

The Pew Charitable Trusts and Harvard Dental School Dental Access Survey

Topline Report • September 18, 2018

The survey was conducted for The Pew Charitable Trusts and Harvard School of Dental Medicine via telephone (landline and cell) by SSRS, an independent research company. Interviews were conducted from August 1 to September 9, 2018, among a representative random sample of 828 total respondents (423 with dental coverage through Medicaid and 405 with dental coverage through a private insurer) from 33 states, plus the District of Columbia, which are areas where Medicaid offers a dental benefit that provides more than just emergency care. The margin of error with design effect for the total respondents is +/-5 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level. The margin of error with design effect for the Medicaid sample is +/-5.8 percentage points and the privately insured sample is +/-6 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence interval. More information about the survey design and weights are available in the methodology report.

Based on total respondents

SO. And to ask you the right questions, can you tell me what state do you live in?

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
Alaska	1%	1%	1%
Arkansas	2%	1%	2%
California	16%	14%	17%
Colorado	3%	1%	3%
Connecticut	1%	2%	*
Illinois	3%	4%	2%
Indiana	4%	4%	4%
Iowa	1%	1%	1%
Kansas	2%	1%	2%
Kentucky	1%	1%	1%
Louisiana	1%	1%	1%
Massachusetts	2%	3%	2%
Michigan	5%	7%	5%
Minnesota	2%	3%	2%
Missouri	2%	1%	3%
Montana	*	*	*
Nebraska	1%	2%	*
New Jersey	4%	4%	4%
New Mexico	1%	2%	*
New York	8%	14%	7%
North Carolina	5%	5%	5%
North Dakota	*	*	*
Ohio	6%	6%	6%
Oregon	3%	4%	3%

Pennsylvania	6%	5%	7%
Rhode Island	*	1%	*
South Carolina	3%	1%	4%
South Dakota	*	*	1%
Vermont	*	*	*
Virginia	4%	2%	5%
Washington	6%	4%	7%*
Washington, D.C./District of Columbia	*	1%	*
Wisconsin	3%	2%	3%
Wyoming	*	--	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *

Based on total respondents

DENT2/DENT2a/DENT3/DENT4. Combo Table

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
Medicaid	19%	100%	--
Private Insurance	81%	--	100%

Based on total respondents

DENT5. During the time that you have had dental coverage through (MEDICAID/YOUR CURRENT INSURANCE PLAN) have you been a patient at an office or a clinic for dental care, for services like an exam or treatment such as fillings or extractions, but not including orthodontics or elective dental work?

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
Yes	79%	70%	81%
No	20%	29%	19%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%
Refused	--	--	--

Based on total respondents who have been a patient at an office or clinic for dental care services; Total Respondents N = 627; Medicaid N = 296; Private Insurance N = 331

DENT6. And when were you a patient most recently? Was this...?

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
In the last three years (Net)	93%	84%	94%
In the last year	77%	67%	79%
More than a year, but not more than 3 years ago	16%	17%	15%
More than 3 years ago	7%	15%	6%
Never	--	--	--
Don't know	*	1%	--
Refused	*	*	--

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

Based on total respondents

DENT6. And when were you a patient most recently? Was this...?

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
In the last three years (Net)	73%	59%	76%
In the last year	61%	47%	64%
More than a year, but not more than 3 years ago	12%	12%	12%
More than 3 years ago	6%	11%	4%
Never	20%	29%	19%
Don't know	1%	2%	1%
Refused	*	*	--

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

Based on total respondents who have been a patient at an office or clinic for dental care services in the last three years; Total Respondents N = 555; Medicaid N = 242; Private Insurance N = 313

DENT7. Which one of the following was the main reason you last visited the dentist? Was it ...?

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
For a check-up, examination, or cleaning	77%	59%	80%
Because something was wrong, bothering, or hurting you, or	13%	26%	11%
For a treatment of a condition that was discovered at an earlier dental visit	9%	13%	8%
Other	--	--	--
Don't know	1%	*	1%
Refused	*	1%	--

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

Based on total respondents who have been a patient at an office or clinic for dental care services in the last three years because something was wrong, bothering, or hurting respondent or for a treatment or condition that was discovered at an earlier dental visit; Total Respondents N = 160; Medicaid N = 99; Private Insurance N = 61

DENT8/DENT9. Combo Table – Thinking of that same visit to receive dental care, how long, in approximate number of days was it from the time you contacted the dental office to request an appointment to the time you received care?

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
1 month or less (Net)	94%	92%	95%
Over 3 weeks	9%	8%	10%
3 weeks or less	2%	2%	2%
2 weeks or less	15%	16%	15%
1 week or less (Subnet)	67%	64%	69%
Less than 1 day	3%	2%	3%
1 day	15%	13%	16%
2 days	14%	17%	13%
3 days	11%	8%	12%
4 days	3%	1%	4%
5 days	1%	5%	--
6 days	1%	3%	*
7 days	19%	16%	20%
1 month or less (unspecified)	1%	3%	--
2 months	1%	1%	1%
3 months or more	3%	2%	3%
No answer	2%	4%	1%
Don't know/can't recall	*	1%	--
Refused	--	--	--

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

Based on total respondents who have been a patient at an office or clinic for dental care services in the last three years; Total Respondents N = 555; Medicaid N = 242; Private Insurance N = 313

DENT10/DENT11. Combo Table – Again, thinking back to that same dental visit. How many minutes from door to door did it take to travel to get to the appointment?

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
Less than a half hour (Net)	73%	60%	75%
1-5 minutes	15%	8%	16%
6-10 minutes	22%	18%	23%
11-15 minutes	14%	16%	13%
16-20 minutes	18%	14%	19%
21-29 minutes	3%	2%	4%
Less than a half hour (unspecified)	*	2%	*
At least a half hour but less than 1 hour (Net)	20%	27%	19%
30-35 minutes	11%	17%	10%
36-40 minutes	2%	3%	2%
41-45 minutes	4%	5%	3%
46-59 minutes	3%	1%	3%
At least a half hour but less than 1 hour (unspecified)	*	*	--
1 hour or more	7%	14%	5%
Don't know/can't recall	*	--	*
Refused	*	--	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

Based on total respondents who have been a patient at an office or clinic for dental care services in the last three years; Total Respondents N = 555; Medicaid N = 242; Private Insurance N = 313

DENT12. What type of practice did you go to for that dental visit? Was it a ...

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
Public clinic, such as a community health center or non profit subsidized care clinic	9%	34%	5%
Private dental office	87%	60%	92%
Somewhere else	2%	2%	1%
Don't know	2%	4%	2%
Refused	--	--	--

Based on total respondents

DENT13. During this time did any of the following problems prevent you from visiting a dentist at the time you needed care?

a. I couldn't afford to pay for dental care

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
Yes	14%	27%	11%
No	85%	71%	88%
Don't know	1%	2%	1%
Refused	*	*	--

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

b. I couldn't find a dentist's office that would accept my insurance

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
Yes	7%	19%	4%
No	92%	80%	95%
Don't know	1%	2%	1%
Refused	--	--	--

c. A dentist who would see me was too far away

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
Yes	5%	15%	3%
No	94%	85%	96%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%
Refused	--	--	--

d. There was too long a wait time for a dentist who would see me

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
Yes	7%	16%	5%
No	93%	82%	95%
Don't know	*	1%	*
Refused	--	--	--

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

e. I couldn't get time off from work to go to the dentist

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
Yes	12%	15%	12%
No	87%	84%	88%
Don't know	1%	1%	1%
Refused	--	--	--

f. I was afraid to receive dental treatments

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
Yes	9%	18%	7%
No	90%	80%	92%
Don't know	1%	2%	1%
Refused	--	--	--

g. I did not have transportation to get to the dentist

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
Yes	6%	18%	4%
No	93%	81%	96%
Don't know	*	1%	*
Refused	--	--	--

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

Based on Total Respondents

DENT13. Yes Summary Table

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
Yes (Net)	33%	55%	27%
a. I couldn't afford to pay for dental care	14%	27%	11%
b. I couldn't find a dentist's office that would accept my insurance	7%	19%	4%
c. A dentist who would see me was too far away	5%	15%	3%
d. There was too long a wait time for a dentist who would see me	7%	16%	5%
e. I couldn't get time off from work to go to the dentist	12%	15%	12%
f. I was afraid to receive dental treatments	9%	18%	7%
g. I did not have transportation to get to the dentist	6%	18%	4%
Yes (Net) Excluding A and F	24%	42%	20%

Based on Total Respondents

DENT13. No Summary Table

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
a. I couldn't afford to pay for dental care	85%	71%	88%
b. I couldn't find a dentist's office that would accept my insurance	92%	80%	95%
c. A dentist who would see me was too far away	94%	85%	96%
d. There was too long a wait time for a dentist who would see me	93%	82%	95%
e. I couldn't get time off from work to go to the dentist	87%	84%	88%
f. I was afraid to receive dental treatments	90%	80%	92%
g. I did not have transportation to get to the dentist	93%	81%	96%

Based on total respondents

DENT14. During the time that you have had dental coverage through (MEDICAID/YOUR CURRENT INSURANCE PLAN), have you turned down or delayed a needed dental procedure because insurance would not cover it or would not pay enough so you could afford it?

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
Yes	20%	26%	19%
No	78%	73%	80%
Don't know	2%	2%	2%
Refused	--	--	--

Based on total respondents

DENT15. During this time, have you experienced any missed time from work or school due to oral health problems?

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
Yes	9%	12%	8%
No	90%	87%	91%
This doesn't apply to my situation	1%	1%	1%
Don't know	*	*	*
Refused	*	*	--

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

Based on total respondents who have experienced missed time from work or school due to an oral health problem;

Total Respondents N = 71; Medicaid N = 42; Private Insurance N = 29****

** Caution small base size, less than 50

DENT15A. About how many days did you miss—your best guess is fine.

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
1 day	33%	4%	43%
2-3 days	33%	47%	28%
4 or more days	27%	45%	21%
Don't know	*	*	--
Refused	7%	4%	8%

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

Based on total respondents

DENT16. During this time have you visited a hospital emergency room or urgent care center to address oral health pain or a problem?

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
Yes	9%	20%	7%
No	90%	79%	92%
Maybe/can't remember	1%	--	1%
Don't know	*	1%	*
Refused	*	*	--

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

Based on total respondents

DENT17. Do you think you would or would not be willing to receive preventive oral care such as a screening or fluoride rinse while seeing another type of medical provider, such as your primary care physician, nurse, or other trained health professional?

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
Willing (Net)	60%	64%	59%
Very willing	28%	31%	27%
Somewhat willing	32%	33%	32%
Unwilling (Net)	35%	32%	36%
Somewhat unwilling	13%	13%	13%
Very unwilling	22%	19%	23%
Currently receiving this care at my practice	*	*	*
Don't know	3%	2%	4%
Refused	1%	1%	1%

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

Based on total respondents

DENT18. Do you think you would or would not be willing to receive preventive medical care services such as vaccinations or a blood pressure check at the dental office?

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
Willing (Net)	61%	64%	61%
Very willing	32%	34%	31%
Somewhat willing	30%	30%	30%
Unwilling (Net)	34%	32%	34%
Somewhat unwilling	14%	13%	14%
Very unwilling	20%	19%	20%
Currently receiving this care at my practice	*	*	*
Don't know	3%	3%	3%
Refused	2%	*	2%

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.

Based on total respondents

DENT19. I'd like to ask you about dental therapists. These are dental care providers who give routine care, and are similar to physician assistants or nurse practitioners in medicine. They are trained to provide about one-quarter of the procedures that dentists can perform, including drilling and filling cavities and extracting loose, diseased teeth. Several US states have passed laws authorizing them to practice under the supervision of a dentist. Do you think you would or would not be willing to receive treatment from a dental therapist if you needed this type of care?

	Total	Medicaid	Private Insurance
Willing (Net)	71%	73%	70%
Very willing	32%	38%	31%
Somewhat willing	38%	35%	39%
Unwilling (Net)	28%	24%	29%
Somewhat unwilling	10%	8%	11%
Very unwilling	17%	16%	17%
Currently receiving care from a dental therapist	*	1%	*
Don't know	1%	2%	1%
Refused	*	1%	*

Note: Percentage less than 0.5 printed as *.