Dental Program

Dental Program Highlights

Plan features

- PrimeWest Health is a County-Based Purchasing (CBP) health plan owned by the following 13 rural Minnesota counties we serve: Beltrami, Big Stone, Clearwater, Douglas, Grant, Hubbard, McLeod, Meeker, Pipestone, Pope, Renville, Stevens, and Traverse
- Member and Provider Call Centers are staffed by live representatives
- Care coordination is available to all members
- Higher reimbursement is available for contracted providers
- Alternative payment methodologies are available for some providers to target quality and access

Benefits

PrimeWest Health follows the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) covered dental benefits guidelines. Adult benefits are dictated by legislation. Benefits for children through age 20 and pregnant adults include preventive services as well as several restorative procedures. Due to the rural nature of the communities where our members live, the dental benefit set is continuously evaluated by licensed dentists, with whom PrimeWest Health holds contracts, to determine if PrimeWest Health should cover additional dental services over and above what DHS fee-for-service covers. Examples of services covered by PrimeWest Health in addition to DHS fee-for-service coverage include the following:

- A second dental cleaning per calendar year for adults age 21 and over (children have no limit)
  - Adults may be eligible for two additional cleanings within a calendar year if they are performed in accordance with an appropriate individualized treatment plan. A Service Authorization is not required.
- Smoking cessation counseling
- Scaling and root planing (deep cleaning) in a clinic setting with an approved Service Authorization
- General anesthesia in a clinic setting with an approved Service Authorization certifying the medical necessity

Dental grants

PrimeWest Health has provided nearly 2.4 million dollars in community reinvestment grants to local dental providers. Among other things, these grant dollars have done the following: built a brick and mortar dental clinic that primarily serves Minnesota Health Care Programs (MHCP) recipients; provided funds to an existing clinic to expand and add a location in a PrimeWest Health community; provided portable equipment to a dental provider in the process of expanding its mobile dental services; supplied start-up funds to provide a pediatric dentist for those eligible to receive Indian Health Services; allowed dental providers to update their equipment, leading to more efficient dental services; and provided for service expansion, increased appointment availability, and decreased wait time for appointments.
Member Services Contact Center
If members need help finding a dentist or have questions about dental care, they should call PrimeWest Health Member Services at 1-866-431-0801 (toll free), Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. Member Services staff is able to provide detailed information on dental providers currently accepting new patients, dental providers who provide specialty dental services, and which providers have referral, age, or service area guidelines or restrictions. Member Services staff also answer questions related to coverage of dental services.

Dental care coordination
PrimeWest Health members experiencing difficulty accessing dental care or who are unable to find a dentist who will treat their oral health needs will be referred to the PrimeWest Health Dental Services Coordinator for assistance. The Dental Services Coordinator will work directly with the provider, member, caregiver, or county case manager to ensure appointments are made, attended, and the treatment plan and all necessary follow-up is completed.

Role of the county case manager
PrimeWest Health members with a county case manager should discuss their oral health care needs and any difficulty they are having accessing dental care with that county case manager. The county case manager has face-to-face meetings with the member and is responsible for maintaining the member’s care plan and any health goals, including oral health. The county case manager has the ability and resources to help the member and collaborate with PrimeWest Health’s Dental Services Coordinator and other PrimeWest Health care coordinators, depending on the member’s unique needs. This may include a care coordinator with expertise in behavioral health, chemical dependency, dual diagnoses, or senior care.

Transportation to a dental appointment
Members in need of transportation to a dental appointment should contact their county of residence. The county will review the request and determine if transportation services are necessary. If it is determined necessary, the county will work with the member to arrange the transportation. Members residing in a nursing home or other institution who are in need of special medical transportation can have this arranged by that residence. If the member is not residing in an institution, the member should contact the transportation provider and PrimeWest Health to have a Level of Need Assessment (LONA) completed.

Provider collaboration
PrimeWest Health continuously looks for opportunities to collaborate with dental providers on mutually beneficial initiatives. For example, PrimeWest Health has worked with dental providers to reduce no-show rates by providing an additional dental appointment reminder call and a follow-up call for those members who miss their appointment. Through this collaborative effort, no-show appointments have been greatly reduced.

In addition, PrimeWest Health has collaborated with dental clinics to expand mobile dental outreach services in schools, Head Start classrooms, Public Health and Human Services offices, medical clinics, and other locations. All that is needed is cooperation from the entity and a suitable spot to hold the clinic. Preventive and some diagnostic services are provided during mobile dental outreach and restorative services are either provided on site or referred to a local provider for completion in an office setting.

PrimeWest Health network of contracted dental providers
PrimeWest Health has a network of contracted dentists available to provide preventive and restorative dental care as well as oral surgery, pediatric dentistry, and other specialty dental services. The PrimeWest Health Provider Directory has a section dedicated to dental providers, and all contracted dental providers are listed by county. PrimeWest Health has experienced a steady increase in the number of dental and oral surgery clinics in the PrimeWest Health dental provider network from 19 clinics in 2005 to 92 dental clinics and 25 oral surgery clinics in 2018. PrimeWest Health members can see any dentist in the PrimeWest Health network. We will also pay for covered dental services from an out-of-network dentist who is willing to accept PrimeWest Health reimbursement as reimbursement in full.

Dental provider enrollment
PrimeWest Health actively pursues dental providers who are identified through retroactive claims report review, member request, county personnel request, and general outreach if the provider is in a location that would be beneficial to PrimeWest Health members. If PrimeWest Health is unable to execute a contract with a dental provider in an area of need, a dental outreach clinic will be scheduled in that community, as long as a location can be secured and county cooperation is achieved.
Service Authorization process
Members in need of a dental service requiring a Service Authorization are encouraged to contact their referring/general dentist to assist with any necessary paperwork or other information that may be needed for a determination of medical necessity. The provider rendering the service works with PrimeWest Health to complete the Service Authorization process.

Dental educational materials
PrimeWest Health has educational materials on oral health available for distribution to members. Materials include: “Oral Health and Summer Break,” “Sour Candy and Your Teeth,” “Prevent Dental Emergencies,” “Handling Dental Emergencies,” “Take Care of Those Tiny Teeth,” and “Poor Oral Health Can Hurt Grades.”

Dental educational materials are provided through the following methods:

- **Monitoring emergency room (ER) visits for dental reasons:** If a member goes to the ER to receive dental care, he/she will receive education by mail and phone and provider listings will be given to the member.
- **PrimeLines:** This member newsletter is sent to each household with a PrimeWest Health member.
- **Early Dental Care booklet:** This booklet is distributed to pregnant members. Providers and county partners also distribute this booklet to PrimeWest Health members and community members.
- **Health Risk Assessment (HRA):** Upon enrollment, all PrimeWest Health members are asked to complete an HRA. If oral health is an area of concern for the member, educational materials and a dental provider listing are sent to the member.

**Ask Mayo Clinic nurse line**
If a dentist is not available, or if it is after normal clinic hours, members can call the **Ask Mayo Clinic** nurse line at all 1-888-668-4336 (toll free). Registered nurses (RNs) can help members decide whether they need urgent or emergency care. An RN is available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, every day of the year.