

REPEAL THE ANNUAL CAP ON MEDICAID ADULT DENTAL BENEFITS!

The consequences of the \$1000 annual cap on adult dental services under Medicaid mandated by the legislature in October 2017:

- **Cuts over 16,000 low-income adults from comprehensive dental care**, including parents, seniors and persons with disabilities, according to the CT Office of Fiscal Analysis.¹
 - Most adults on HUSKY are working and earning low wages which prohibit them from paying for services above the \$1,000 cap.
 - It may preclude some persons from receiving dental care needed to address their health needs, to eat properly, to get and retain employment and result in low esteem.
- **Increases the use of emergency departments** by HUSKY adults for dental pain.
 - Research shows that when states reduce or eliminate adult dental benefits, preventive dental service use decreases, unmet dental care needs increase, and the costly use of emergency departments for dental problems increases.² **Emergency Department visits can cost 3 – 10 times more** than dental visits and often do not lead to treatment of the issue.
 - When dental services are not available,, antibiotics may be prescribed whether needed or not.³ In addition, **addictive opioids may be prescribed for pain.**⁴
- **Leads to higher costs to the state.**
 - Unfinished cases can get progressively worse, leading to infection, inflammation, and possible loss of teeth which in turn would require more expensive dental and medical care.

Fewer dentists will participate in Medicaid, undermining the significant successes DSS had in recruiting dentists after the 2005 settlement of the dental access lawsuit against it known as *Carr v. Wilson-Coker*, because of:

- The administrative burden of having to request prior authorization for any dental treatments in excess of \$1000/year
- The risks of undertaking care for Medicaid patients who end up needing dental care in excess of \$1000 but have no means to pay for it after prior authorization is denied

PLEASE REPEAL THIS EXPENSIVE RESTRICTION ON ACCESS TO CARE!

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¹ https://www.cga.ct.gov/ofa/Documents/year/GOVBS/2017GOVBS-20170215_Human%20Services%20Subcommittee%20Budget%20Sheets%20Agency%20Hearing%20Phase%20FY%2018%20and%20FY%2019.pdf

² <http://kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/access-to-dental-care-in-medicaid-spotlight-on-nonelderly-adults/view/footnotes/#footnote-178966-17>

³ <http://www.drbcuspids.com/index.aspx?sec=ser&sub=def&pag=dis&ItemID=320509>

⁴ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4245386/>