



The Medicare Oral Health Coalition—which includes leading organizations representing oral health, health care consumers, older adults, people with disabilities, patients, providers, industry, social service, and others—applauds the inclusion of payment for “medically necessary” dental treatment in the final 2023 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule. We are thrilled to see the Biden Administration recognize the need for improving Medicare dental coverage, and take this first step to making more meaningful “medically necessary” coverage a reality. We are grateful to Administration officials, the scores of advocates, and Members of Congress, who have worked for years to get us to this point.

With millions of older adults and people with disabilities unable to afford the dental care they need to stay healthy, adding oral health coverage to Medicare is critical. While more needs to be done to ensure all Medicare enrollees can get the oral health care they need, this final rule is an important win. Now, more people will be able to access certain dental services that are integral to specific medical treatments, such as organ transplants and cardiac valve procedures, without worrying about going into debt, missing a mortgage payment or skipping meals.

The final rule authorizes Medicare payment for dental care that is “inextricably linked and substantially related to the success of” medical treatments, and includes a specific set of example clinical scenarios in which this applies. It also establishes an annual process for the agency to consider including additional example scenarios that meet this standard as more evidence becomes available. This can be a source of hope for many individuals who would otherwise be unable to afford dental care needed to prevent complications to their medical treatment.

We appreciate the steps the Biden Administration has taken toward delivering on oral health coverage to older adults and people with disabilities. We look forward to working with CMS on implementing this critical policy, and making it even more robust over time, as well as continuing to push for legislation to add comprehensive oral health coverage to Medicare.

*The Medicare Oral Health Coalition is dedicated to ensuring that all Medicare enrollees have affordable, comprehensive oral health coverage as part of their overall health coverage. Current members include Families USA, AARP, National Rural Health Association, National Association of Community Health Centers, American Heart Association, American Diabetes Association, Justice in Aging, Center for Medicare Advocacy, The Arc of the United States, American Dental Hygienists’ Association, National Council on Aging, Meals on Wheels, the CareQuest Institute for Oral Health, Community Catalyst, the Gerontological Society of America, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), and the Oral Health Progress and Equity Network (OPEN) Inc. The views expressed by the Coalition do not necessarily represent those of individual members.*