



DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

News Release

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**DHS REINSTATES PREVENTIVE DENTAL SERVICES FOR ADULTS,
OFFERS DENTURE BENEFITS FOR FIRST TIME**

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Department of Human Services (DHS) announced today the State has resumed dental benefits – including periodic exams and cleanings – for Medicaid-eligible adults. These benefits, which have not been offered by the State for more than a decade, will help up to 95,000 needy men and women.

Through the new Prevent Adult Dental Decay (PADD) program, DHS clients in Medicaid – including the Fee-For-Service and QUEST programs – can now receive \$500 in yearly benefits for X-rays, cavity fillings, restorative procedures and other dental services. In addition, for the first time, DHS is providing \$1,000 in annual benefits for Medicaid recipients who require full or partial dentures.

“Many impoverished men and women did not receive an appropriate level of dental care over the past decade, which had a significant negative impact on their health, self-esteem and employability,” DHS Director Lillian Koller said. “By reinstating these dental benefits and adding coverage for dentures, DHS is helping Hawai'i residents in need lead healthier lives.”

Preventive and restorative dental benefits for needy adults were eliminated by the State in 1996 as part of budget-cutting measures. Following these cuts, Medicaid only paid for emergency

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DHS reinstates preventive dental services for adults

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dental services, such as tooth extractions. The 1996 budget reductions did not affect dental coverage for children.

In 2006, the Lingle-Aiona Administration worked with the Hawai`i State Legislature to reinstate preventive and restorative dental benefits, which became effective in December.

“Since reinstating these adult dental benefits, more dentists have expressed an interest in providing services to our Medicaid clients,” Director Koller said. “This will improve access to much-needed care, especially on the Neighbor Islands.”

To learn more about adult dental coverage, call 211 or contact the Community Case Management Corporation at (808) 486-8030 on O`ahu or (888) 486-8030 toll-free from the Neighbor Islands. Translation services are available.

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