

Dental Access Partners



February 15, 2021,

Sen. Dave Senjem
Minnesota Senate
95 University Ave West
3401 MSB
St. Paul, MN 55155

Rep. Robert Bierman
Minnesota House of Representatives
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
579 SOB
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Sen. Senjem and Rep. Bierman:

Apple Tree Dental, Community Dental Care, and Hennepin Healthcare are three of Minnesota's most essential providers of dental care for people on public programs who've come together to form Dental Access Partners (DAP). On behalf of DAP, we would like to thank you for authoring HF838/SF701 to add periodontal coverage back into the Medical Assistance benefit set.

Periodontal disease is an infection of the tissues and bones that surround and support the teeth; it is one of two diseases of the mouth and treatment of this disease is not currently covered for Medicaid enrollees. When left untreated, it can cause tooth loss and has been linked to major health problems including heart disease, strokes, preterm birth. People who rely upon Medicaid shouldn't have to wait until their gum disease makes them very ill before it can be treated. When periodontal disease is left undertreated, it can lead to more expensive dental and medical treatment, as well as to hospitalizations, which increase Medicaid medical costs. Sadly, we see this far too often under the current restricted benefit set.

Oral health is an integral part of overall health. Thank you again for your support and hard work on this incredibly important issue. Please reach out to us or contact our lobbyist, Tara Erickson at Tara@tgeconsultingmn.com, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mike Helgeson
CEO, Apple Tree Dental

Dr. Mary Seieroe
Chair of Dentistry, HCMC

Karen Kleinhans
CEO, Community Dental Care