



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 6, 2019

TO: The Honorable Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 467 – MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO RESTORE ADULT DENTAL BENEFITS
TO MEDICAID ENROLLEES**

Hearing: Friday, February 8, 2019 3:00 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of this measure, and offers comments.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to appropriate funds to DHS to restore diagnostic, preventive, and restorative adult dental benefits to adult Medicaid enrollees. Requires DHS to obtain the maximum federal matching funds available for the expenditure.

DHS appreciates and supports the restoration of a basic oral health benefit for adult Medicaid and QUEST Integration recipients. The current limited benefit of emergency-only coverage does not support the goals of whole person care. Additionally the inability of recipients to access preventive oral health care can have a negative impact on a person's health, especially for individuals with chronic diseases, pregnant women and the health of their newborns.

In the 2018 legislature, DHS estimated that to provide the benefit, it would take at least six months before it could be implemented, and that there would be a gradual ramp up of utilization of the benefit. We had estimated about \$4,700,000 in general funds and

\$7,056,720 in federal funds for fiscal year 2020 for restoration of adult dental benefits. As more people use the benefits in future years, our estimates were that \$17,000,000 in general funds and about \$25,500,000 in federal funds for a total of \$42,500,000 would be needed. We are currently researching how other Medicaid programs have restored their adult dental benefits, and the costs of doing so. However, we have not completed our analyses at this time to be able to provide any updated estimates of utilization or costs.

We respectfully request that any appropriation not supplant funding priorities identified in the Executive Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

SB-467

Submitted on: 2/5/2019 12:58:48 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/8/2019 3:00:00 PM

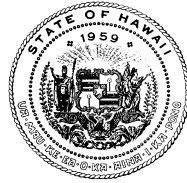
Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jerris Hedges	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Oral health contributes significantly to overall health. Providing adult dental benefits to Medicaid enrollees is sound health policy. I support this measure.

Jerris Hedges, MD

Dean, John A. Burns School of Medicine



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony COMMENTING on S.B. 467
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO RESTORE ADULT DENTAL BENEFITS TO
MEDICAID ENROLLEES.**

SENATOR RUSSELL E. RUDERMAN, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Hearing Date: February 8, 2019

Room Number: 016

1 **Fiscal Implications:** The Department of Health defers to the Department of Human Services on
2 program implementation and fiscal implications of S.B. 467 and to the priorities in the
3 Governor's Executive Biennium Budget request.

4 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health supports the intent of this bill and offers
5 comments on S.B. 467 from a public health perspective. Good oral health is an important part of
6 good overall health and well-being. It is often one of the first place where signs and symptoms of
7 other serious diseases such as diabetes are noticed. The Department's 2015 Hawaii Oral Health:
8 Key Findings report identified expanding Medicaid dental services for adults beyond the limited
9 benefits for emergency and palliative care as one of eight strategies to improve oral health.

10 The 2016 Hawaii Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System data shows that 71.6% of
11 adults in Hawaii visited a dentist in the past year. However, only 47.9% of low-income adults
12 had a dental visit. The 2014 Hawaii Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System data shows
13 less than half of pregnant women (46.9%) see a dentist for teeth cleaning although national
14 health recommendations state dental visits are safe and important to prevent dental problems for
15 mothers and their developing babies. Low-income pregnant women have even lower estimates
16 for teeth cleaning (34.9%).

17 Nationally, several states have shown a lack of regular dental care drives up health care
18 costs by examining emergency department data. Without access to preventive and treatment
19 services, many residents seek care at hospital emergency departments for dental problems

1 although dental services are not available there. In January 2017, the Hawaii Health Information
2 Corporation (HHIC) reported that there were nearly 3,000 emergency department (ED) visits by
3 children and adults in Hawaii over a one-year period (2015-2016) for preventable dental
4 problems, representing more than \$17.3 million dollars in hospital charges by both state, federal
5 and private providers.

6 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

7 **Offered Amendments:** None



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Human Services
February 8, 2019 at 3:00 p.m.

by

Mary G. Boland, DrPH, RN, FAAN
Dean and Professor

School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene

and

Michael Bruno, PhD

Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Vice Chancellor for Research
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

SB 467 – MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO RESTORE ADULT DENTAL BENEFITS TO MEDICAID ENROLLEES

Chair Ruderman, Vice Chair Rhoads and members of the Senate Committee on Human Services:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of this bill, SB 467. This bill aims to improve the oral health in Hawai'i by expanding dental service benefits for the State's adult Medicaid enrollees. This requires the State to appropriate funds to restore diagnostic, preventive, and restorative dental benefits to adult Medicaid enrollees.

The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene (UHM SONDH) and our sister health sciences schools provide services to adults whose lives are impacted severely by lack of access to oral prevention and treatment services. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) notes oral conditions are frequently considered separate from other chronic conditions, but these are actually inter-related. An adult oral health benefit in the Medicaid program can save money in emergency care, address chronic disease and the dangerous spread of disease from the mouth to other parts of the body, help people preserve their teeth into old age, and improve adults' job prospects. Further, adults with access to dental care may be more likely to recognize the value of the benefit, gain information related to improving their and their family's oral hygiene practices, and use the pediatric benefit in the state plan.

The UH Mānoa Dental Hygiene Clinic provides direct services and sees many adults whose oral decay and infections contribute to their inability to be employed and whose poor teeth are a deterrent when they do seek employment. Our Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene students and supervising dentist provide dental cleaning services and referral to individuals who are in high need of oral health care and are underinsured or

without dental insurance. Through these patient care experiences, we recognize the dire need for enhanced access to oral care and improved financial support for people needing diagnostic, preventive, and restorative dental services. This measure creates a clear pathway for improved oral health care for adult Medicaid enrollees in this state.

Therefore, the UHM SONDH on behalf of the University of Hawai'i respectfully requests that SB 467 pass as written. We appreciate your continuing support of dental health and all health care professions in Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



STATE OF HAWAII
STATE COUNCIL
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
PRINCESS VICTORIA KAMAMALU BUILDING
1010 RICHARDS STREET, Room 122
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543

February 8, 2019

The Honorable Senator Russell Ruderman, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services
Thirtieth Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawai'i
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Senator Ruderman and Members of the Committee:

SUBJECT: SB 0467 – Relating to Making an Appropriation to Restore Basic Adult Dental Benefits to Medicaid Enrollees

The State Council on Developmental Disabilities (DD) **STRONGLY SUPPORTS SB 0467**. The bill makes an appropriation to the Department of Human Services to restore adult dental benefits to Medicaid enrollees. Requires federal matching funds.

The Council cannot emphasize enough the importance of dental care services that include preventive, restorative, prosthetic, and emergency services for people with DD. We are all aware of how oral health, or the lack thereof, affects all aspects (emotional, psychological, and social) of our lives. Numerous individuals can share with you their experience of having a tooth or teeth extracted or acquiring serious health problems because necessary dental services were not available because of the termination of the Medicaid adult dental benefit coverage in 1996. Compounding the challenges is the limited number of dentists on the Neighbor Islands who are available and willing to serve Medicaid enrollees

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **strong support of SB 0467**.

Sincerely,

Daintry Bartoldus
Executive Administrator



February 8, 2019 at 3:00 pm
Conference Room 016

Senate Committee on Human Services

To: Chair Russell E. Ruderman
Vice Chair Karl Rhoads

From: Paige Heckathorn Choy
Director of Government Affairs
Healthcare Association of Hawaii

Re: **Testimony in Support**
SB 467, Making an Appropriation to Restore Adult Dental Benefits to Medicaid Enrollees

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii (HAH), established in 1939, serves as the leading voice of healthcare on behalf of 170 member organizations who represent almost every aspect of the health care continuum in Hawaii. Members include acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies, hospices, assisted living facilities and durable medical equipment suppliers. In addition to providing access to appropriate, affordable, high quality care to all of Hawaii's residents, our members contribute significantly to Hawaii's economy by employing over 20,000 people statewide.

We would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to **support** this measure, which would restore basic adult dental benefits to Medicaid patients. Having and maintaining good oral health enables individuals to live healthier, more productive lives. A report released by the Department of Health titled *Hawaii Oral Health: Key Findings* reveals that there are disparities in access to basic and routine dental treatment for underserved individuals. According to the report, low-income residents in the state were more likely to have dental problems and less likely to seek care to resolve those issues than their counterparts. Restoring the dental benefit in the Medicaid program will help to increase access to needed preventive and dental services that can help to bridge this gap in care.

Addressing dental issues early is also beneficial for the health care system, since many individuals turn to emergency room care to seek treatment. According to the department's report, there were more than 3,000 emergency room visits due to preventable dental problems in 2012. Expanding access to and encouraging the use of preventive dental treatments and oral health services could help to lower the number of visits, saving the system from costly treatments.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Human Services
Friday, February 8, 2019; 3:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 016**

RE: COMMENTING ON SENATE BILL NO. 467, MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO RESTORE ADULT DENTAL BENEFITS TO MEDICAID ENROLLEES.

Chair Ruderman, Vice Chair Rhoads, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **COMMENTS** on Senate Bill No. 467, MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO RESTORE ADULT DENTAL BENEFITS TO MEDICAID ENROLLEES.

The bill, as received by your Committee, would:

- (1) Appropriate an unspecified amount of general funds for Fiscal Year 2019-2020, and an unspecified amount of general funds for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 to restore preventative and restorative adult dental benefits to Medicaid enrollees;
- (2) Direct the Department of Human Services (DHS) to obtain the maximum federal matching funds available for this expenditure; and
- (2) Take effect on July 1, 2050.

We support the immediate reinstatement of preventative and restorative dental services to adult Medicaid enrollees.

Over the past seven legislative sessions, the HPCA has urged the Legislature to appropriate additional funds to HMS401 for the reinstatement of adult dental Medicaid coverage, without success. As such, during the 2018 Regular Session, we offered an alternative solution for your consideration. Last year, we believed additional funds for fiscal year 2018-2019 were not necessary because it was our contention that there were sufficient resources within HMS401 to reinstate this essential benefit immediately.

Our position has not changed and we continue to believe that there are sufficient resources in HMS401 to reinstate the benefit immediately.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.



HO'OLA LAHUI HAWAI'I
P.O. Box 3990; Līhu'e, Hawai'i
Phone: 808.240.0100 Fax: 808.246.9551

February 5, 2019

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Chair

Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair

Testimony in Support of SB 467

MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO RESTORE ADULT DENTAL BENEFITS TO MEDICAID ENROLLEES.

Friday, February 8, 2019, 3:00PM, Conference Room 016

Ho'ola Lahui Hawaii the only Federally Qualified Health Center and Native Hawaiian Health Care System on Kauai is strongly **SUPPORTING** this bill to restore adult dental benefits for those on Medicaid.

Dental care is vital to the overall health of individuals. Nearly 50% of all adults aged 30 or older have some form of gum disease according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and adult cavities is on the rise. Around 90% of all adults have had a cavity and 1 in 4 adults have untreated cavities.

It is vital to support the dental benefit restoration to Medicaid for those who are most in need. Prevention will save millions of dollars in restorative care services in the long term.

If patients are not in pain, they can eat healthier and have a more positive outlook they are more likely to gain employment and be more productive. Since 2009 when this benefit was removed, we have witnessed increasing numbers of individuals who are in dire need of care including major decay and infection.

This is the single most important bill currently in the legislature to our patients. We strongly encourage the committee to pass this bill and restore benefits to those most in need.

Respectfully Requested,

David Peters
Chief Executive Officer



February 5, 2019

Testimony in Support of S.B. 467
Making an appropriation to restore adult dental benefits to Medicaid enrollees

The Hawaii State Rural Health Association (HSRHA) respectfully submits written testimony in support of S.B. 467.

As a non-profit rural health association, our mission is to advocate for access to comprehensive healthcare that includes dental health, primary care and behavioral health, as an integral part of a person's overall health and wellness. Quite often, our neighbor island rural communities struggle to obtain equitable access to timely dental care.

Adults with dental disease often face challenges that impair their productivity and well-being. They suffer in pain, and may have to take time off from work because they have a toothache or other serious oral health issues. Left untreated, tooth decay and gum disease are linked to serious health problems, including premature births in pregnant women and chronic conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and stroke.

The Hawaii State Rural Health Association's Board of Directors strongly supports this bill to restore adult dental benefits to Medicaid enrollees as a crucial first step to improve oral health amongst our most vulnerable populations. Improving access to dental care, in addition to investing in oral health prevention pays off in the long term. All residents in Hawaii should be able to receive culturally appropriate and timely healthcare where they reside.

Hawaii State Rural Health Association
4442 Hardy Street, Suite 205
Lihue, HI 96766
email: hsrhacoordinator@gmail.com
website: hawaiistateruralhealth.org

Established in 1994, the Hawaii State Rural Health Association (HSRHA) is a 501(C) 3 non-profit organization dedicated to addressing rural health needs across our island state.

~ Working Together To Promote Healthy Rural Communities ~

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SB-467

Submitted on: 2/5/2019 4:20:52 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/8/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Diana Shaw	Testifying for Lanai Community Health Center	Support	No

Comments:

Oral health is critical to the overall health and well being of all individuals - no matter what age. The state must reinstate full oral health benefits for adults.

SB-467

Submitted on: 2/5/2019 5:41:00 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/8/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Louis Erteschik	Testifying for Hawaii Disability Rights Center	Support	No

Comments:

SB-467

Submitted on: 2/6/2019 6:10:30 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/8/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lisa Rantz	Testifying for Hilo Medical Center Foundation	Support	No

Comments:

SB-467

Submitted on: 2/6/2019 8:11:19 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/8/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brian Higa	Testifying for Bay Clinic, Inc.	Support	No

Comments:

1. My name is Brian Higa and I am the Chief Dental Officer at Bay Clinic, Inc. on the Big Island of Hawaii. I have the privilege of treating the people of Hawaii Island through our public health center. I am writing a testimony in strong support of SB467 (restoring adult benefits to Medicaid enrollees). Currently, Medicaid only covers emergency services for adults 21yrs or older. This means these patients can only receive covered care when they are already in pain or have an infection associated with their oral cavity. This should be considered a very poor standard of care. I believe no one would want this type of coverage for themselves or the ones they care most about. Adding preventative and restorative benefits would allow for comprehensive oral care. This would have a positive effect on speech, diet, and self-confidence for these patients (resulting in better overall health). Patients who don't see their dentist for regular cleanings and evaluations also miss out on the opportunity to detect oral pathology (including oral cancer) at early treatable stages. Early tooth loss also presents barriers to a person's ability to get a job and provide for themselves and their families. Restoring adult benefits also is cost effective. Toothaches are one the most common reasons for emergency room visits in states without adult benefits. In closing, I strongly support SB467 to give the adult Medicaid patients the coverage every human being deserves.



February 8, 2019
3:00 pm
Conference Room 016

To: The Honorable Sen. Russell E. Ruderman, Chair
The Honorable Sen. Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair
Committee on Human Services

From: Paula Arcena, Executive Vice President, External Affairs

Re: SB467 Relating to Making an Appropriation to Restore Adult Dental Benefits to Medicaid Enrollees

AlohaCare is pleased to submit this testimony in **support** of SB467 which makes an appropriation to the Department of Human Services to restore adult dental benefits to Medicaid enrollees; and require federal matching funds.

It's been 10 years since adults in Hawaii's adult Medicaid program have had dental coverage. Children in Hawaii's Medicaid program currently have comprehensive dental coverage. Senior citizens who are Medicaid eligible have multiple options for dental coverage from Medicare Advantage plans.

Without dental coverage, 180,000 adults in the Hawaii Medicaid program are not getting the benefit of early detection and treatment for better overall health. Meanwhile, the state continues to spend significantly on dental care. In 2012 alone, Hawaii Medicaid paid \$4.8 million for 1,691 adults for emergency room visits for preventable oral health problems, according to the Department of Health, Hawaii Oral Health: Key Findings report.

Opportunities to improve the health of the entire body with good oral care are clinically well established. Clinical studies show that without proper dental care pregnant mothers are at higher risk for having premature births and underweight babies. Bacteria in the mouth can get into the bloodstream and cause a heart infection called endocarditis. Some mental health medications cause dry mouth, putting people at risk for tooth and gum disease. Diabetes can make people more susceptible to serious gum disease, such as gingivitis or worse, periodontitis.

To encourage AlohaCare members to seek dental care, AlohaCare is voluntarily providing its members with basic dental coverage. Starting January 1, 2019, AlohaCare is covering basic dental services to adult members who rely on Medicaid as their primary health insurance. By absorbing the cost of an annual dental exam, biannual cleanings and fluoride treatment, two bitewing x-rays and one filling or non-emergency extraction, we hope to help adults with Medicaid get into a dentist chair before they have a dental crisis.



AlohaCare

For a healthy Hawaii.

AlohaCare is a local, non-profit health plan founded in 1994 by Hawaii's Community Health Centers. We serve over 70,000 Medicaid and dual-eligible health plan members. We are the third largest health plan in Hawaii. We partner with nearly 3,500 physicians, specialists and providers in the care of our members. We have over 260 employees who work on Oahu, the Big Island, Maui and Kauai.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



BAY CLINIC, INC.
NETWORK OF FAMILY HEALTH CENTERS

Testimony of Bay Clinic, Inc.

In SUPPORT of SB 467 Making an appropriation to restore adult dental benefits to medicaid enrollees. Bill makes an appropriation to the department of human services to restore adult dental benefits to medicaid enrollees. Requires federal matching funds.

SENATOR RUSSELL RUDERMAN, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

SENATOR ROSALYN BAKER, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, CONSUMER PROTECTION, AND HEALTH

Dear Honorable Chairs Senator Ruderman and Senator Baker:

On behalf of Bay Clinic, Inc., the largest Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) on Hawai'i Island and the second largest in the state, I express our support of SB 467, which makes an appropriation to the department of human services to restore adult dental benefits to medicaid enrollees.

Currently medicaid is providing coverage for emergency dental services only. This includes imaging, diagnosis, and temporary/incomplete treatments or extractions. This amount of treatment is considered a very low standard of care for anyone 21 years old or older. With restoring adult benefits (preventative and restorative), medicaid would allow their patients access to comprehensive dental care. This could restore and sustain oral health which ultimately would prevent pain, infection and tooth loss. Loss of teeth has a negative effect on speech, diet, and self-confidence all of these contributing factors to a person's overall health.

In 2009, 6,648 of Bay Clinic's visits were for adult dental care services. This is also the year medicaid changed its policy for providing comprehensive dental health coverage to its customers. Over the next two years following this change, Bay Clinic's patients receiving adult dental care dropped to 4,675. To date, Bay Clinic has not seen the adult dental patient numbers of 2009. Due to lack of adult QUEST dental coverage, the underserved and low-income patients have suffered, being denied basic dental health services, which in turn has cost the state due to the corresponding rise in adults presenting at emergency room for dental health issues.

Sincerely,

Harold Wallace MPH
Chief Executive Officer

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Hilo Family Health Center Hilo Women's Health Center Hilo Family Dental Center Mobile Health
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CORPORATE OFFICE

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Bay Clinic, Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAI'I

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 467: Making an Appropriation to Restore Adult Dental Benefits to Medicaid Enrollees

TO: Senator Russell Ruderman, Chair, Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair; and Members, Committee on Human Services

FROM: Betty Lou Larson, Legislative Liaison, Catholic Charities Hawai'i

Hearing: Friday, 2/8/19; 3:00 pm; CR 016

Chair Ruderman, Vice Chair Rhoads, and Members, Committee on Human Services:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in support** of SB 467, which makes an appropriation to the Department of Human Services to restore adult dental benefits to Medicaid enrollees. I am Betty Lou Larson, with Catholic Charities Hawai'i.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i (CCH) is a tax exempt, non-profit agency that has been providing social services in Hawai'i for over 70 years. CCH has programs serving elders, children, families, homeless and immigrants. Our mission is to provide services and advocacy for the most vulnerable in Hawai'i.

We support this bill since poor oral health can have a serious impact on peoples' overall health and their ability to live productive lives. We have found a number of kupuna who do not have access to primary dental care. Even with the knowledge that special programs like Kupuna Smiles provides, these seniors cannot afford to see a doctor. It is also of great concern for the homeless who already are at high risk of ill health due to their unstable living situations. Lack of dental care affects a wide range of Hawaii residents since access to regular oral health care varies greatly across the State. **Our rural and neighbor island residents and persons/families with lower incomes have disproportionate access issues.**

In 2009, Hawaii's adult dental benefits were removed. Data shows that this is having a significant impact on our residents. There were over 3,000 ER visits for acute oral health conditions in 2016, totaling over \$17 million in direct costs. Compare this with 1,800 visits to the ER in 2006, with \$4 million in costs. Medicaid beneficiaries constitute over half (53%) of the dental emergencies seen, statewide, in emergency rooms.

Restoring adult dental benefits could cut costs by diverting an estimated 79% of ER dental visits to community settings, with a much lower cost. An emergency seen by a community dentist costs an estimated 48% of the cost of an ER treatment.

Good oral health is important since it can improve the beneficiaries' ability to obtain and maintain employment and engage with others.

We urge your support of this bill to enhance the dental and overall health of Hawaii's residents.

Please contact me at (808) 373-0356 or bettylou.larson@catholiccharitieshawaii.org if you have any questions.





Testimony in Support of RE: HB276 Relating to Flavored Tobacco Products

Ellie Kelley-Miyashiro, RDH, BS

Past President/Regulations and Practice Chairperson – Hawaii Dental Hygienists' Association

Feb 6, 2019

Dear Chair Ruderman and Respected Members of the Committee on Human Services:

The Hawaii Dental Hygienists' Association (HDHA) strongly **SUPPORTS SB 467**. The bill appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services to restore basic adult dental benefits to Medicaid and QUEST enrollees. We congratulate you on your initiative to expand Medicaid dental services for adults to include preventive, diagnostic and restorative treatment services. This provision would directly benefit seniors, as well as adults with developmental and physical disabilities in providing necessary oral health services.

HDHA cannot emphasize enough the importance of dental care services that include preventive, restorative, prosthetic, and emergency services for all residents of Hawaii. We are keenly aware of how oral health, or the lack thereof, can affect all aspects (physical, emotional, psychological, and social) of our lives. It is also common knowledge that oral health has a direct correlation to over-all health. The mouth is connected to and shares a circulatory system with the rest of the body. Ignoring or limiting oral care services places Hawaii residents at risk for increased health problems.

As the largest association representing Hawaii's licensed dental hygienists', HDHA strongly **SUPPORTS SB 467** to address the unnecessary effects of dental disease among Hawaii's people.

Thank you for your consideration.

February 5, 2019

To: Senator Russell Ruderman, Chair
Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

From: Laura Nevitt, Director of Public Policy
Hawaii Children's Action Network

Re: **S.B. 467– MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO RESTORE ADULT DENTAL BENEFITS TO MEDICAID ENROLLEES**
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 016 , February 8, 2019, 3:00 PM

HCAN is committed to improving lives and being a strong voice advocating for Hawai'i's children. We write in support of S.B. 467 which makes an appropriation to the department of human services to restore adult dental benefits to medicaid enrollees. Requires federal matching funds.

It is widely acknowledged that the behavior of parents, and in particular mothers, affects their children's health

Oral health has an important role in the general well-being of individuals. Since oral health behaviors can affect the oral health, attempting to construct good oral health behaviors can affect the general health of individuals. Indeed, the adoption of good oral health habits in childhood often takes place with parents, especially with mothers.

The foundation for healthy permanent teeth in children and teenagers is laid during the first years of life. Poor diet, poor habits of food intake and inadequate toothbrushing habits during the first 2 years of life have been shown in several studies to be related to tooth decay in children. The development of caries in primary teeth further increases the risk of developing caries in permanent teeth.

Therefore it is essential to establish a proper oral hygiene routine early in life to help ensure the development of strong and healthy teeth. **Parents, as consistent role models, are key for setting a daily routine and to making their children understand the importance of oral hygiene.** Toothbrushing should be presented as a habit and an integral part of the daily hygiene routine. Children are very sensitive to social stimuli such as praise and affection, and learn best by imitating their parents. Physiological and mental development affects the oral care of children.

Therefore, making sure that adults have access to dental benefits, helps improve the oral health of our keiki.

For these reasons, HCAN respectfully requests that the committee pass S.B. 467 to help ensure that our
HCAN is committed to building a unified voice advocating for Hawaii's children by improving their safety, health, and education.



Feb. 8, 2019

To: Chair Senator R. Ruderman, Vice-Chair, Senator K. Rhoads, and Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services

From: Nancy Partika, Disparities Director, *Oral Health for All Hawaii*

Subject: Strong **Support: SB 467**, MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO RESTORE ADULT DENTAL BENEFITS TO MEDICAID ENROLLEES

Hearing: February 8, 2019 in Room #016

Aloha Senator Ruderman, Senator Rhoads and Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services:

I am Nancy Partika, Disparities Director for *Oral Health For All Hawaii*, which is a project of the Hawaii Children's Action Network, established in 2018 to support & engage communities with oral health disparities by encouraging grassroots leadership and advocacy & sparking changes in oral health disparities via community-driven initiatives.

Needless to say, Hawaii has struggled for decades with oral health disparities and problems accessing care for its most needy. The 2009 abolishment of full adult dental benefits under State Medicaid and the problems that resulted from adults receiving emergency-only care since then has spiraled, while the State continues to pay out millions per year in acute oral health emergency room care statewide that does not provide adequate oral health care or support to our at-risk populations.

Per the 2017-18 DOH study, 66% of all ER visits made statewide were Medicaid and/or Medicare recipients, and the costs in 2016 for these 3,000 total visits cost a staggering \$17 million dollars. Fiscally, it seems logical that these millions of dollars that could be potentially saved via fewer ER visits and instead wisely utilize a portion of those dollars to pay upfront for preventative and restorative dental care benefits for Medicaid recipients.

Poor oral health is already co- linked to an array of acute and chronic health conditions, including: heart disease, diabetes, stroke, depression, low birth weight and premature birth.

Researchers have also identified linkages from chronic dental pain to end-stage renal disease, liver transplants, opioid-related emergency department visits, and opioid-related crime. These co-conditions are made worse by having poor oral health, and the care of the oral health of chronically ill or pregnant can be another significant potential area for return on investment. We are now recognizing that not intervening in oral health conditions early and preventively will cost much more later on in unintended direct and indirect societal costs.

Currently there are 17 states offer comprehensive adult oral health benefits (with expanded services offered), 17 states that offer limited (averaging \$500-\$1,000 person/year) adult oral health benefits, and 14 (Hawaii included) offering emergency-only adult oral health benefits and 3 states that offer no adult oral health benefits. Many options exist as to how Hawaii could address the need for greater oral health benefits.

By adding a comprehensive or limited dental services benefit, Hawaii's adults on Medicaid are expected to experience fewer oral health-related ER visits, with improvements to their chronic disease risks and overall health status. Broader Medicaid dental benefits for adults would not only support individual health and well-being among Hawaii's most vulnerable adults, but could also improve the employment status and socio-economic strength of our communities.

There is clear Administrative and Legislative messaging regarding the desired zero-based budget and the cost of adding benefits to anything this fiscal year. The State, however, is already paying in ER costs for Medicaid dental services to the tune of almost \$10 million a year.** If we even agree to invest half of that amount in basic preventive and restoration adult dental services, we can hopefully begin to reduce the increasing costs of inappropriate ER care, along with needless pain and suffering, employment-related disability, co-related health status and self-image, not to mention helping to address some opioid use relating to chronic dental pain.

We in the community fully understand and support the need to address multiple issues and crises at the Legislative level; however the issue of inadequate coverage of adults for oral health under Medicaid is now a chronic problem in need of immediate attention. Improving oral health for adults and their families in Medicaid has widespread public and private support statewide, and, as the oral health needs grow, so do the voices for change to a more humane and responsive policy towards adults' on Medicaid. Waiting for yet another, year in hopes of improved fiscal situation only exacerbates the costs and problems we continue to see and experience in adult oral health.

Your pro-active attention to this issue is respectfully appreciated—Mahalo for this opportunity to testify on this important public health bill.

**Rough calculation, based on the DOH HHIC ER data study (Dr. Don Hayes, FHSD-DOH, 2018) determined that HHIC reported just over 3,000 emergency room (ER) visits for acute oral health conditions in 2016, totaling over \$17 million in direct costs, compared to 1,800 visits in 2006, with \$4 million in costs. It was also determined that for all dental emergency services that were provided in 2015-16 in Hawaii, 56% were disproportionately Med-QUEST recipients, which represent about 25% of the overall Hawaii population.

\$17 million (2016 total paid) X 56% (Medicaid recipients using ER) = \$9,520,000 potential cost-savings, if all ER use by Medicaid recipients for dental conditions was eliminated.

SB-467

Submitted on: 2/7/2019 10:44:03 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/8/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joseph Kohn MD	Testifying for We Are One, Inc. - www.WeAreOne.cc - WAO	Support	No

Comments:


Strongly support universal health care including dental care. Clearly there is no shortage of money, but there is justice.

www.WeAreOne.cc



THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEMS

To: The Honorable Russell E. Ruderman, Chair
The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair
Members, Committee on Human Services

From: 
Paula Yoshioka, Vice President, Government Relations and External Affairs, The
Queen's Health Systems

Date: February 7, 2019

Hrg: Senate Committee on Human Services Hearing; Friday, February 8, 2019 at 3:00 PM in
Room 016

Re: Support for S.B. 467, Making an Appropriation to Restore Adult Dental Benefits to
Medicaid Enrollees

The Queen's Health Systems (Queen's) is a not-for-profit corporation that provides expanded health care capabilities to the people of Hawai'i and the Pacific Basin. Since the founding of the first Queen's hospital in 1859 by Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV, it has been our mission to provide quality health care services in perpetuity for Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i. Over the years, the organization has grown to four hospitals, 66 health care centers and labs, and more than 1,600 physicians statewide. As the preeminent health care system in Hawai'i, Queen's strives to provide superior patient care that is constantly advancing through education and research.

Queen's appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in support for S.B. 467, which would make an appropriation to the Department of Human Services to restore adult dental benefits to Medicaid enrollees and requires federal matching funds. Through our dental clinic, Queen's is able to provide full-service dental care for patients on an outpatient and inpatient basis. These services are provided to patients who may have limited options or no other options for their dental care, complex oral facial pathology, medically fragile health, and/or special needs. For Fiscal Year 2017, 60% of the patients served at the Dental Clinic were Medicaid eligible.

The Dental Clinic is home to Hawai'i's only accredited hospital-based General Practice Residency Program and provides comprehensive dental services to meet the needs of our community. Queen's is committed to providing quality care to Native Hawaiians and all the people of Hawaii regardless of their ability to pay. Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue.

The mission of The Queen's Health Systems is to fulfill the intent of Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV to provide in perpetuity quality health care services to improve the well-being of Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i.



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Research Office

En Young, MBA
Sansei, Lanai

Date: February 7, 2019

To: Senator Russell Ruderman, Chair
Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair
Members of the Human Services Committee

Re: Strong Support for SB467 Making an Appropriation to Restore
Adult Dental Benefits to Medicaid Enrollees

Hrg: February 8, 2019 at 3:00pm at Conference Room 016

The Hawai'i Public Health Instituteⁱ is in **Strong Support of SB 467** which restores adult dental benefits for Medicaid enrollees.

SB467 appropriates funds to the DHS to restore diagnostic, preventive, and restorative adult dental benefits to Medicaid and QUEST integration enrollees. In a survey conducted by Ward Research for HIPHIⁱⁱ, 9 in 10 registered Hawaii voters (89%) strongly agreed that preventative dental benefits should be included in adult Medicaid coverage.

Oral health in our state is a public health crisis, with Hawaii receiving a failing grade of "F" in three recent oral health report card released by The Pew Center for the States. Restoring adult dental benefits would help to address this crisis. In addition, a 2015 Department of Health report entitled *Hawaii Oral Health: Key Findings* revealed a shortfall in the area of dental benefits, including:

- Only 52% of low-income adults in Hawai'i saw a dentist, compared to 82% of high-income adults.
- 51% of low-income adults lost teeth due to dental disease, compared to only 32% of high-income adults.
- In 2012, there were more than 3,000 emergency room visits due to preventable dental problems, 67% more than in 2006. As a result, aggregate hospital charges for dental emergency visits were \$8,500,000 compared to \$4,000,000 in 2006.

Medicaid does not provide any preventive oral healthcare for adults, only emergency dental (extraction or pain management). Adult Medicaid enrollees have no coverage for preventive or routine dental care, and this lack of access has a negative impact on one's health,

especially for individuals with chronic diseases such as coronary disease and diabetes. In addition, because of the lack of coverage, many low-income adults only seek dental care for acute conditions that have been allowed to reach a crisis stage.

HIPHI defers to the State Department of Human Services on the estimates to restore basic adult dental benefits. We strongly support the restoration of these benefits.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trish'.

Trish La Chica, MPA
Policy and Advocacy Director

ⁱ Hawai'i Public Health Institute is a hub for building healthy communities, providing issue-based advocacy, education, and technical assistance through partnerships with government, academia, foundations, business, and community-based organizations.

ⁱⁱ Findings from a Ward Research Study commissioned by the Hawaii Public Health Institute that summarizes findings from a phone survey among n=812 registered Hawaii voters (maximum sampling error of +/-3.3%) conducted between November 5 to 8, 2018. A copy of the results are available upon request.

SB-467

Submitted on: 2/5/2019 3:10:38 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/8/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Crystal Costa	Individual	Support	No

Comments:



Hawaii Dental Association

LATE

To: The Senate Committee on Human Services
Time/Date: 3:00 p.m. February 8, 2019
Location: State Capitol Conference Room 16
Re: SB 467, Making an Appropriation to Restore Adult Dental Benefits to Medicaid Enrollees

Aloha Chair Ruderman, Vice Chair Rhoads and the Committee on Human Services,

The Hawaii Dental Association (HDA) is a statewide professional membership organization representing dentists practicing in Hawaii and licensed by the State of Hawaii Board of Dentistry. HDA members are committed to protecting the oral health and well-being of the people of Hawaii, from keiki to kupuna and everyone in between.

SB 467 makes an appropriation to the department of human services to restore adult dental benefits to Medicaid enrollees. It acknowledges that “lack of access to dental coverage and oral health care is a social justice issue that disproportionately affects the poor, children, the elderly, and racial and ethnic minority groups.”

This bill is an important step toward promoting oral health in our community and we strongly support it.

Please advance this measure.

SB-467

Submitted on: 2/7/2019 3:05:38 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/8/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i	Support	No

Comments:

SB-467

Submitted on: 2/5/2019 3:07:31 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/8/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
michele Tui	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a practicing Dental Hygienist on the island of Hawaii; I want to add my support to this bill. I am working with preschool children but I am seeing that the parents are in as great need as their children. If parents can take care of their dental health they are more likely to follow through with their children's.

SB-467

Submitted on: 2/5/2019 2:58:26 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/8/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Lee Buenconsejo-Lum	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Poor oral health adversely affects individual, families and communities. Individuals with diabetes and heart disease have worse outcomes if they also have poor dentition. Similarly, pregnant women with poor oral health are more likely to have problems with their pregnancies, including pre-term birth and low birth rates. As patients age, they are at higher risk for malnutrition and subsequent infectious diseases if they do not have healthy teeth and gums. All of these conditions, including the actual acute dental pain/emergencies contribute to high and rising health care costs (emergency department visits, emergency extractions, pain medications). All of the accurate medical, scientific and economic data are listed in the Adult Medicaid Dental Policy brief that was prepared for the 2019 Legislative Session.

SB-467

Submitted on: 2/5/2019 4:29:33 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/8/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
chelsea pang	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-467

Submitted on: 2/6/2019 6:43:19 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/8/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joanne Amberg	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB 467. This bill proposes an appropriation for the expansion of adult dental benefits under Medicaid to include reinstate basic preventive and restoration benefits.

Oral health is a crucial part of a person’s physical, psychological, social and economic health and wellbeing. In fact, pain due to oral disease in children results in thousands of hours of missed school every year; while adults with poor oral health often struggle to manage chronic co-conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. Missing or broken teeth also create social barriers for adults to find and maintain gainful employment in our service-based economy.

As a result of Hawaii’s past decade of minimal coverage for dental care, our emergency room have been overutilized for unmet oral health needs to the tune of thousands of visits per year, costing millions of dollars.

There were reported just over 3,000 emergency room (ER) visits for acute oral health conditions in 2016, totaling over \$17 million in direct costs, compared to 1,800 visits in 2006, with \$4 million in costs. For all dental emergency services that were provided in 2015-16 in Hawaii, 56% were disproportionately Med-QUEST recipients, who represent about 25% of the overall Hawaii population.

An estimated 79% of ER dental visits could be diverted to community settings, saving about 48% of the cost of each visit. (Example: treating a dental emergency might cost \$750 in an ER vs. \$390 in the community setting.)

In FY 2017, for the 234,258 adults who had emergency-only dental coverage, only 17,889 (8%) of them received ANY dental services for the year.

If a state opts to cover adult dental care through Medicaid, the Federal government will match up to 50% of the state’s investment.

As a part of our commitment to improve oral health in Hawaii, we believe that basic coverage of dental services for adults is a critical factor in ensuring access to appropriate and timely oral health care. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this very important health bill.

SB-467

Submitted on: 2/6/2019 8:31:23 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/8/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
karen oneill	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SB-467

Submitted on: 2/6/2019 8:52:13 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/8/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kawehi Lopez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB467. Poor oral health has many negative impacts on an individual's life and I believe that access to dental benefits will greatly improve the lives of many here in Hawai'i.

SB-467

Submitted on: 2/6/2019 9:30:26 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/8/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Maria Teresa Belardo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

Restoration of adult dental benefits is crucial when it comes to dental health. I strongly support this bill. Please pass this incredibly needed benefits to adult Medicaid enrollees.

Mahalo,

Maria

(Kauai resident)

SB-467

Submitted on: 2/6/2019 11:05:44 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/8/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
June Munoz	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support SB 467 - restoring adult dental benefits to Medicaid enrollees because I see that it is most needed to support good health and wellness in our community here on Kauai and due to the high cost of dental services, most adults needing services will choose to go without. I see many adults both in my work and surrounding community and know that this bill will bring much relief and wellness will be restored to many suffering adults.

TESTIMONY FOR SENATE BILL 467
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO RESTORE ADULT DENTAL BENEFITS TO MEDICAID ENROLLEES

Date of hearing:

February 8, 2019

Committee:

Committee of Human Services

February 5, 2019

Dear Chair Russell E. Ruderman, Vice Chair Karl Rhoads, and Committee members:

My name is Andrew Tseu, D.D.S., J.D. and I am submitting testimony as a Hawaii resident. I am writing in strong support of SB 467. This bill proposes an appropriation for the expansion of adult dental benefits under Medicaid to include reinstate basic preventive and restoration benefits.

Hawaii's oral health services has not been given adequate attention and resources necessary to support good oral health care in our state since Medicaid adult dental benefits were drastically cut in 2009.

Oral health is a crucial part of a person's physical, psychological, social and economic health and well-being. In fact, pain due to oral disease in children results in thousands of hours of missed school every year; while adults with poor oral health often struggle to manage chronic co-conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. Missing or broken teeth also create social barriers for adults to find and maintain gainful employment in our service-based economy.

As a result of our past decade of minimal coverage for dental care, our emergency room have been overutilized for unmet oral health needs to the tune of thousands of visits per year, costing millions of dollars.

As a part of our commitment to improve oral health in Hawaii, we believe that basic coverage of dental services for adults is a critical factor in ensuring access to appropriate and timely oral health care.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this very important health bill.

Best regards,



Andrew Tseu, D.D.S., J.D.

SB-467

Submitted on: 2/7/2019 5:10:10 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/8/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jessica Prestler Chang	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

As a registered dental hygienist who grew up in Hawaii, I support SB467. Making dental care accessible to our Medicaid population will financially benefit the state with less emergency room visits and better managed chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. Promoting oral health initiatives is also highly beneficial to the community. Healthy individuals with good teeth are better able to enter the workforce and maintain their nutrition. It's an overall wise and ethical move to help provide oral care to adults with Medicaid.

SB-467

Submitted on: 2/7/2019 1:53:00 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/8/2019 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rosie	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I write in support of SB467 Restoring adult dental benefits.

I am a dental professional and see first hand that the segment of the population who need adult dental medicaid benefits have suffered for years.

We need to help these patients regain hope in the system. Mahalo