

1 TO THE HONORABLE SENATE:

2 The Committee on Health and Welfare to which was referred Senate Bill  
3 No. 94 entitled “An act relating to expanding Medicaid beneficiaries’ access to  
4 dental care and establishing the VDent dental assistance program” respectfully  
5 reports that it has considered the same and recommends that the bill be  
6 amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu  
7 thereof the following:

8 Sec. 1. 33 V.S.A. chapter 19, subchapter 4 is added to read:

9 Subchapter 4. Coverage for Dental Services

10 § 1991. DEFINITIONS

11 As used in this chapter:

12 (1) “Dental services” means preventive, diagnostic, or corrective  
13 procedures related to the teeth and associated structures of the oral cavity.

14 (2) “Dental therapist” means an individual licensed to practice as a  
15 dental therapist under 26 V.S.A. chapter 12.

16 (3) “Dentist” means an individual licensed to practice dentistry under  
17 26 V.S.A. chapter 12.

18 § 1992. MEDICAID COVERAGE FOR ADULT DENTAL SERVICES

19 (a) Vermont Medicaid shall provide coverage for medically necessary  
20 dental services provided by a dentist, dental therapist, or dental hygienist  
21 working within the scope of the provider’s license as follows:

1           (1) Up to two visits per calendar year for preventive services, including  
2           prophylaxis and fluoride treatment, with no co-payment. These services shall  
3           not be counted toward the annual maximum benefit amount set forth in  
4           subdivision (2) of this subsection.

5           (2) Diagnostic, restorative, and endodontic procedures, to a maximum of  
6           \$1,000.00 per calendar year, provided that the Department of Vermont Health  
7           Access may approve expenditures in excess of that amount when exceptional  
8           medical circumstances so require.

9           (3) Other dental services as determined by the Department by rule.

10          (b) The Department of Vermont Health Access shall develop a  
11          reimbursement structure for dental services in the Vermont Medicaid program  
12          that encourages dentists, dental therapists, and dental hygienists to provide  
13          preventive care.

14          Sec. 2. DENTAL ACCESS AND REIMBURSEMENT WORKING GROUP;  
15                  REPORT

16          (a) The Department of Vermont Health Access, in consultation with the  
17          Board of Dental Examiners and the Vermont State Dental Society, shall  
18          convene a working group of interested stakeholders to:

19                  (1) evaluate current Medicaid reimbursement rates to dentists, dental  
20                  therapists, and other providers of dental services and determine the amount of  
21                  fiscally responsible increases to the rates for specific services that would be

1 needed in order to attract additional providers to participate in the Vermont  
2 Medicaid program;

3 (2) determine the feasibility of and costs associated with establishing a  
4 State dental assistance program to provide access to affordable dental services  
5 for Vermont residents who have lower income and are enrolled in Medicare;  
6 and

7 (3) explore opportunities to further expand access to dental care in  
8 Vermont, including:

9 (A) examining the potential to reimburse dentists, dental therapists,  
10 and dental hygienists for teledentistry services; and

11 (B) exploring the possible integration of dental services into the  
12 scope of services provided through accountable care organizations.

13 (b)(1) On or before November 1, 2019, the Department of Vermont Health  
14 Access shall provide to the House Committee on Health Care and the Senate  
15 Committee on Health and Welfare the working group's findings and  
16 recommendations regarding the feasibility and costs of creating a dental  
17 assistance program for Medicare beneficiaries as described in subdivision  
18 (a)(2) of this section and on opportunities to further expand access to dental  
19 care as described in subdivision (a)(3) of this section. The report shall also  
20 include the amount of funding that would be needed to achieve

1 the reimbursement rates determined by the working group pursuant to  
2 subdivision (a)(1) of this section.

3 (2) The Department of Vermont Health Access shall report on the amount  
4 of funding necessary to achieve the reimbursement rates determined by the  
5 working group pursuant to subdivision (a)(1) of this section as part of the  
6 Department’s fiscal year 2021 budget presentation.

7 Sec. 3. AMENDMENT TO MEDICAID STATE PLAN

8 If necessary, the Secretary of Human Services shall request approval from  
9 the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for an amendment to  
10 Vermont’s Medicaid State Plan to include the expanded Medicaid dental  
11 benefits set forth in 33 V.S.A. § 1992.

12 Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATES

13 (a) Sec. 1 (33 V.S.A. § 1991), Sec. 2 (dental access and reimbursement  
14 working group), Sec. 3 (State Plan amendment), and this section shall take  
15 effect on passage.

16 (b) Sec. 1 (33 V.S.A. § 1992) shall take effect on the later of July 1, 2019  
17 or approval from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services of the State  
18 Plan amendment for expanded Medicaid dental benefits.

19 and that after passage the title of the bill be amended to read: “An act  
20 relating to expanding Medicaid beneficiaries’ access to dental care”

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3 (Committee vote: \_\_\_\_\_)

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Senator \_\_\_\_\_

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FOR THE COMMITTEE