
ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES

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Access to health services, which includes insurance status, an adequate supply of providers, and having a usual source of care, significantly impacts health and well-being. Health services includes access to necessary medical, dental, and behavioral health systems to meet the changing needs of the entire person from birth to death. The long-term impacts of the Access to Health Services strategies will be measured by the population health indicators listed within this part of the State Health Improvement Plan.

Originally enacted in 1974, the Hawaii Prepaid Health Care Act (HPHCA) was the first in the nation to set minimum standards of healthcare coverage for workers. The HPHCA is under Hawaii Revised Statutes Chapter 393. The HPHCA requires Hawaii employers to provide health care coverage for eligible employees to insure protection against the high cost of medical and hospital care for nonwork-related illness or injury. Preempted in October of 1981 by the Federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), the HPHCA was reinstated effective March 1, 1983. Therefore, technically the HPHCA that is effective today was enacted in 1983 despite its original passage in 1974.

Excellent oral health is essential to our overall health and well-being. We need healthy teeth and gums throughout our lives to eat properly, work productively, go to school able to focus on learning, feel confident about our appearance, and enjoy life. In the United States, the two most common oral diseases are dental caries (tooth decay) and periodontal (gum) disease. These conditions are largely preventable with regular oral hygiene practices and preventive dental visits. Unfortunately, oral health care is too often viewed as an “extra” non-essential service, placing greater attention toward other health care issues among individuals and insurance.

The State of Hawaii expanded its dental benefits to the Medicaid adult population in January 2023. The restoration of dental benefits was part of the FY 2023 Executive Supplemental Budget that was passed in the 2022 legislative session. As a result, Med-QUEST received over \$25 million in total funds to expand services, including restoring full dental benefits for adults. Medicaid eligible adult beneficiaries would receive a range of dental services including preventative, restorative, and some denture coverage.

The major barriers to accessing health services in Hawaii are geographic, sociocultural, and economic. Populations experiencing these barriers include the underinsured, uninsured, individuals on Medicaid, migrant workers, immigrants, rural/isolated communities, and Native

Hawaiians. Due to the high cost of living, which ranks among the highest in the nation, the challenge continues to be difficult to recruit and retain providers in rural and underserved areas. All counties continue to struggle with health workforce shortages in all disciplines (e.g. physicians, nurses, physician assistants, dentists, dental hygienists, psychiatrists, psychologists, clinical social workers, licensed therapists, etc.). Oahu is the primary island with the greatest population and economic activity. The health workforce shortages are much more pronounced on the neighbor islands (Kauai, Maui, Molokai, Lanai, Hawaii Island) due to the rurality, lower population levels, and lack of economic opportunities.

State of Hawaii Department of Health has identified strategies to increase access to health services through community partners and workforce programs. Partners and programs that support Access to Health Services include:

- Hawaii Department of Health, Office of Primary Care and Rural Health
- Hawaii Department of Health, Family Health Services Division
- Hawaii Primary Care Association
- Hawaii Public Health Institute, Hawaii Oral Health Coalition
- Hawaii Department of Education, Hawaii Academies
- Hawaii HOSA Future Health Professionals
- Hawai'i/Pacific Basin Area Health Education Center (AHEC)
- Health Resources and Service Administration, National Health Service Corps
- Health Resources and Service Administration, Nurse Corps
- Conrad 30 waiver program for J-1 foreign medical graduates

The top two goals/priorities for the Access to Health Services are:

- Improve the health of the residents of Hawaii by increasing equitable access to medical, dental, maternal, and mental health services.
- Increase the percentage of enrolled Medicaid population that receives covered dental services.

INDICATORS

Increase the proportion of people with health insurance

| State | Year | Percentage |
|-----------------------|------|------------|
| Baseline ¹ | 2018 | 95.3% |
| Target | 2030 | 98.3% |

RELATED OBJECTIVE



Healthy People 2030



Community Health Needs Assessment

INDICATORS

Increase the proportion of people with a usual primary care provider

| State | Year | Percentage |
|-----------------------|------|------------|
| Baseline ² | 2018 | 85.0% |
| Target | 2030 | 90.0% |

RELATED OBJECTIVE



Healthy People 2030

Reduce the proportion of people who can't get medical care when they need it

| State | Year | Percentage |
|-----------------------|------|------------|
| Baseline ³ | 2018 | 7.3% |
| Target | 2030 | 3.3% |



Healthy People 2030

Increase the proportion of children and adolescents (0-17 years of age) to receive care within a medical home

| State | Year | Percentage |
|-----------------------|------|------------|
| Baseline ⁴ | 2018 | 46.9% |
| Target | 2030 | 51.9% |



Healthy People 2030

Increase the proportion of Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT)-eligible youth aged 1-18 who have received dental services in the past year

| State | Year | Percentage |
|-----------------------|------|------------|
| Baseline ⁵ | 2021 | 54.0% |
| Target | 2030 | 59.0% |

Increase the proportion of children enrolled in Head Start preschool who received a professional dental exam in the past year

| State | Year | Percentage |
|-----------------------|------|------------|
| Baseline ⁶ | 2018 | 82.8% |
| Target | 2030 | 85.8% |

INDICATORS

RELATED OBJECTIVE

Reduce the proportion of adults with one permanent tooth extracted due to tooth caries or periodontal disease

| State | Year | Percentage |
|-----------------------|------|------------|
| Baseline ⁷ | 2020 | 39.8% |
| Target | 2030 | 34.8% |

STRATEGIES

- ❖ Analyze disparities in health insurance status and access to services by gender, age, income, geographic isolation.
- ❖ Develop and support health programs that address gaps in access or utilization in services.
- ❖ Support health workforce development, recruitment, and retention programs to address the primary care, dental, and behavioral health workforce shortages across the state.
- ❖ Continue to support and expand affordable and accessible preventive dental services to Hawaii's low-income population, including children enrolled in the Medicaid program.

References

- ¹ <https://www.hawaiihealthmatters.org/indicators/index/view?indicatorId=2254&localeId=14>
- ² <https://www.hawaiihealthmatters.org/indicators/index/view?indicatorId=1220&localeId=14>
- ³ <https://www.hawaiihealthmatters.org/indicators/index/view?indicatorId=3079&localeId=14>
- ⁴ <https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/archive2021/results?q=6984&r=13>
- ⁵ <https://www.hawaiihealthmatters.org/indicators/index/view?indicatorId=12247&localeId=14>
- ⁶ <https://www.hawaiihealthmatters.org/indicators/index/view?indicatorId=12569&localeId=14>
- ⁷ <https://www.hawaiihealthmatters.org/indicators/index/view?indicatorId=1225&localeId=14>