



Office of the Governor
Division of Medicaid

Dr. Robert L. Robinson
Executive Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date

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State's Medicaid Reimbursing Pediatric Tooth Decay Prevention
Fluoride varnish OK by dentists, physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants

JACKSON, MS.- (Date, 2010) – Medicaid reimbursement is now available for the application of fluoride varnish to children's teeth by pediatric primary care providers (PCPs) in Mississippi for up to two times per year. In a letter to the Mississippi Dental Association, Division of Medicaid Executive Director Dr. Robert L. Robinson stated, "...we are reimbursing both dentists and medical providers (physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants) for an oral health assessment and for application of fluoride varnish for children under age three."

According to dental experts, fluoride varnishes applied professionally would substantially reduce tooth decay in children. The varnish is quick and easy to apply and after 24 hours the application it is brushed and flossed off.

Although the oral health of children in the United States has steadily improved over the past few decades, tooth decay in early childhood remains a significant problem, particularly among low-income families. Tooth decay is now the No. 1 chronic infectious disease in children. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, it is five times more common in kids than asthma and seven times more common than hay fever. Almost half of kids ages 2 to 11 have had decay in their baby teeth.

Studies also indicate that children living in poverty suffer twice as much tooth decay as do other children, and their cavities are more likely to go untreated. Dr. Robinson went on to say, "We hope this program will enhance our ongoing efforts to improve access to preventive dental care for our children."

Medicaid Provider questions concerning this topic should be directed to the Division of Medicaid Medical Services Bureau at 1-800-421-2408 and ask for Medical Services.

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