



Overview of the Dental and Oral Health Services Measures in the 2023 Child Core Set

Introduction

Improving oral health outcomes for children and adolescents in Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) is a priority for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Tooth decay is one of the most common chronic conditions of childhood, can have long-lasting effects on healthy growth and development, and is more prevalent among children who are from low-income families.¹

In recognition of this priority, CMS reports on quality improvement efforts and progress in this area each year.² Furthermore, the Core Set of Children's Health Care Quality Measures for Medicaid and CHIP (Child Core Set) includes three measures that focus on measuring access to high quality and appropriate dental and oral health services (Table 1).

CMS added the Sealant Receipt on Permanent First Molars (SFM-CH) measure to the 2021 Child Core Set to replace the Dental Sealants for 6–9 Year-Old Children at Elevated Caries Risk (SEAL-CH) measure, which was retired by the measure steward. The dental sealant measure was selected because it assesses the quality and appropriateness of oral health care.³

In 2022, CMS added two new measures to the Child Core Set the Oral Evaluation, Dental Services (OEV-CH) measure and the Topical Fluoride for

Children (TFL-CH) measure.⁴ These measures replaced the Percentage of Eligibles Who Received Preventive Dental Services (PDENT-CH) measure. The OEV-CH and TFL-CH measures were selected because they assess the number of beneficiaries that receive evidence-based preventative oral health care, and the measures are more precise than the PDENT-CH measure.

Taken together, these measures focus on an overall oral evaluation (OEV-CH) and two evidence-based preventive services (TFL-CH and SFM-CH). They will support CMS and states in continuing to improve dental and oral health among Medicaid and CHIP beneficiaries. This technical assistance resource provides an overview of the three dental and oral health services measures in the 2023 Child Core Set, and highlights differences in the measure specifications (Table 2).

Table 1. Dental and Oral Health Services Measures Included in the 2023 Child Core Set

NQF #	Measure Name
2517	Oral Evaluation, Dental Services (OEV-CH)
2528/3700/ 3701 ^a	Topical Fluoride for Children (TFL-CH)
Not endorsed	Sealant Receipt on Permanent First Molars (SFM-CH)

^a This measure has three rates corresponding to topical fluoride applications provided as (1) dental OR oral health services, (2) dental services, or (3) oral health services.

¹ <https://www.medicaid.gov/federal-policy-guidance/downloads/cib062520.pdf>.

² See <https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/quality-of-care/downloads/2021-child-chart-pack.pdf> for the Quality of Care for Children in Medicaid and CHIP: Findings from the 2020 Child Core Set.

³ More information on the SFM-CH measure can be found at <https://www.medicaid.gov/federal-policy-guidance/downloads/cib111920.pdf>.

⁴ More information on the OEV-CH and TFL-CH measures can be found at <https://www.medicaid.gov/federal-policy-guidance/downloads/cib121021.pdf>.

Table 2. Overview of the Dental and Oral Health Services Measures in the 2023 Child Core Set

	Oral Evaluation, Dental Services (OEV-CH)	Topical Fluoride for Children (TFL-CH)	Sealant Receipt on Permanent First Molars (SFM-CH)
Measure steward	American Dental Association on behalf of the Dental Quality Alliance (ADA/DQA)	American Dental Association on behalf of the Dental Quality Alliance (ADA/DQA)	American Dental Association on behalf of the Dental Quality Alliance (ADA/DQA)
Description	Percentage of enrolled children under age 21 who received a comprehensive or periodic oral evaluation within the measurement year.	Percentage of enrolled children ages 1 through 20 who received at least two topical fluoride applications as: (1) dental or oral health services, (2) dental services, and (3) oral health services within the measurement year.	Percentage of enrolled children who have ever received sealants on permanent first molar teeth. Two rates are reported: (1) at least one sealant and (2) all four molars sealed by the 10th birthdate.
Age	Children who are under the age 21 as of December 31 of the measurement year. Report 9 age stratifications and a total rate: • Age <1 • Ages 1 to 2 • Ages 3 to 5 • Ages 6 to 7 • Ages 8 to 9 • Ages 10 to 11 • Ages 12 to 14 • Ages 15 to 18 • Ages 19 to 20 • Total ages <1 to 20	Children ages 1 through 20 as of December 31 of the measurement year. Report 8 age stratifications and a total rate: • Ages 1 to 2 • Ages 3 to 5 • Ages 6 to 7 • Ages 8 to 9 • Ages 10 to 11 • Ages 12 to 14 • Ages 15 to 18 • Ages 19 to 20 • Total ages 1 through 20	Children who turn age 10 in the measurement year.
Denominator	Children who are under age 21 as of December 31 of the measurement year.	Children ages 1 through 20 as of December 31 of the measurement year.	Children who turn age 10 in the measurement year.
Numerator	The unduplicated number of enrolled children who received an oral evaluation as a dental service during the measurement year.	The unduplicated number of enrolled children who received at least two fluoride applications as the following during the measurement year: • Dental or oral health services • Dental services • Oral health services Fluoride applications must be provided on at least two unique dates of service.	The unduplicated number of enrolled children who received a sealant in the 48 months prior to the 10th birthdate on: • At least one permanent first molar tooth • All four permanent first molars.
Continuous enrollment	180 days during measurement year.	The measurement year.	12 months prior to the child's 10th birthdate.
Allowable gap	No allowable gaps in the continuous enrollment period.	No more than one gap in enrollment of up to 31 days during the measurement year. To determine continuous enrollment for a beneficiary for whom enrollment is verified monthly the child may not have more than a single 1-month gap in coverage.	No more than one gap in enrollment of up to 45 days during the continuous enrollment period. To determine continuous enrollment for a beneficiary for whom enrollment is verified monthly the child may not have more than a 1-month gap in coverage.
Anchor date	None.	None.	Enrolled on the 10th birthdate.
Exclusions	None.	None.	Children who have received treatment (restorations, extractions, endodontic, prosthodontic, and other dental treatments) on all four permanent first molars in the 48 months prior to the 10th birthdate.
Data source	Administrative	Administrative	Administrative
Codes needed to calculate the measure	• CDT Codes • NUCC maintained Provider Taxonomy Codes	• CDT Codes • CPT Codes • NUCC maintained Provider Taxonomy Codes	• CDT Codes • Tooth Number Codes • Tooth Surface Codes

Oral Evaluation, Dental Services (OEV-CH)

The Oral Evaluation, Dental Services (OEV-CH) measure examines the percentage of enrolled children under age 21 who received a comprehensive or periodic oral evaluation within the measurement year. This measure includes one rate that measures the number of children who received an oral evaluation as a dental service during the measurement year. This measure uses the CDT codes and the NUCC maintained coding system to determine the numerator.

Claims with missing or invalid CDT codes, missing or invalid NUCC maintained Provider Taxonomy Codes, or NUCC maintained Provider Taxonomy Codes that are not listed in the measure specifications will not be counted in the numerator.

For the 2023 Child Core Set, the measure steward updated the technical specifications for the OEV-CH measure, which includes the following:

- Updated the link to the DQA Measures User Guide in the Additional Notes section.

Topical Fluoride for Children (TFL-CH)

The Topical Fluoride for Children (TFL-CH) measure examines the percentage of enrolled children ages 1 through 20 who received at least two topical fluoride applications as (1) dental or oral health services, (2) dental services, and (3) oral health services within the measurement year, where there were at least two unique dates of service when topical fluoride was provided. This measure includes three rates: (1) dental or oral health services, (2) dental services, and (3) oral health services.

This measure uses the CDT, CPT, and NUCC coding systems to determine the numerator: the rate for dental or oral health services (Rate 1) uses CDT and CPT codes. The rate for dental services (Rate 2) and the rate for oral health services (Rate 3) use CDT codes and NUCC maintained Provider Taxonomy Codes to determine the numerator. Rate 3 also uses CPT codes.

For the 2023 Child Core Set, the measure steward updated the technical specifications for the TFL-CH measure, which includes the following:

- Updated the Guidance for Reporting section to clarify that the numerator of Rate 1 is not the sum of the numerators of Rates 2 and 3. There may be cases where a child may be eligible to be included in the numerator of Rate 1, but not in the numerators of Rates 2 and 3. There may also be a case where a child could be eligible to be included in the numerators of both Rates 2 and 3.
- Updated the Administrative Specification section to remove the note under “Numerator for Rate 1 (Dental or oral health services)” and “Numerator for Rate 3 (Oral health services)” that stated that states could use additional codes to reimburse for fluoride provided by non-dental providers. States are encouraged to use the codes included in the specifications.
- Updated the link to the DQA Measures User Guide in the Additional Notes section.

The technical specifications for the TFL-CH measure describe additional factors to consider when determining the numerator of each rate, which include the following:

- The numerator cannot include more than one fluoride application per beneficiary on the same date of service. This applies to all three rates.
- All claims that have missing or invalid service codes (CPT and CDT codes) should be excluded from the numerator. This applies to all three rates.
- All claims that have missing or invalid NUCC maintained Provider Taxonomy Codes should be excluded from the numerator. This applies to Rates 2 and 3.

All modes of topical fluoride application (all CDT and CPT codes for this measure) are considered equally effective for this measure. This measure does not consider alternate home-use fluoride products including supplements.

Sealant Receipt on Permanent First Molars (SFM-CH)

The Sealant Receipt on Permanent First Molars (SFM-CH) measure examines the percentage of enrolled children who have ever received sealants on permanent first molar teeth for (1) at least one sealant and (2) all four molars sealed by the 10th birthdate. This measure includes two rates: (1) sealant for at least one permanent first molar, and (2) sealants for all four molars. This measure uses CDT codes, tooth number codes, and surface codes to determine the numerator and exclusions. A record with a missing or invalid tooth number code may not be counted in the numerator.

For the 2023 Child Core Set, the measure steward updated the technical specifications for the SFM-CH measure, which includes the following:

- Updated the Guidance for Reporting section to clarify that sealants that are received prior to 48 months before the 10th birthdate are not included in the numerator of the measure.
- Updated the link to the DQA Measures User Guide in the Additional Notes section.

Technical Assistance Resources for Calculating the Dental and Oral Health Services Measures

Several resources are available to help states calculate the dental and oral health services measures for Child Core Set reporting:

- The technical specifications for the dental and oral health services measures are in the FFY 2023 Child Core Set Resource Manual, available at <https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/quality-of-care/downloads/medicaid-and-chip-child-core-set-manual.pdf>.
- The FFY 2023 Child Core Set Measurement Period Table includes the date ranges that should be used for the denominator and numerator for the dental and oral health services measures, and is available at <https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/quality-of-care/downloads/ffy-2023-child-core-set-measurement-periods.pdf>.

- The FFY 2023 Child, Adult, and Health Home Core Set Reporting: Data Quality Checklist for States contains additional guidance to help states improve the completeness, accuracy, consistency, and documentation of the data reported, and is available at <https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/quality-of-care/downloads/child-adult-healthhomes-data-quality-checklist.pdf>.
- The DQA User Guide is available at https://www.ada.org/-/media/project/ada-organization/ada/ada-org/files/resources/research/dqa/dental-quality-measures/2023-measures/2023_dqa_pediatric_measures_user_guide_final.pdf.
- Additional Child Core Set resources are available at: <https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/quality-of-care/performance-measurement/adult-and-child-health-care-quality-measures/child-core-set-reporting-resources/index.html>.

For More Information

For technical assistance related to calculating and reporting the OEV-CH, TFL-CH, or SFM-CH measures, or other Child, Adult, and Health Home Core Sets measures, please contact the TA mailbox at MACQualityTA@cms.hhs.gov.