



May 15, 2020

The Honorable Holly Mitchell
Chair, Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee
State Capitol, Room
Sacramento, California 95814

The Honorable Philip Ting
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
State Capitol, Room 6026
Sacramento, California 95814

Re: Dental Managed Care Transition – Request for Delay

Dear Senator Mitchell/Assemblymember Ting:

On behalf of the California Dental Association, I would like to request that the Legislature reject the Administration's proposal to transition all Medi-Cal dental services to the fee-for-service delivery system and instead authorize a three-year extension of the existing dental managed care contracts. We believe that a transition of this magnitude, at this extraordinary point in time, will jeopardize both providers and beneficiary access to care. Given the anticipated budget deficit and proposed reductions in funding, we have significant concerns that dental practices will not be able to reopen in light of the economic devastation that has already occurred as a result of the pandemic. As for beneficiaries, their access to care may be jeopardized by a transition that cannot be adequately managed due to other competing department workload, and looming budget cuts will make provider participation even more challenging. By keeping the existing structure in place, CDA acknowledges that the dental managed care plans will have to maintain adequate networks – a beneficiary protection that will not exist in the fee-for-service program.

CDA had previously supported this transition but has to acknowledge the tremendous changes brought to the Medi-Cal program with COVID-19 and the ensuing fiscal uncertainty. In light of these significant challenges, we believe an extension is warranted at this time. We remain committed to improvements in the program and will be working with the Department and the contracting dental health plans to effectuate these improvements over the next three years. If you have any questions regarding this issue, please contact me at 916.554.7340 or brianna.pittman@cda.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brianna Pittman-Spencer", is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Brianna Pittman-Spencer
Legislative Director