



Medicare Dental Benefits And Organized Dentistry...

A Policy Conundrum

Coalition Building Panel

Santa Fe Group Salon

Lindsey Robinson, DDS

May 2019

Disclaimer

I am currently not a fiduciary of any organization and this presentation represents my thoughts on the subject only.

Former ADA Mission:

“to help all members succeed.”

New Mission of the ADA:

“the professional association of dentists dedicated to **serving both the public and profession of dentistry**. The ADA promotes the public’s health through commitment of member dentists to provide quality oral health care, **accessible to everyone**.”

ADA Policies Related To Medicare

Elimination of Disparities in Coverage for Dental Procedures Provided under Medicare...

Resolved, that the Association seek legislation to provide fair and equitable treatment to all Medicare recipients by **eliminating disparities in coverage for dental procedures**, and be it further

Resolved, that the Association **seek legislation** which would provide for payment of dental services under **Part B** of Medicare in cases where **the procedure is necessary and directly associated with a medical procedure or diagnosis**.

Examples from 1993: **kidney transplants, prosthetic heart valve replacement**

ADA Policies Related To Medicare

Medically Necessary Care (Trans.1990:537)...

Resolved, that the following definition of “medically necessary care” be adopted:

Medically necessary care means the reasonable and appropriate diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up care (including supplies, appliances and devices) as determined and prescribed by qualified, appropriate health care providers in treating any condition, illness, disease, injury or birth developmental malformations. Care is medically necessary for the purpose of: **controlling or eliminating infection, pain and disease; and restoring facial configuration or function necessary for speech, swallowing or chewing.**

and be it further

Resolved, that the appropriate agencies of the Association **distribute this definition of “medically necessary care” to third-party payers, plan purchasers, professional health organizations and state and federal regulatory agencies.**

Community Statement on Medicare Coverage for Medically Necessary Oral and Dental Health Therapies *

“The undersigned organizations are proud to join in support of Medicare coverage for medically-necessary oral/dental health therapies...”

American Academy of Periodontology

American Dental Education Association

American Dental Hygienists' Association

American Dental Association

California Dental Association

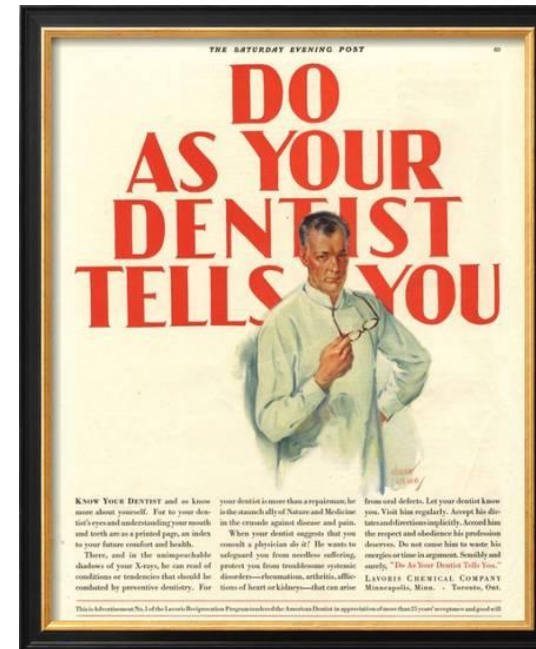
National Network for Oral Health Access

Pacific Dental Services Foundation

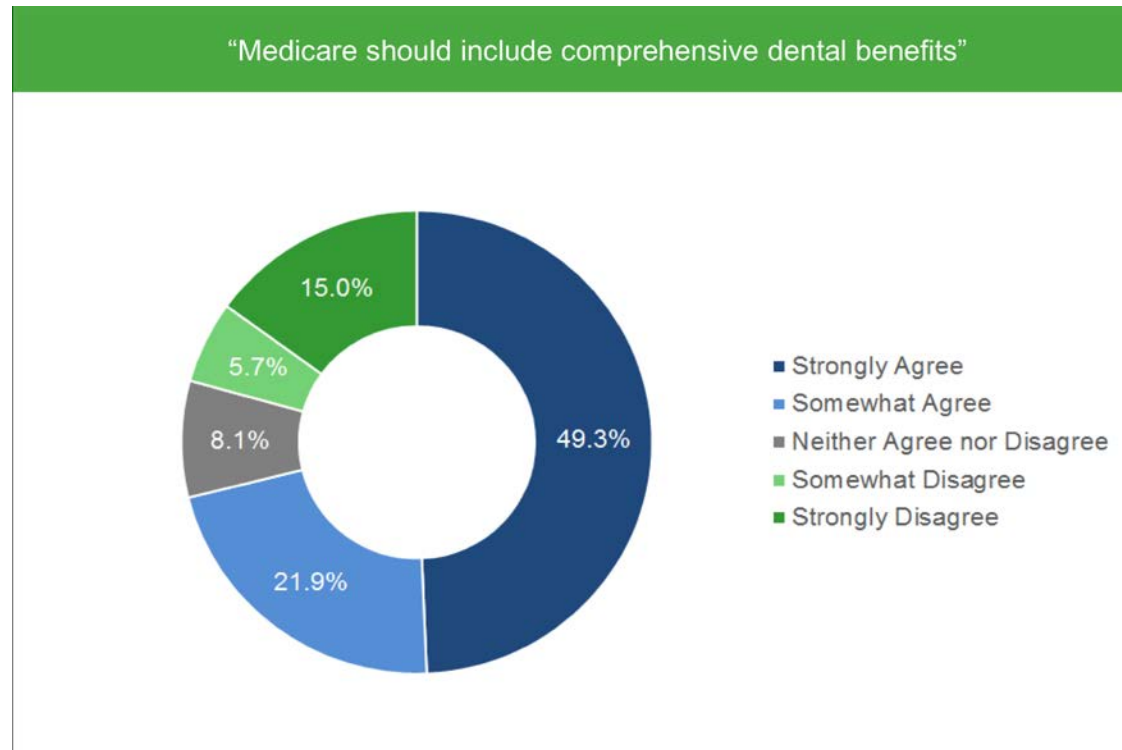
*** Santa Fe Group consensus statement**

Advocacy: an activity which aims to influence decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions.

This doesn't work anymore....



What Do We Know About Dental Professionals' Views On Adding A Medicare Dental Benefit?



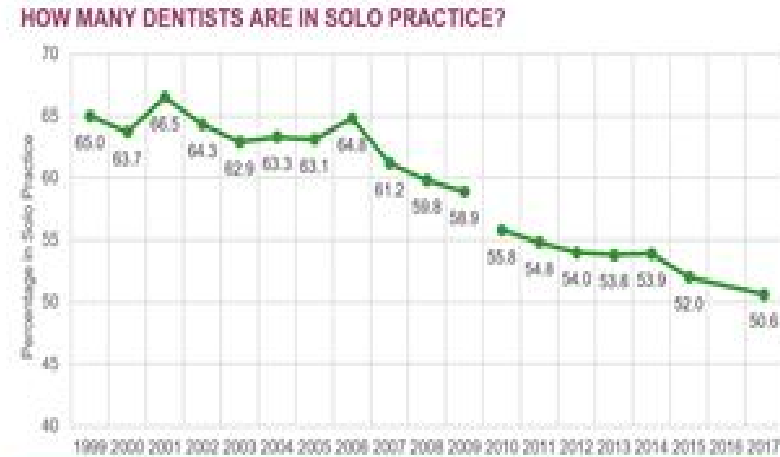
HPI survey - random sample of licensed, active US dentists in Jan 2018. From Families USA whitepaper July 2018

Practice Patterns of US Dentists Are Changing:

Key Take Aways 1999-2017

HPI data

- Decline in solo practice overall
- 1 in 2 dentists in solo practice in 2017
- Only 1 in 5 dentists under 35 in solo practice
- Increasing proportion of women dentists in the workforce
- Women less likely to be in solo practice and be owners



FEWER DENTISTS ARE WORKING AS SOLO PRACTITIONERS. About 2 in 3 dentists were in solo practice in 1999. That proportion decreased to 1 in 2 in 2017.

What Does This mean?

Interprofessional Education

“Fluoride and a physical: Patients see docs at the dentist”



Harvard Dental Center 2015

STATNEWS

Opportunities for Collaborative Practice

CareMore

CareMore Announces Pioneering New Model of Integrated Dental Care and Chronic Disease Management

April 10, 2017 02:15 PM Eastern Daylight Time

CERRITOS, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--CareMore has launched a new model of care to achieve greater integration between dental and primary care services. The hope is to improve access and outcomes for aging seniors, many of whom suffer from multiple chronic conditions, by bringing primary care to the dentist's chair.

"This is a unique opportunity to study the impact of integration in a large scale clinical model"

CareMore Services



December 12, 2018

Kaiser Permanente opens Beaverton Medical and Dental Office



Committed to integrated health care



As a family practice office dedicated to whole body health, we offer the opportunity to understand your care at a deeper level. Some call it Oral Systemic Health. We call it the [Mouth-Body Connection](#). Beyond a name, we've developed a holistic approach that combines oral health and total health that we use to guide you to early and ongoing intervention and ultimately better health.

entrepreneurial practice services

Build "It" And They Will Come...

Perspective of Dental Professionals

- **Experience with government programs has been mostly negative; i.e. State Medicaid programs**
- **Administrative and regulatory burden unknown; i.e. EHR and reporting requirements**
- **Most are in private practice and small business owners (high overhead with lab costs, etc. would not be covered by a facility fee)**
- **Reimbursement from commercial insurance products is declining and overall payer mix becoming more important**

Perspective of Dental Professionals

- **Medicare program is not truly means tested – not everyone needs it so prioritize those who most need it**
- **Older adults who really need the care may still have difficulty accessing it even with a dental benefit**
- **Most dentists are conservative and believe in a private sector “solution” versus expansion of an entitlement program**

National Academy of Medicine Dental Collaborative

*“The purpose of this collaborative is to explore ways in which health literacy principles and practices can promote effective integration of dental health and general health into an actionable primary care model. Creation of this model will incorporate lessons learned from current models and will include perspectives from system players such as patients, providers, health care facilities, insurers and policy makers. The collaborative’s **ultimate goal is to catalyze action in the use of health literacy practices to promote integrated, coordinated, patient-centered care.**”*

In Conclusion

- **Coalitions amplify the voice of oral health to policy makers and regulators**
- **Collaborative practice model (IPE) is taught in dental school and fits the millennial team orientation**
- **Increasingly more new dentists will seek opportunities to practice in collaborative groups**

In Conclusion

- Research supports the existence of a sufficient provider network
- ADA leadership needs to provide direction on how to implement their own policy
- Strengthen evidence-base by conducting prospective studies on relationship between chronic dx management and dental care
- Dentistry can (**is poised to!**) become an integral component of primary care through improved health outcomes, reduced cost, and better patient/provider satisfaction = Quad Aim



Thank you!

Lindsey A. Robinson, DDS
lindseyr@sbcglobal.net