

Healthy Families Elimination: What Dental Providers Need to Know

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The Governor proposed and the Legislature approved the transition of all 875,000 of the children currently enrolled in the Healthy Families program to the Medi-Cal program.

- **Timeline:** The Administration's plan currently has the transition occurring in several phases, with approximately 200,000 children transitioning no sooner than January 1, 2013 and then other cohorts in March, April, August and September. There continues to be a great deal of advocacy supporting a delay in the transition, but at this time, the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) intends to begin as planned on January 1. However, it is important to note that DHCS is required to get permission from the federal administration before the transition can begin.
- **No Dental Managed Care Expansion:** CDA successfully advocated against the Administration's proposal to expand Medi-Cal dental managed care statewide by moving the children from the Healthy Families Program managed care plans to new Medi-Cal managed care plans during the transition. Instead, children will be moved into the Denti-Cal fee-for-service system in all counties — except in Sacramento and Los Angeles where dental managed care currently exists — effectively preventing expansion of Medi-Cal dental managed care as a result of this transition.
- **Dental Network Capacity:** One key issue of concern for DHCS is whether the state can develop and maintain a sufficient network of dentists within the current Medi-Cal structure to provide dental care to all 875,000 new enrollees. To that end, DHCS is conducting provider outreach efforts through surveys and direct phone calls to encourage current Healthy Families providers to become Denti-Cal providers if they are not already and to encourage current Denti-Cal providers to serve more patients. DHCS also plans to communicate with all newly licensed dentists to encourage their enrollment in the program to serve these new beneficiaries. To communicate with DHCS about your capacity to serve children as they transition from the Healthy Families Program to the Medi-Cal program, you can complete and submit this short form: www.surveymonkey.com/s/dc_provider_survey.
- **To Become a Denti-Cal provider:** DHCS plans to help dentists who are interested in becoming Denti-Cal providers by expediting their enrollment in the program and helping to ensure the application process goes as smoothly as possible. DHCS has made clear, however, that an increase in the Medi-Cal rates paid to providers is not tenable in this fiscal environment and

not part of the current plan. To find out more about becoming a Denti-Cal provider, go to www.denti-cal.ca.gov/WSI/Prov.jsp?fname=enrollment_tool_kit.

- **To Continue Serving Your Healthy Families Patients:** Dentists who currently serve Healthy Families children and who are also Medi-Cal dental services providers (either through direct enrollment in the Denti-Cal program or through a Medi-Cal dental managed care plan) may continue to see their patients as they transition to Medi-Cal if they are affiliated with the same plan. DHCS will notify families when their children are transitioned, and DHCS is considering the feasibility of a process to notify providers when their patients transition from one program to the other. To communicate with DHCS about your interest and capacity to serve children as they transition from the Healthy Families Program to the Medi-Cal program, please complete and submit this short form: www.surveymonkey.com/s/dc_provider_survey.
- **To Discontinue Serving Healthy Families Beneficiaries:** If you are currently serving children through the Healthy Families Program and do not wish to continue to serve them after their transition to Medi-Cal, please notify the dental plans with whom you are currently contracted as soon as possible, and notify DHCS by completing and submitting this short form: www.surveymonkey.com/s/dc_provider_survey. You will also want to notify your patients, advise them of the importance of continued care, support them in finding alternative care by referring them to the local dental society or advise them to contact DHCS at 800-322-6384.

CDA will continue to actively engage with the administration in the implementation discussions and with the Legislature in its oversight process, including during the upcoming Legislative Special Session that will be called by the governor to address health care issues. CDA will keep members informed as the issue progresses.

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