

1

Would you support a comprehensive adult Medicaid dental benefit that includes access to routine / preventive oral health care?

Yes

2

Please explain your answer.

I am a former foster mother, and one of my daughters came to me at age 17, with six adult teeth already extracted." It was heartbreaking. She was starting adulthood with missing teeth, and I saw firsthand the devastating consequences of not having adequate dental care.

3

Recognize and regulate non-dentist oral health providers (for example, support the integration of dental therapists according to HB2235)?

Yes

4

Integration of and provision of oral health services in non-traditional settings (for example, pediatric offices, schools, mobile clinics, etc.).

Yes

5

Empower AHCCCS to better enforce standards regarding access to oral health care.

Yes

6

Please explain your answers.

Together, this slate of policies would improve both access and outcomes. Bolstering access to non-dentist oral health providers would put otherwise prohibitively expensive oral healthcare treatments and preventative measures in reach for more Arizonans. Placing opportunities to access oral health services in nontraditional settings would have a positive impact on ensuring that more people view oral health services as a priority. Improving enforcement for oral healthcare standards would secure quality oral healthcare for more Arizonans. I support all three listed policies.

7

Oral health is an important part of overall health for both mother and child. Hormonal changes during pregnancy put pregnant women at higher risk for oral health issues. This disparity is exacerbated in low-income women, who may lack access to other key health supports. Research strongly suggests a link between gum disease and poor birth outcomes such as maternal high blood pressure, preterm delivery, and lower birth weight, which in turn increase overall health care costs. At present, low-income women who participate in Arizona's Medicaid program do not have access to comprehensive and affordable oral health care, despite several broadly-supported efforts by the legislature to provide this benefit. Would you support a comprehensive oral health benefit for pregnant women who participate in Medicaid?

Yes

8

Please explain your answer.

The fact that efforts to ensure that pregnant women have access to oral health care have been stopped is ridiculous and one of the things I point to as a sign that the lawmaking process in Arizona is broken. I would be proud to support and sponsor a bill to rectify this inexcusable gap in coverage.

9

How would you ensure oral health access is a priority in future state budgets?

Across the board, public health spending in Arizona is among the lowest in the nation, and oral health is one of the areas where neglecting public health hurts Arizonans the most. I would support a budget with more funding for AHCCCS and education programs around oral health. I also would make sure that experts in oral healthcare access are able to share what they think is most needed with lawmakers.

10

What other actions would you take to promote oral health equity in Arizona?

In the last several sessions, the legislature has deregulated which essential health benefits insurance plans must provide; pediatric oral care has been one of the benefits that has been under attack. I will stop that deregulation and move Arizona health policy in the direction of filling gaps in coverage, including the many in oral health, rather than creating them.

11

Thank you for participating in the survey. To receive a record of your responses please provide your email.

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