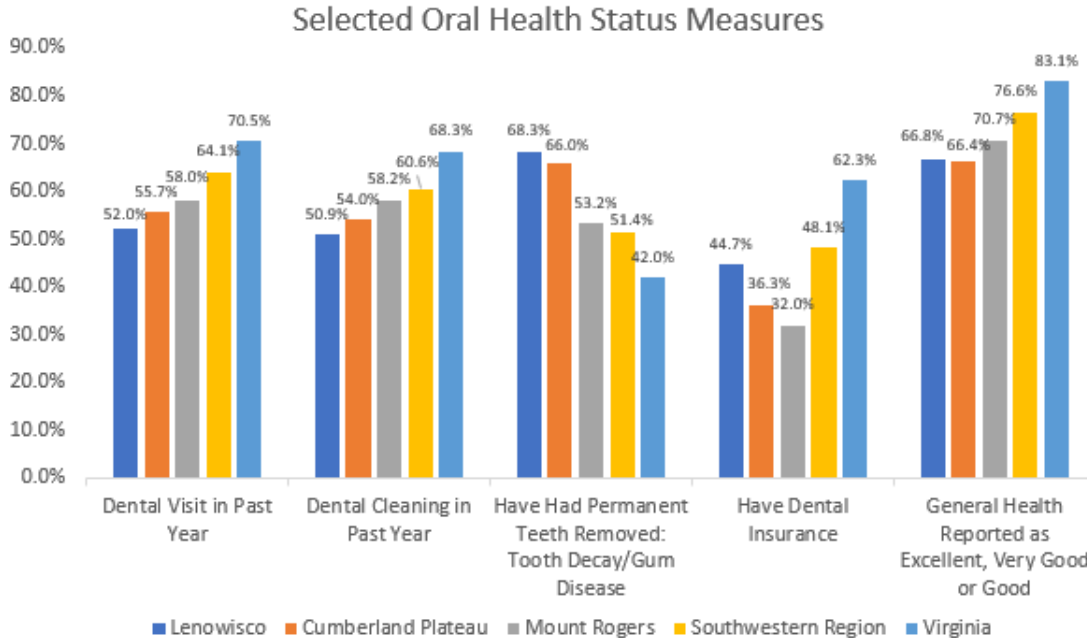
Virginia Dental  
Health  
Professional  
Shortage Areas



Source: [data.HRSA.gov](https://data.HRSA.gov), July 2020.

# Dental Need Higher in Southwest Virginia

**Selected Oral Health Status Measures:  
Lenowisco, Cumberland Plateau and Mount Rogers Health Districts**



**Source:** Patrick Finnerty Paper, Virginia Department of Health, BRFSS Data

**Note:** The most recent data for Lenowisco, Cumberland Plateau, and Mount Rogers Health Districts for “Dental Visit in Past Year” and “Have Had Permanent Teeth Removed due to Tooth Decay/Gum Disease” was 2016; the most recent data for “General Health;” was 2014; and the most recent data for “Dental Cleaning in Past Year” and “Have Dental Insurance” was 2013. Region and Virginia figures may not include all Counties/Districts due to data limitations.

“Southwestern Region” includes the following Local Health Districts: Alleghany, Central Virginia, Cumberland Plateau, Lenowisco, Mount Rogers, New River, Pittsylvania/Danville, Roanoke City, and West Piedmont.

# Dental Benefit: Impact in Southwest Virginia

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- 161,000 out of the 870,000 newly covered are in Southwest Virginia.
- 233 Dentists in Southwest Virginia are enrolled in the program.

## Challenges In Rural Areas

- Geographic isolation.
- Lack of adequate transportation.
- Lack of fluoridated community water supplies.
- Higher rates of poverty.
- Large elderly population.
- Lower dental insurance rates.
- Provider shortages.
- Difficulty finding providers willing to treat Medicaid patients.



# Acknowledgement

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- Many thanks to the Department of Medical Assistance Services and to Patrick Finnerty, Senior Advisor, DentaQuest Partnership for Oral Health Advancement for the information used in this presentation.