



February 19, 2016

Community Transformation Team  
Washington State Healthcare Authority  
626 8<sup>th</sup> Ave SE  
Olympia, WA 98501

**Re: Transformation Project Suggestions**

Dear Community Transformation Team,

On behalf of Molina Healthcare of Washington, I am writing to express support for both oral health related transformation project proposals (#95 – DENT, and #96 – Healthy Mouths, Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies) submitted to the Health Care Authority as suggestions for global Medicaid Waiver Activities. Each of these projects aims to increase the number of Medicaid-insured clients who receive necessary dental care and treatment.

While we support these projects and their likely real impact on improving dental care access for targeted high needs populations; we firmly believe these projects are interim stop-gaps and precursors to what Washington really needs, which is to move all Medicaid dental services from FFS to Managed Care. Washington State’s adult Medicaid dental access is in a state of crisis, with only 24% of dentists accepting adult Medicaid beneficiaries. Washington is behind at least seven other states nationwide (including Oregon and California) that already include dental benefits under managed Medicaid. The empirical statistics of Washington’s dental health crises and unmet oral health needs is represented in statistics like those below:

- Nearly 40% of Washington’s children start Kindergarten with tooth decay;
- Almost 15% of Washington’s children have rampant decay (7 or more decayed/filled teeth); 13% have untreated decay.
- Only 17% of Medicaid-insured adults accessed dental care in FY 2014.

Healthier Washington has a stated commitment to the promise of “whole person” health. This promise cannot be fully realized until oral health is integrated into “whole person health”. Research has confirmed that improving the oral health of individuals can result in better health and overall reductions in medical spending. Molina believes that integrating oral health into Medicaid Managed Care could dramatically improve access without increasing total Medicaid funding. We are working today to test our hypothesis that current Oral Health spend (both preventive and Emergency) may be adequate when combined, to cover all Oral Health services under managed Medicaid, with enough surplus to increase dental fee schedules and thereby increase dental access.



We believe that HCA should leverage the Transformation Waiver to pilot inclusion of oral health in Medicaid Managed Care in at least one ACH. Based on preliminary conversations, it is our understanding that at least two regional ACHs are interested in exploring such a pilot. Molina is ready, willing and prepared to be the lead MCO in the pilot. It is our understanding from the HCA that a CMS waiver is not required to conduct such an oral health pilot.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide input and we thank you for your efforts in leading this important work for our State. We are excited about the possibilities for innovation that the Medicaid Waiver may enable and we look forward to working with you and our regional partners in support of a healthier Washington.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions through Laurel Lee at [Laurel.Lee@molinahealthcare.com](mailto:Laurel.Lee@molinahealthcare.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Laurel A. Lee".

Laurel A. Lee  
Vice President, Member and Community Engagement  
Molina Healthcare of Washington

cc: Peter Adler  
Claudia St. Clair