

BACKGROUND

- Oral health is highly valued by society and is essential to overall health
 - 37% of low income adults avoid smiling due to the condition of their mouth and teeth¹
 - Low income adults are 10 times more likely to rate the overall condition of their mouth and teeth as poor versus high-income adults¹
- Cost is cited as the number 1 reason for not visiting the dentist more frequently among those without a visit in the last 12-months. Trouble finding a dentist is a close second among adults with Medicaid dental benefits¹
- Access to dental providers is particularly difficult for patients living in rural areas²

PROJECT GOALS

- Identify dental providers within a 20-mile radius of Barre, MA who are able to accept new adult patients insured through MassHealth
- Of the providers identified, generate a table outlining reasonable expectations related to wait time to schedule first appointment, general extraction process for uncomplicated teeth, and anxiolytics offered

METHODS

- Using the MassHealth Dental website for Members, <https://masshealth-dental.net/MemberServices/Default.aspx>, a list of dental providers and practices was generated based on proximity to the Barre, MA zip code, 01005
- The list was downloaded and sorted by increasing mileage from 01005. All dental providers and practices on the list were theoretically located within a 20-mile restriction of the zip code
- A Google search was used to identify each dental provider and practice to determine their current location. If the provider or practice was identified as being located within a 20-mile radius on the first 5 search hits, no further information was collected
- If the provider or practice was identified as being located within a 20-mile radius, a telephone call was placed to learn more about their service offerings and confirm their acceptance of MassHealth adult patients. The survey used to guide the conversation is included on this poster

Dental Practice Survey:

- Do you serve pediatrics or adults or both?
- Do you accept adults insured through MassHealth?
- How far in advance are routine visits booked?
- How far in advance are urgent visits booked?
- Do you offer designated walk-in hours?
- Do any of your dentists have OR privileges?
- What anxiolytics do you offer?
- What is your process for extractions: can they occur on the same day as a consult or is it a two-visit process before any extraction can occur?
- Do you ask that patients start antibiotics before extractions are performed?
- Do you have a staff member that would be willing to discuss care for mutual patients?

First 5 Results from MassHealth site

Dentist/Office Name	Specialty	Dentist Identifier	Address	Contact Phone	Distance	Maps
IDEH A... ELETOR	No Longer Exists	1770797698 (NPI)	212 Freight Shed Rd Baldwinville, MA 01436	(978) 939-2161	11.8	Map/Direction
IDEH A... STAFF	No Longer Exists	110000011 (Medicaid) 0002207 (State License) XX99990189 (NPI)	212 Freight Shed Rd Baldwinville, MA 01436	(978) 939-2161	11.8	Map/Direction
CENTRA... SURGE	Does not accept MassHealth adults		386 Elm St Gardner, MA 01440	(978) 632-7270	12.0	Map/Direction
CONNOR... MES.F	Does not accept MassHealth adults	DN20897 (State License) 1538143128 (NPI) 110104018A (Medicaid) DN13152 (State License)	386 Elm St Gardner, MA 01440	(978) 632-7270	12.0	Map/Direction
APOTHE... HARVE	Does not accept MassHealth adults	1073534020 (NPI) 110009761A (Medicaid)	39 Lennon St Gardner, MA 01440	(978) 632-5502	12.2	Map/Direction

Figure 1

RESULTS

- There were 559 dental practices and dental providers who accept MassHealth patients listed as being within a 20-mile radius of the Barre, MA zip code
- Of those, only 101 actually exist within the geographical specifications and can accept adults insured through MassHealth
- The 101 identified as still accessible to MassHealth adults included 56 dentists at 39 dental practices, 2 oral surgeons at 2 oral surgeon practices, and 2 dental hygiene clinics
- The closest dental provider that can accept a new MassHealth adult patient is 13.2 miles away from 01005

Of the dental practices accepting new MassHealth patients:

- Availability to book a new patient visit ranged from same day to 6-months
- There was much variation in the internal processes and amount of appointments necessary for an uncomplicated extraction to occur
 - Some required a consult appointment with a cleaning and x-ray before the extraction, others could perform one at the time of the first appointment
- Only 5 practices offered laughing gas as an option for sedation during visits

Reasons for Exclusion

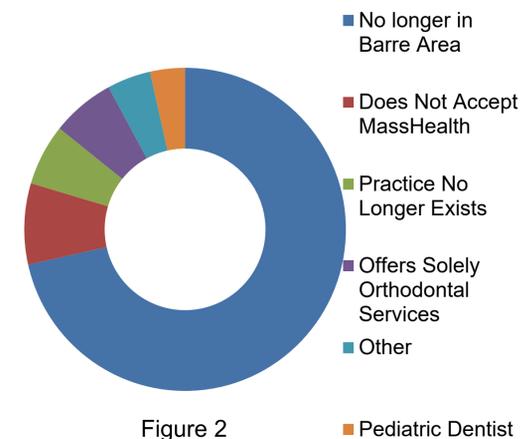


Figure 2

18%

Percentage of Dental Providers listed on the MassHealth website who are actually accessible to adult patients

Presented: 8/12/2016

CONCLUSIONS

- There is a mismatch between needed and actual dental access for adult patients insured through MassHealth in the Barre, MA area
- The MassHealth website contains an outdated list of dental practices and providers and misrepresents the reality of barriers to accessing dental care for their members
- Even for practices who accept MassHealth, full spectrum dental services may not be available to their members
 - That is to say some practices only offer routine dental care like cleanings to MassHealth patients and cannot provide them with comprehensive care including extractions and root canals
- The 01005 zip code could benefit from more dental providers who accept MassHealth patients in order to eliminate barriers to accessing care

PRESENTERS

- Annika Bannon is a medical student from the University of Massachusetts Medical School
- Stephen Martin is a Family Physician and Associate Professor of Family Medicine and Community Health at the University of Massachusetts Medical School
- Hugh Silk is a Family Physician and Professor of Family Medicine and Community Health at the University of Massachusetts Medical School

REFERENCES

- ¹Health Policy Institute of the American Dental Association (2016) *Oral Health and Well-Being in the United States*. American Dental Association, Chicago, IL. Available from: <http://www.ada.org/~media/ADA/Science%20and%20Research/HPI/OralHealthWell-Being-StateFacts/US-Oral-Health-Well-Being.pdf?la=en>.
- ²Wall TP, Brown LJ. The urban and rural distribution of dentists, 2000. *J Am Dent Assoc*. 2007 Jul;138(7):1003-1011.

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