

To:  
Federally Qualified  
Health Centers  
HealthCheck  
Providers  
Nurse  
Practitioners  
Physician  
Assistants  
Physician Clinics  
Physicians  
Rural Health  
Clinics  
HMOs and Other  
Managed Care  
Programs

## Wisconsin Medicaid coverage of topical application of fluoride for children

Effective for dates of service on and after February 26, 2004, Wisconsin Medicaid will reimburse nurses and dental hygienists employed at certified HealthCheck nursing agencies, physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners for topical applications of fluoride provided to children.

Effective for dates of service on and after February 26, 2004, Wisconsin Medicaid will reimburse providers for topical applications of fluoride. These applications can be provided by nurses and dental hygienists employed at certified HealthCheck nursing agencies, physicians, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners.

### Background

Topical application of fluoride to a child's teeth by a provider is a safe and effective way to contribute to the prevention of tooth decay as part of a comprehensive oral health program.

Wisconsin Medicaid recommends that children under five years of age who have erupted teeth receive topical fluoride treatment. Children at low or moderate risk of early childhood caries should receive one or two applications per year; children at higher risk should receive three or

four applications per year. Refer to the Attachment of this *Wisconsin Medicaid and BadgerCare Update* for treatment information.

The appropriate mode of fluoride delivery in children under five years of age is fluoride varnish. Over-the-counter (OTC) mouth rinses are not covered by Wisconsin Medicaid.

### Claims submission

When submitting claims to Wisconsin Medicaid for topical fluoride treatment, providers must indicate Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) procedure code D1203 (Topical application of fluoride [prophylaxis not included] — child) on the paper ADA 2000 claim form, the paper CMS 1500 claim form, or on the electronic 837 Health Care Claim: Professional transaction (commonly known as the 837P). Providers may also indicate HealthCheck and office visit HCPCS procedure codes on the previously mentioned claim forms when submitting claims to Wisconsin Medicaid for fluoride treatment.

In cases where more than two fluoride treatments per year are medically necessary, providers are required to retain documentation in the recipient's file indicating the need for additional treatments.

Ancillary staff (e.g., physician assistants, nurse practitioners) are required to follow billing procedures as listed in the Physician Services Handbook.

Wisconsin Medicaid will separately reimburse providers for the appropriate level office visit or preventive visit at which the fluoride application was performed.

### **Treatment provided at HealthCheck agencies**

Wisconsin Medicaid covers topical application of fluoride provided by a dental hygienist at a certified HealthCheck nursing agency. Since HealthCheck nursing agencies are Medicaid certified, Wisconsin Medicaid does not require that the dental hygienist providing the treatment be individually Medicaid certified.

A prescription from a licensed dentist is required for a dental hygienist to provide a fluoride treatment. The prescription must be retained in the recipient's HealthCheck file.

Fluoride treatment can be provided by a nurse employed by a HealthCheck nursing agency under a HealthCheck agency physician's order or agency protocol.

### **Training materials**

Training materials describing how providers may perform lift-the-lip oral screenings, apply fluoride varnish to a small child's teeth, and provide basic oral health guidance to parents can be found on the Medicaid Web site at [dhfs.wisconsin.gov/medicaid/](http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/medicaid/).

Refer to the Attachment for fluoride varnish application instructions.

Training materials are available in paper format from Provider Services if requested.

A limited number of on-site trainings are available for group practices. Contact Sally Andrews at (608) 266-7677 or State Oral Health Consultant Nancy McKenney at (608) 266-3201 to schedule a session.

### **For more information**

Providers may call Provider Services at (800) 947-9627 or (608) 221-9883 with questions about this *Update*.

### **Information regarding Medicaid HMOs**

This *Update* contains Medicaid fee-for-service policy and applies to providers of services to recipients on fee-for-service Medicaid only. For Medicaid HMO or managed care policy, contact the appropriate managed care organization. Wisconsin Medicaid HMOs are required to provide at least the same benefits as those provided under fee-for-service arrangements.

**I**n cases where more than two fluoride treatments per year are medically necessary, providers are required to retain documentation in the recipient's file indicating the need for additional treatments.

The *Wisconsin Medicaid and BadgerCare Update* is the first source of program policy and billing information for providers.

Although the *Update* refers to Medicaid recipients, all information applies to BadgerCare recipients also.

Wisconsin Medicaid and BadgerCare are administered by the Division of Health Care Financing, Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, P.O. Box 309, Madison, WI 53701-0309.

For questions, call Provider Services at (800) 947-9627 or (608) 221-9883 or visit our Web site at [dhfs.wisconsin.gov/medicaid/](http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/medicaid/).

PHC 1250

# ATTACHMENT

## Application of fluoride varnish instructions

Providers may use the following information when providing topical applications of fluoride treatments for children. Criteria for use of fluoride varnish includes the presence of factors that put a child at risk for dental caries including visible plaque on the primary incisors, carious lesions, white spot lesions, or a history of decay. Socioeconomic status can also be an indicator of risk.

Use the following instructions when performing fluoride treatments:

1. Clean the teeth. The teeth need to be “toothbrush clean” before fluoride varnish can be applied. Application after a dental prophylaxis is also acceptable.
2. Use one drop of varnish (.3 ml) per child, dispensing it on the tray cover or in a small cup.
3. Isolate and dry the quadrant that will be treated. (A quadrant is a quarter of the mouth.) This can be accomplished with gauze or air. Drying should be thorough, but not excessive.
4. Apply the varnish to all exposed surfaces of the teeth, including the chewing and interproximal surfaces (i.e., spaces between teeth). Disposable brushes or cotton-tipped applicators can be used.
5. Repeat for the rest of the mouth.
6. Ask the recipient not to brush his or her teeth for four hours following the application. Inform parents that the child’s teeth will look yellow until the varnish is brushed off. (By this time, the fluoride will have been absorbed into the enamel of the teeth.) Follow the manufacturer’s instructions regarding eating and drinking after a fluoride treatment is performed.