

Introduced by

Representatives Schneider, Brown, Davis, Finley-DeVilleville, McLeod, Mitskog, Nelson, Hager
Senators Bekkedahl, Hogan

1 A BILL for an Act to provide for a legislative management study relating to dental and oral health
2 care status among Medicaid recipients and workforce support to improve access for low-income
3 children, Native American children, and individuals with disabilities; and to provide an
4 appropriation.

5 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

6 **SECTION 1. LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT STUDY - ACCESS TO DENTAL AND ORAL**
7 **HEALTH CARE SERVICES FOR LOW-INCOME CHILDREN, NATIVE AMERICAN**
8 **CHILDREN, AND INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES.**

- 9 1. During the 2025-26 interim, the legislative management shall consider studying the
10 unmet dental and oral health care needs of low-income children, Native American
11 children, and individuals with disabilities. The study must include:
- 12 a. An overview of the dental and oral health care status of Medicaid recipients,
13 including low-income children, Native American children, and individuals with
14 disabilities, both on and off reservations;
 - 15 b. Evaluation of the importance of receiving dental and oral health care services,
16 the impacts and outcomes of not receiving services, general health
17 consequences, complications, and expanded costs of future care;
 - 18 c. Review of state and federal regulations, policies, and procedures limiting or
19 perceived as limiting dentist provider enrollment in Medicaid, including
20 impediments to enrollment, prior authorizations, attachments, appeals, and timely
21 payments;
 - 22 d. Availability of, and access or barriers to, complex dental services for Medicaid
23 recipients with disabilities or dental conditions which might require anesthesia or
24 critical care;

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- 1 e. Review Medicaid dental reimbursement rates for a selection of preventative and
2 treatment services in this state compared to other states, private payers, and in
3 comparison to real cost for dental teams to determine potential need to increase
4 reimbursement rates;
- 5 f. Review barriers and opportunities relating to expanding education for dentists
6 and dental staff, including consideration of a new dental school in this state, long-
7 term partnership with regional dental schools, and increased dental student
8 residencies located in this state;
- 9 g. Consideration of the expansion or promotion of programs that offer support and
10 resources to enable on-the-job training and apprenticeships for dental assistants,
11 including the visibility of providing state and federal resources to support
12 providers offering such training;
- 13 h. Consideration of expansion or creation of volunteer and charitable dental
14 programs and nonprofit services;
- 15 i. Evaluation of ways to improve accessibility to dental and oral health care
16 services for Medicaid recipients, including low-income children, Native American
17 children, and individuals with disabilities, both on and off reservations;
- 18 j. Exploration of the feasibility of partnerships between state programs and tribal
19 health organizations to enhance delivery;
- 20 k. Review of programs designed to recruit and retain dental health providers, such
21 as loan forgiveness or incentives for dentists working in underserved
22 communities, including tribal communities; and
- 23 l. Exploration of the use of telehealth solutions to reach rural areas, including tribal
24 communities.
- 25 2. The study may include broader considerations of unmet needs for dental services for
26 all Medicaid recipients, data for those recipients, and any current for remediation with
27 goals, objectives, projected costs, and implementation timetables.
- 28 3. The legislative management shall report its findings and recommendations, together
29 with any legislation required to implement the recommendations, to the seventieth
30 legislative assembly.

1 **SECTION 2. APPROPRIATION - DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES -**
2 **ORAL HEALTH PROGRAM STUDENT ROTATION EXPANSION.** There is appropriated out of
3 any moneys in the general fund in the state treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of
4 \$97,000, or so much of the sum as may be necessary, to the department of health and human
5 services for the purpose of supporting the department's oral health program student rotations
6 across the state, including community health centers serving Native American populations, and
7 for dental student recruitment efforts, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2025, and ending
8 June 30, 2027.