



**Dental Requirements Reminder for Children in Foster Care  
February 3, 2025**

To: Article 29-I VFCA Health Facilities (29-Is), Local Departments of Social Services (LDSS), the Administration for Children's Services (ACS), and Medicaid Managed Care Plans (MMCPs) including Mainstream Managed Care and HIV Special Needs Plans

To ensure improved dental access and outcomes for children in foster care, the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) is issuing a reminder that MMCPs are **required** to adhere to the following:

- MMCPs will maintain Foster Care Liaisons (FCL) on staff to ensure there is a high-touch coordination approach with Local Departments of Social Services (LDSS)/the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) and the 29-I. The FCL will coordinate dental services and access to dental services for all children in foster care including assisting the LDSS/ACS and 29-I with identifying available dental providers and scheduling dental appointments, when necessary. The MMCP **cannot** delegate these high touch coordination activities to a dental vendor.
- The MMCP FCL is the direct MMCP contact for care coordinators, 29-Is, LDSS/ACS, and service providers and is responsible for monitoring dental access for children in foster care and youth placed in the care of a VFCA.
- The MMCP shall ensure there is sufficient network capacity, which includes dental providers, to meet the timeframe and distance requirements for completion of required foster care initial health assessments, and on-going preventive, and restorative care, as required under the Medicaid Managed Care/Family Health Plus/HIV Special Needs Plan/Health and Recovery Plan Model Contract (Model Contract).
- The MMCP FCL is required to assist with access to dental care issues including facilitation of single case agreements with out of network providers when a participant is placed outside of the MMCP's service area and/or due to a lack of qualified or available providers in the MMCP's network.
- The MMCP FCL will be readily available via telephone and email to the LDSS/29-I during regular business hours to address any issues for managed care enrollees in foster care. The MMCP must instruct 29-Is/LDSS on what to do to obtain needed services/supports after business hours and on weekends.

- Appointments for dental services should be located within 30 minutes/30 miles of the child's placement consistent with Department Time and Distance Standards. The MMCP must permit children to access medically necessary dental services from providers outside of the MMCP's network, if the MMCP network does not include an available, qualified provider, and/or when an MMCP is unable to locate a participating dentist within 30 minutes/30 miles of the enrollee's placement. Payment arrangements to out-of-network providers are made through a single case agreement. As stated above, the MMCP is responsible for negotiating the single case agreement to include mutually agreed upon payment between the MMCP and the provider. MMCPs may contract with non-Medicaid enrolled providers as appropriate to address service needs. MMCPs may negotiate agreements for payment of these services which may include fees at or above established Medicaid FFS rates.
- Appointment times must adhere to standards outlined in the [Model Contract](#), including but not limited to the following:
  - For emergency care: immediately upon presentation at a service delivery site.
    - *If in need of emergency care, MMCPs should be made aware that an appointment is needed because of an emergency.*
  - Non-urgent "sick" visit: within forty-eight (48) to seventy-two (72) hours of request, as clinically indicated.
  - Routine non-urgent, preventive appointments except as otherwise indicated in the Model Contract: within four (4) weeks of request.
  - Specialist referrals (not urgent), except as otherwise indicated in the Model Contract: within four (4) to six (6) weeks of request.

29-Is are **expected** to submit concerns and/or complaints to the Department of Health Medicaid Managed Care Complaint Team at 1-800-206-8125 or [managedcarecomplaint@health.ny.gov](mailto:managedcarecomplaint@health.ny.gov), if they experience any difficulty in obtaining access to dental care for children/youth in foster care enrolled in a MMCP even when they are working in good faith together with the FCL to find dental care.

Additional information about requirements for children/youth in foster care can be found in the [29-I Policy Paper](#), [MCO Children's Transformation Requirements and Standards](#), and the [29-I Billing Manual](#).

Thank you for your cooperation in improving dental outcomes and access for children in foster care.

Questions about this announcement can be sent to [BH.Transition@health.ny.gov](mailto:BH.Transition@health.ny.gov).