

In October 2012, Vermont’s adult Medicaid Dental Insurance cap of \$495 for pregnant women was lifted, allowing women to receive more dental care during their pregnancy and 60 days postpartum. This data brief reports on possible effects of the lifting of the cap, and on outreach efforts conducted by the Vermont Department of Health District Office Staff.

**Key Findings**

Removing the Medicaid dental cap for pregnant women increased the percent of women who visited the dentist and had an even larger impact on the number of dental visits. Three of the four District Offices with outreach efforts saw the largest increases.

**Outreach Efforts**

**Public Health Dental Hygienists**

Public Health Dental Hygienists (PHDHs) provide direct care service in WIC clinics by educating clients and staff, conducting oral health risk assessment, applying fluoride varnish to children, and coordinating care for those who need it. PHDHs also deliver community education by doing outreach and training to medical and dental providers and supporting community organizations.

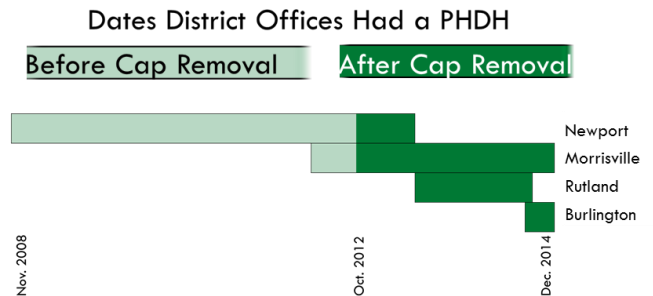
The Newport and Morrisville District Offices were the only offices to have a PHDH at the time the cap was removed. Newport’s PHDH worked 4 years before the cap removal, but stopped working 7 months after the cap removal. Morrisville’s PHDH continued through the time period of this analysis.

The Rutland District Office had a PHDH who started 7 months after the cap removal and worked for a little over a year. Burlington’s PHDH started almost 2 years after the cap removal, but Burlington was engaging in other outreach efforts at the time of cap removal.

**Burlington District Office Outreach**

While the Burlington District Office did not have a PHDH until almost two years after the cap removal, Burlington staff conducted educational outreach at the time of the cap removal.

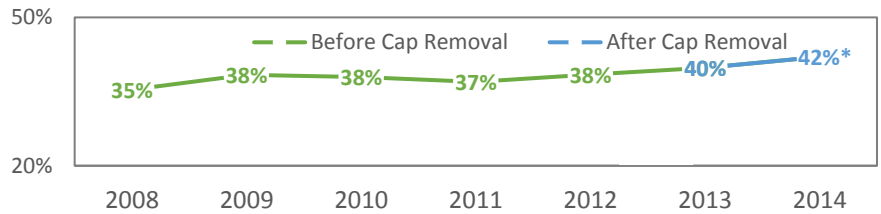
In 2012, Burlington District Office staff developed and disseminated informational packets about the importance of dental care during pregnancy to providers and pregnant women. Further, the Maternal and Child Health Coordinator in the Burlington District Office had strong relationships with key staff in OB/GYN offices in Burlington. These OB/GYN offices made concerted efforts to help connect pregnant women with dentists.



## Increases in Dental Visits After Lifting of Medicaid Cap

The percent of Medicaid-enrolled pregnant Vermonters who visited the dentist while pregnant or in the 60 days after giving birth was significantly higher after the cap removal.

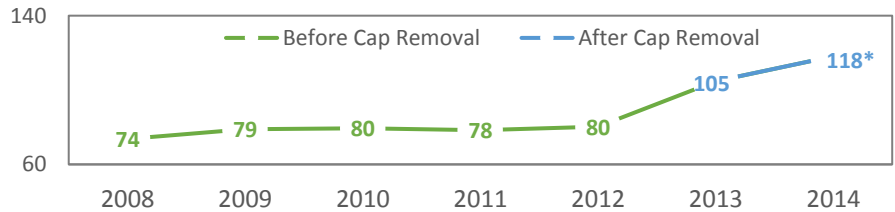
PERCENT OF MEDICAID-ENROLLED PREGNANT WOMEN WHO VISITED THE DENTIST (2008-2014)



\* The 2014 percentage is significantly better than the percentage in 2011.

The number of dental visits by Medicaid enrolled pregnant women significantly increased after the cap removal.

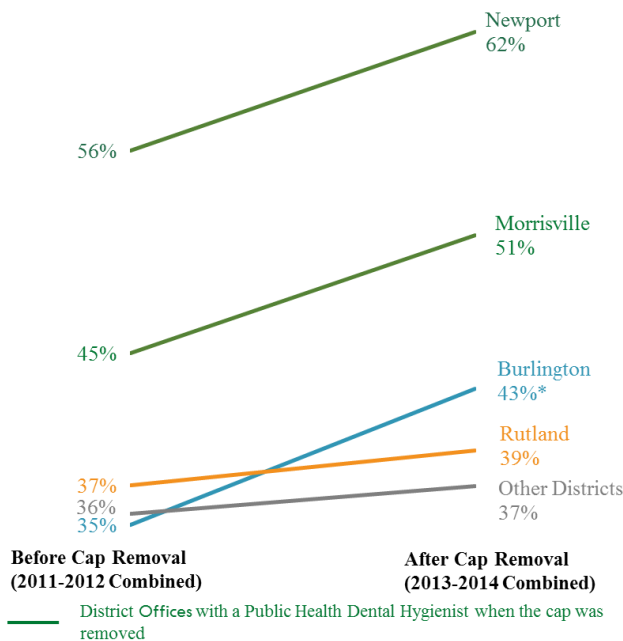
# OF DENTAL VISITS PER 100 MEDICAID-ENROLLED PREGNANT VERMONTERS (2008-2014)



\* The 2014 rate is significantly better than the 2011 rate.

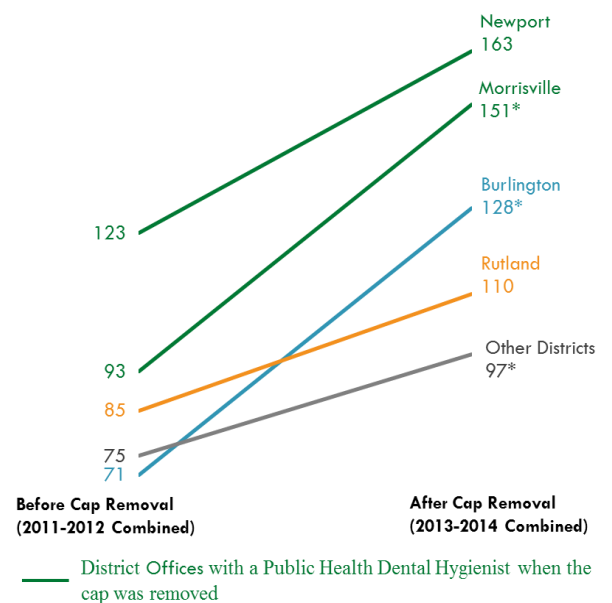
Increases in the proportion of Medicaid-enrolled pregnant women who visited the dentist were highest in the District Offices which were undertaking outreach efforts when the cap was lifted (Burlington, Morrisville, and Newport). The rate of dental visits also increased the most in those three District Offices.

PERCENT OF MEDICAID-ENROLLED PREGNANT WOMEN WHO VISITED THE DENTIST, BY VERMONT HEALTH DISTRICT OFFICES (2011-2014)



\* The percentage in this area after the cap removal is significantly better than the percentage in this area before the cap removal.

# OF DENTAL VISITS PER 100 MEDICAID-ENROLLED PREGNANT WOMEN, BY VERMONT HEALTH DISTRICT OFFICES (2011-2014)



\* The rate in this area after the cap removal is significantly better than the percentage in this area before the cap removal.

## Data Notes

For this report, Medicaid dental claims were analyzed to compare dental utilization rates for Medicaid-enrolled women before and after the cap removal in Vermont. This includes women who delivered during this time frame and had paid claims for dental visits 270 days before they delivered or within 60 days postpartum.

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- Questions or comments about this report, or requests for further Oral Health data in Vermont,
  - please go to: <http://healthvermont.gov/health-statistics-vital-records/surveillance-reporting-topic/oral-health>,
  - or contact Denise Kall, PhD at [Denise.Kall@vermont.gov](mailto:Denise.Kall@vermont.gov).
- For more information about the Oral Health Program at the Vermont Department of Health,
  - please go to: <http://healthvermont.gov/wellness/oral-health>,
  - or contact Robin Miller, RDH, MPH at [Robin.N.Miller@vermont.gov](mailto:Robin.N.Miller@vermont.gov).