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# FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR	Ortiz y Pino	ORIGINAL DATE LAST UPDATED		НВ	
SHORT TITI	LE Expand Dental Car	re to Children		SM _	96/aSPAC
			ANALY	ST	Chilton/Glenn

# ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY19	FY20	FY21	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total		\$15.0	NFI	\$15.0	Nonrecurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to HB 308

## **SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

LFC Files

Response Received From Department of Health (DOH)

## **SUMMARY**

## Synopsis of SPAC Amendment

The Senate Public Affairs Committee amendment adds representatives of the dental health insurance industry to the task force's membership.

## Synopsis of Original Memorial

Noting the importance of dental and oral health to the well-being of all people, and especially children, Senate Memorial 96 asks the Department of Health (DOH) to convene a task force to study how dental care can be made more widely available to children receiving Medicaid benefits. The task force would study means of improving access to dentists by children receiving Medicaid, increasing the number of dental providers who accept Medicaid patients, and finding ways to eventually decrease the number and costs of dental visits. The task force would also consider one of the central reasons for lack of dentist participation in Medicaid: low reimbursement rates.

Members of the task force would include representatives from the following entities:

- HSD Medical Assistance Division
- New Mexico Dental Association

## Senate Memorial 96/aSPAC – Page 2

- New Mexico Oral Health Advisory Committee
- New Mexico Dental Hygienists' Association
- New Mexico Pediatric Society
- University of New Mexico Department of Dental Medicine
- Health Action New Mexico
- New Mexico Oral Health Coalition
- Albuquerque Area Indian Health Service

The task force would be asked to report its findings and recommendations to the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee and the Legislative Finance Committee before November 1, 2019.

#### FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

There would be a cost in personnel time to the DOH in convening the requested task force, and in compiling and presenting its reports. DOH estimates that its cost would be approximately \$15 thousand "to support the study and publication in addition to existing staff time."

## **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

DOH points out that "Tooth decay is the most prevalent chronic condition among children in the United States." More than one-quarter of US preschoolers (28%) have experienced visible cavities well before entering school. The consequences of dental disease have taken a toll on children, their families, and communities. This has led policymakers to consider a variety of strategies to address the oral health burden among US children.

According to American Dental Association data, only 38 per cent of US dentists accept Medicaid; in New Mexico, where some 72 per cent of births are covered by Medicaid, the percentage of dentists accepting Medicaid is somewhat higher, at 49.8 per cent. New Mexico Medicaid payments to dentists average 58.9 per cent as much as payments from private dental insurance. The ADA data, at

https://www.ada.org/~/media/ADA/Science%20and%20Research/HPI/Files/HPIgraphic\_0417\_1 .pdf?la=en,

indicate a linear relationship among the states between Medicaid payment and Medicaid participation.

DOH notes that Senate Memorial 96 and the resultant possibility of increased Medicaid dental benefits might help "to provide additional dental care services for a significant number of children in the most underserved communities in our state."

**RELATIONSHIP** to House Bill 308, which would establish the profession of dental therapy within New Mexico, a way of having mid-level dental practitioners available especially in areas of especially high need. HB 308 would also establish minimum qualifications for a DOH Director of Oral Health; its third provision is to require a dental exam of students before they enroll in school. HB308 in turn is related to 2015 Senate Memorial 136, which set up a Dental Therapy Task Force.

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