

Oral Health Access Among Older Californians

Oral health is a critical component of overall health. After retirement, many older adults lose their dental insurance and have lower incomes. This can reduce access to essential dental services and compromise oral health.

2 million
older adults in California lack dental insurance

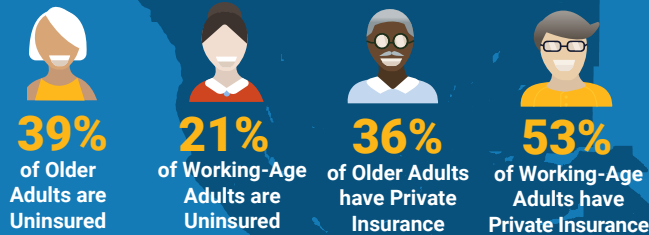
The population of older Californians is projected to nearly triple by 2060.

2020
4.3 million
(10.7% of the population)

2060
11 million
(24.4% of the population)

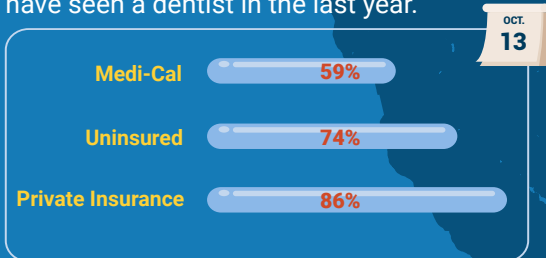
1. Age and Dental Insurance

Fewer older adults had private dental insurance – or any insurance – compared with adults ages 18 to 64.

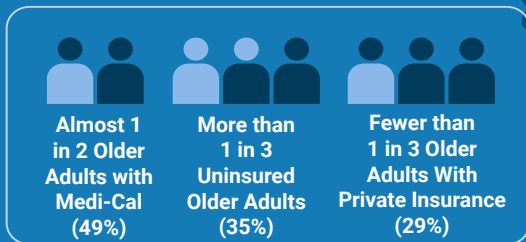


2. Insurance and Dental Care

Older adults with Medi-Cal were least likely to have seen a dentist in the last year.

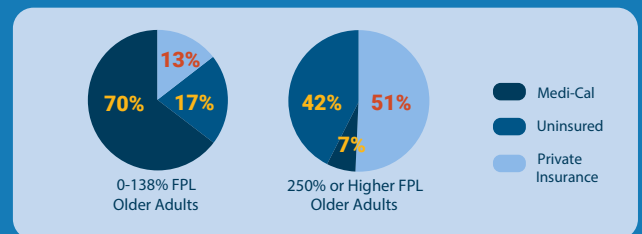


More older adults with Medi-Cal saw a dentist for a specific problem.



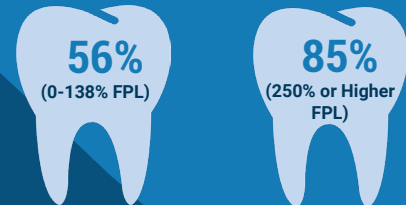
3. Income and Dental Insurance

Seven in 10 of the poorest older adults had Medi-Cal.

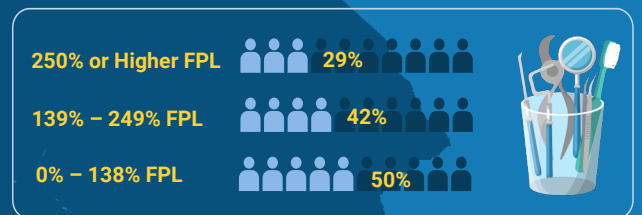


4. Income and Dental Care

The poorest older adults were least likely to see a dentist last year.



The poorest older adults were more likely to see a dentist for specific dental problems.



Note: FPL = Federal Poverty Level
Sources: 2017 and 2018 California Health Interview Survey, State of California Department of Finance

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- Provide affordable options for dental insurance for older adults.
- Affordable dental insurance can promote timely visits and visits for routine checkups, particularly among low-income and uninsured older adults.