

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.

Oral health is a key component of a person's overall well-being and general health. Lack of routine and preventative care leads to poorer health outcomes in the future and higher costs in the long run. In addition to the health implications, poor oral health due to lack of dental benefits can reduce a person's productivity and quality of life. Healthcare, including dental benefits, is a human right and everyone should have access to the care that they need.

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.

Lack of access to dental care and oral healthcare is a major problem across the state of Arizona, particularly in rural areas and Tribal areas. There's no one size fits all solution. Multiple approaches will be needed to address the different causes and aspects of the problem. Recognizing dental therapists and safely providing oral health services in non-traditional settings like pediatric offices and mobile clinics will both help to expand access to basic dental services and care. We also need to include other components, such as expanding AHCCCS to include dental care, to fully address this crisis.

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.

Oral health is key for the health, safety, and future success of both the mother and the child. Individuals in lower income brackets already face greater health disparities and we should not be increasing the likelihood of poorer outcomes by not offering dental healthcare coverage. Comprehensive oral health should absolutely be included in AHCCCS for individuals who are pregnant. This would protect the health of the mother and child and reduce future healthcare costs for the state and private individuals.

9

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

I believe that healthcare is a human right and that every Arizonan should have access to quality, affordable healthcare, including oral healthcare. I will be a strong advocate for policies that address the current challenges to accessing care and work to find innovative solutions to these problems. This will improve the health of our residents and the success of our state. I will listen to the needs of my constituents and work with stakeholder groups to help bring everyone to the table to work together to find solutions.

10

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

Legislative District 11 includes many rural areas and I personally understand the challenges that Arizonans living in rural areas face when trying to find affordable, quality healthcare. It's not unusual to have to drive 50 miles or more to receive the care that you need or wait weeks until a provider is available. I will work hard to promote oral health equity across Arizona and meet the needs of our people.

11

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

info@mendoza4arizona.com