

Report on the Dental Benefits Committee
To: House of Delegates

The 2022 House of Delegates adopted HD-13-2022, establishing the Dental Benefits Committee (Committee) as a standing committee. The Committee is responsible for investigating and analyzing dental benefits-related member issues, conducting outreach with dental benefits carriers operating in Washington state, establishing a working relationship with the Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC), and collaborating on the substance and implementation of the Association's dental benefits advocacy agenda.

Current Committee Members

Dr. Mikaely Moore Fujita, Co-Chair

Dr. Ryan Lemke, Co-Chair

Dr. John Gibbons

Dr. Robin Henderson

Dr. Liselotte Mannion-Black

Dr. Stacey Syype

Dr. Daniel Tremblay

The following is an update on the Committee's activities since the 2024 House of

Delegates meeting:

Advocacy Efforts

The Committee partnered with the Board of Directors and the Legislative Session Task Force on SB 5351, which will be further detailed in the Legislative Task Force Committee's report.

The Committee has also strengthened community outreach to gather reliable data and feedback from members and their teams.

Preventive Care Dental Benefit Policy

In June 2025, the Committee began the co-development of a legislative proposal aimed at expanding access to preventive dental care and improving coverage standards. The proposed bill, scheduled for introduction in the 2026 legislative session, seeks to remove interfering limitations such as age restrictions and frequency limits on preventive services. It also addresses the

denial of clinically necessary preventive procedures when those procedures are classified as bundled or as inclusive to other necessary treatment, ensuring that patients receive appropriate care without administrative barriers.

The Committee collaborated closely with the Legislative Task Force and staff to draft the bill, ensuring alignment with WSDA's mission and legislative agenda. This work included evaluating claims data, gathering feedback from member dentists, and consulting with industry experts to shape a policy that reflects both clinical best practices and consumer needs. The Preventive Care bill is positioned to create a more equitable coverage framework while strengthening provider-patient decision making.

Development of the Dental Benefit Advocacy Role

On May 6th, 2025, WSDA established a staff position for the Dental Benefit Advocacy Manager to provide focused leadership in addressing dental benefit related issues. This is the first staff role in WSDA's history dedicated exclusively to these issues, enabling more direct engagement with dental offices statewide and assisting in improved data collection and stronger policy development.

Since the role was created, the manager has implemented key initiatives including the formation of targeted subcommittees to address benefit challenges, collaborating with WSDA leadership on the development of a Preventive Care Dental Benefit bill, and establishing a patient coalition to broaden advocacy at the consumer level.

The manager also provides direct assistance to members with claims and insurance matters while coordinating the Dental Benefit Committee's priorities with current legislative objectives. These efforts improve WSDA's influence on benefit policies and expand the tools and resources available to members.

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