

The California Dental Association's strategic public policy actions and advocacy for significant investments have led to historic progress in dental care access, while a number of new initiatives are underway. CDA's advocacy efforts have supported early dental disease prevention and advanced innovation in the dental delivery system for all Californians, especially vulnerable populations.

Medi-Cal Dental Program

- » One million new annual dental office visits since 2020, a 27% increase.
- » 34% increase in the number of Medi-Cal dental providers since the passage of Proposition 56 (2016), a measure co-sponsored by CDA that increased the state's tobacco tax.
- » 40% of California dentists are now enrolled in Medi-Cal.
- » 40% increase in reimbursement rates for most covered dental services since Prop. 56.
- » \$300 million in additional annual funding is secured through Prop. 35 starting in 2027, a 10% increase.

CalHealthCares Student Loan Repayment Program

- » 173 dentists have received student loan repayment grants totaling approximately \$50 million since 2018.
- » Currently funded by Prop. 56, the CalHealthCares program provides eligible dentists with student loan repayment grants in exchange for a five-year service obligation in an underserved area of California.
- » \$10 million in annual funding is secured through Prop. 35 for dental student loan repayments.

Expanding Dental Care for Patients with Special Needs

- » \$50 million in state budget funding to build or expand special needs dental clinics for patients whose physical, medical or cognitive disabilities make it challenging for them to receive care.
- » The Specialty Dental Clinic Grant program will fund at least 10 sites throughout the state and grant applications are currently under review.

Office of Oral Health

- » California established a state Office of Oral Health (OOH) led by a state dental director in 2014.
- » The OOH has developed a state oral health plan – a ten-year roadmap to build local infrastructure, collect statewide data and promote effective oral health messaging to vulnerable communities.
- » In 2021, the OOH published the nation's most comprehensive oral health literacy toolkit to improve equitable access to care and train dental staff in health literacy practices.
- » \$30 million is allocated annually to OOH from Prop. 56 funding, a tenfold increase compared to funding levels before Prop. 56.

Community-Based Clinical Education for Dental Students

- » \$10 million in state budget funding for dental student rotations in underserved and rural areas, improving access to care for California's most at-need populations and increasing the cultural competency of graduating dentists.

Dental Workforce Development

- » CDA is working to expand the dental assistant pipeline through state programs such as the High Road Training Partnership and Apprenticeship Innovation Fund.
- » CDA's Smile Crew CA has expanded dental assisting training opportunities throughout the state with the creation of boot camps and job placement programs, training hundreds of new dental assistants.

Producing Results

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