
Health Care & Wellness Committee

HJM 4014

Brief Description: Asking Congress to include dental care in Medicare.

Sponsors: Representatives Riccelli, Chapman, Tarleton, Orwall, Fey, Macri, Wylie, Doglio, Stonier, Kloba and Pollet.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requests the federal government to include coverage for dental care in the Medicare program.
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Hearing Date: 1/17/20

Staff: Nico Wedekind (786-7290) and Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

Medicare is a federally provided health insurance program for individuals 65 or older, as well as certain individuals under 65 with disabilities. To be eligible for Medicare, an individual under 65 with a disability must first have received disability benefits for at least 24 months. Individuals with end-stage renal disease are also eligible for Medicare, regardless of age.

Medicare coverage is divided into 4 major parts: A, B, C, and D. Part A covers inpatient hospital stays, care in skilled nursing facilities, hospice care, and some home health care. Part B covers certain doctor's services, outpatient care, durable medical supplies, preventative services, mental health services, and limited outpatient prescription drugs. Part C creates the Medicare+ Choice alternatives to "Original Medicare," which allows private insurance providers to bundle Parts A, B, and, optionally, D into one insurance plan. Medicare+ Choice plans may also include benefits not offered by Original Medicare, such as vision, hearing, dental, and wellbeing programs. Part D covers prescription drugs, though which drugs are provided depends on which insurance plan is selected.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Medicare does not cover long-term care, most dental care (unless the dental services require hospitalization), eye exams for the purpose of prescriptive glasses, dentures, cosmetic surgery, acupuncture, hearing aids and exams for fitting such aids, or routine foot care.

Summary of Bill:

The Legislature requests Congress to include coverage for dental care in the federal Medicare program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.