

Dear Doctor:

Effective June 1, 2006, the California Department of Health Services (now the Department of Health Care Services) began coverage for topical fluoride varnish applications by both fee-for-service and managed care plan medical providers as a covered Medi-Cal medical benefit for children younger than 6 years of age, up to three times in a 12-month period.

Coverage of this new benefit was initially described in a [May 2006 Medi-Cal Update \(Bulletin 382\)](http://www.aapca1.org/storage/pdf/dentist/Medi-Cal%20Varnish%20Bulletin%20May%202006%20p1.pdf) (<http://www.aapca1.org/storage/pdf/dentist/Medi-Cal%20Varnish%20Bulletin%20May%202006%20p1.pdf>). Because there was some lack of clarity with respect to the responsibility of Medi-Cal managed care plans to cover this procedure, the Medi-Cal Managed Care Division (MMCD) subsequently issued [MMCD All Plan Letter 07008](http://www.aapca1.org/storage/pdf/dentist/MMCD%20All%20Plan%20Letter%2007008.pdf) (<http://www.aapca1.org/storage/pdf/dentist/MMCD%20All%20Plan%20Letter%2007008.pdf>), dated April 18, 2007.

A recent [AAP Policy Statement](http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/reprint/122/6/1387.pdf) (<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/reprint/122/6/1387.pdf>) states, "The application of fluoride varnish by the medical practitioner is appropriate for patients with significant risk of dental caries who are unable to establish a dental home." (Section on Pediatric Dentistry and Oral Health. Preventive Oral Health Intervention for Pediatricians. Pediatrics 2008; 122(6):1387.)

AAP District IX (California) would like to see fluoride varnish application for young children become a widespread practice among pediatricians. We realize this is unlikely to happen unless there is adequate reimbursement for the procedure. For that reason, we are asking you or your billing office to complete this brief survey so that we can learn more about the extent to which health plans are covering, promoting and reimbursing you for the procedure.

A summary of the survey results will appear in a future edition of the AAP Chapter 1 Newsletter. If you have questions about any aspect of this survey, please email [Dr. Bob Isman](mailto:bob.isman@comcast.net) (bob.isman@comcast.net). Dr. Isman is a Dental Program Consultant with the California Department of Health Care Services in the office that administers the Medi-Cal Dental Program ("Denti-Cal").

Responses to the survey are anonymous unless you choose to leave your name and/or email address. Please paste the following link in your browser to proceed to the survey <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/JTGHTLK>.

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