



May 22, 2020

The Honorable Holly Mitchell  
California State Senate  
State Capitol, Room 5050  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Via COS: [tiffani.alvidrez@sen.ca.gov](mailto:tiffani.alvidrez@sen.ca.gov)

The Honorable Phil Ting  
California State Assembly  
State Capitol,  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
Via COS: [irene.ho@asm.ca.gov](mailto:irene.ho@asm.ca.gov)

RE: MAY REVISE DENTAL MANAGED CARE – SUPPORT FOR IMPLEMENTATION DELAY

Dear Senator Mitchell and Assemblymember Ting:

Western Dental Services is the largest and longest-serving provider of care for Medi-Cal Dental members, under both California's Fee-for-Service (FFS) and its Dental Managed Care (DMC) delivery models. The COVID-19 emergency has had a profound impact on our patients, providers and staff, as well as virtually all other California dental providers. We share the concern voiced by others around the pending July 1, 2020, transition from the current dental managed care system in Sacramento and Los Angeles counties to the FFS model prevalent throughout the rest of the state. Because such a transition could exacerbate many of the challenges already facing Medi-Cal enrollees seeking care as the State begins to re-open, we believe it is in the public interest to suspend for the present further efforts to move forward with the elimination of Dental Managed Care.

With many dental providers facing enormous economic obstacles to reopening and recovery, now is not the time to add even greater uncertainty, and potentially disrupt care for the millions of Medi-Cal members in both counties and many more new Medi-Cal members who are expected to enroll in coming months as a result of very high unemployment.

For these reasons, and because of the additional administrative burden such a transition will place on the Department of Health Care Services at a time of great difficulty, changes in the current delivery system should await a future opportunity to make thoughtful improvements to the entire Medi-Cal delivery system including oral health care.

In the meantime, while we urge the Legislature to reject the Administration's proposal to proceed with the transition, we would support efforts in administering dental managed care contracts to ensure that there is stability, transparency, and strategic direction from the Department to build a lasting infrastructure of access and a continued commitment to state oral health care objectives including preventive care. We believe that a framework for membership assignment that emphasizes continuity of care and member engagement will be an essential

ingredient in achieving important measurable improvements during any extension of the DMC contracts while the state and the dental service delivery system recover. We look forward to resuming the preparation for more comprehensive health care integration and other reforms in the not too distant future.

Thank you for your consideration, and if we can provide additional information or clarification, please don't hesitate to call on us.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Jeffrey Miller in blue ink.

Jeffrey Miller  
President

Handwritten signature of John R. Luther DDS in blue ink.

John R. Luther DDS  
Chief Dental Officer

cc: Members of Senate Budget Sub 3  
Scott Ogus, Senate Budget Consultant (scott.ogus@sen.ca.gov)  
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