



New Hampshire Medicaid Care Management

MEMBER SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS ADULT DENTAL PROGRAM SUMMARY REPORT 2025

*PREPARED FOR: State of New Hampshire, Department of Health & Human Services
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Horn Research confirms that no one conducting this study had a conflict of interest with Delta Dental Plan of New Hampshire, Inc. DBA Northeast Delta Dental (NEDD) or the plan administrator, DentaQuest (DQ).

Executive Summary

The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) conducted an independent qualitative study of adults enrolled in the Dental Medicaid Care Management (DMCM) Program to understand their experience with the Adult Dental Benefit provided through the New Hampshire Smiles Program and DentaQuest.

Horn Research¹ interviewed 30 individuals between March 11, 2025, and March 28, 2025. The study explored four points of inquiry: Description of Participants, Experience with Dental Coverage through DentaQuest, Experience with Dental Care, and Experience with Dental Support Services.

Study participants mirrored the sample population in all demographic characteristics explored, with the exception of an under-representation of older adults and males as compared with the total sample. All participants reported having safe housing. A third of participants reported worrying about not having enough food. Nearly all participants reported access to the internet.

Most participants reported limited or no understanding of their dental insurance and very few participants said they had received information from DentaQuest about their benefits. Those who had received information believed it was clear and easy to read. Only a handful of participants reported receiving encouragement to access dental care and mentioned information they received about the Mobile Dental Clinics. Participants found out about the Smiles Program/DentaQuest initially through a variety of venues, including their child's dental insurance, dental providers, social media, text messages about the Mobile Dental Clinic, and word-of-mouth. They suggested a variety of methods would be effective for outreach. Participants said their dental providers were the best source of help for navigating challenges with their insurance. Participants were most likely to appreciate the coverage available through DentaQuest, especially access to routine care and the low-cost of care. While most participants said they have experienced no challenges in dealing with DentaQuest, several mentioned a lack of providers in the DentaQuest network. The vast majority of participants were unaware of DentaQuest's complaint process.

Participants reported receiving a range of dental care services, including routine cleanings and x-rays, fillings, wisdom tooth removal, and dentures. The bulk of participants had received at least one cleaning. Most participants also had a second cleaning or had a plan for their second cleaning. The most frequently mentioned barrier to accessing dental care was the lack of providers. Participants also said cost-sharing was a challenge. Participants said they liked that their providers were friendly and open with their communication. Mobile Dental Clinic users agreed the providers were friendly, but also mentioned the convenience of the location as a positive aspect of the program. Most participants did not experience any challenges with their dental providers, but several said they could not receive care when they needed it. Mobile Dental Clinic users said appointments filled up quickly and the design of the program made it impossible to get emergency or urgent care. A third of participants had or needed specialist dental care. Participants noted difficulties with delays in care, cost, and quality of care from specialists. A third of participants said they had paid out-of-pocket for dental care in the past, all of whom said it was a financial burden. Worries about specific dental issues, such as gum recession and tooth loss, and fears about not being able to find a provider were top concerns reported by participants. Some participants also worried about a loss of dental coverage, which will cause deteriorating dental health. Participants believed access to dental care insurance had improved their oral health, their

¹ Horn Research is a contractor of Health Services Advisory Group, which is NH's External Quality Review Organization.

mental and emotional health, and their physical health. Participants frequently mentioned that the insurance had made it possible for them to address dental issues they would not have been able to take care of in the past.

A quarter of participants reported transportation challenges, but most were unaware of the dental transportation assistance program. A third of participants had received medication related to their dental care. The bulk of participants said they received their medications with no issue and reported that their MCO had paid for the prescription. None of the participants received care coordination support from DentaQuest.

Based on the experiences and feedback interview participants reported, the findings from this report generated four recommendations for the DO and one recommendation for DHHS.

Recommendations for the DO:

Provide information directly to beneficiaries on the dental benefits available

Interview participants frequently noted that they had not received information about their dental coverage and expressed a lack of understanding of the benefits available to them. Less than 10% of beneficiaries in the total population had received a cleaning in the previous year, suggesting the possibility that more beneficiaries are unaware of their coverage. DentaQuest should directly and regularly provide readable and comprehensive information about the dental benefits available to beneficiaries.

Expand the network of dental providers

Participants frequently noted the difficulty in finding a provider who both takes their insurance and is accepting new patients. DentaQuest should continue to expand its network of dental providers to meet this need.

Expand the Mobile Dental Clinic

Participants said that the Mobile Dental Clinic appointments fill quickly, and they cannot always get care when needed. Expanding the Mobile Dental Clinic to offer more dates and locations can be an effective way of increasing access to care. Focusing on sites where appointments fill quickly may be an appropriate first step.

Engage a comprehensive media strategy

Many participants did not understand that they had dental insurance, despite utilizing the Mobile Dental Clinic. DentaQuest should engage in a more robust media strategy that describes care options and the availability of coverage to bridge the knowledge gap. The strategy should include social media posts, outreach to primary care and mental health providers, collaboration with community partners, and direct contact with beneficiaries through mail, text, and email.

Recommendation for DHHS:

Ensure continued dental benefits for adult Medicaid beneficiaries

Participants overwhelmingly expressed appreciation and positive outcomes related to having access to dental care. Previous qualitative studies have included comments from participants on the need for preventive dental care. Continuing to offer dental benefits to adults can address this significant need.

Introduction

To support an external quality review of New Hampshire's DMCM Program, Horn Research gathered qualitative data from adults continuously enrolled with Medicaid as of January 1, 2024.

The sample population included beneficiaries from across New Hampshire. Horn Research conducted telephonic qualitative interviews between March 11, 2025, and March 28, 2025.

The study explored four Key Points of Inquiry developed in collaboration with DHHS to structure the information gathered from participants. The Key Points of Inquiry included:

- Description of Participants
- Experience with Dental Coverage through DentaQuest
- Experience with Dental Care
- Experience with Dental Support Services

Methodology

Horn Research engaged a standard qualitative data-gathering process as detailed below.

Sample Size and Composition

DHHS provided a population list (N=58,032) of Medicaid beneficiaries in the DMCM Program. A random, stratified sample (N=250) was selected for the study based on the goal of completing interviews with a minimum of:

- five participants who received a cleaning at a Mobile Dental Clinic
- ten participants who received a cleaning at a dentist's office
- no more than five participants who had received no cleanings during the past year
- five participants who live in a nursing home

As shown in Table 1, the population targets were met except for nursing home residents. Despite several attempts at contact with the individuals flagged as living in a nursing home, this goal was not met. Only one participant lived in a nursing home and had not received a cleaning.

Table 1. Number of Participants and Percent of Population by Location of Dental Cleaning

<i>Response from Participant</i>	<i>Interviewed Participants</i>		<i>Sample</i>	<i>Total Population</i>
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Cleaning at Mobile Dental Clinic	11	37%	20%	4%
Cleaning at Dentist's Office	13	43%	40%	8%
Cleaning at Both Mobile and Dentist's Office	4	13%	n/a	n/a
No cleanings	2	7%	40%	92%

Participant Recruitment

Horn Research sent the initial sample of members a letter (Appendix 1) on March 6, 2025, that explained the project, asked for participation, and offered participants a \$50 gift card. Members were encouraged to take part in the study through email and text message. Participants completed the interviews between March 11, 2025, and March 28, 2025.

The general rule applied to determining sample size for qualitative interviews was the point at which the information reached "saturation." Saturation refers to when no new themes emerge from interviews. Horn Research completed 30 interviews out of a goal of 30 interviews. The completed interviews for this study adequately met the data saturation expectation.

Data Collection Process

Horn Research conducted the semi-structured interviews by telephone. An experienced facilitator led the telephone interviews, with participant responses captured in real-time through verbatim note-taking. The Interview Guide (Appendix 2) directed the conversations to address the Key Points of Inquiry. The interviews lasted approximately 20 to 30 minutes. All participants received a summary of the project's purpose at the beginning of the interview, and the facilitator read a statement verifying the confidentiality of the information collected. All participants received a \$50 gift card in the mail in appreciation of their participation in the project. The identities of the interviewees remained confidential to the interviewer and were not revealed to the New Hampshire Medicaid Program.

Data Analysis and Validity

After completing the telephone interviews, Horn Research analyzed the information by identifying, coding, and categorizing primary patterns in the data. The consistent patterns found in the data analysis and the representative sample support the validity of the information gathered. Still, they should not be assumed to represent the total population. The information provided in this report should be used to identify salient issues relevant to the population, provide contextual information for the larger assessment process, and identify avenues for further research. Horn Research slightly edited quotes from interview participants for content and clarity.

Description of Participants

The facilitator asked participants a series of questions about themselves and the resources available to them.

Demographic Details

Study participants represented all three MCOs at nearly equal rates as the total population (*Table 2*).

Table 2. Number of Participants and Percent of Population by MCO

<i>MCO</i>	<i>Interviewed Participants</i>		<i>Sample</i>	<i>Total Population</i>
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
ACNH	7	23%	28%	23%
NHHF	13	43%	39%	38%
WellSense	10	33%	34%	39%

Equal numbers of participants lived in metro and non-metro areas of the state. This represents a slight over-representation of the non-metro population (*Table 4*). Older adults were under-represented in the study (*Table 4*) and women far out-paced the number of men in the study as compared with the population (*Table 5*).

Table 3. Number of Participants and Percent of Population by Region Type

<i>Region Type</i>	<i>Interviewed Participants</i>		<i>Sample</i>	<i>Total Population</i>
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Metro	15	50%	55%	58%
Non-Metro	15	50%	45%	42%

Table 4. Number of Participants and Percent of Population by Age

<i>Age Category</i>	<i>Interviewed Participants</i>		<i>Sample</i>	<i>Total Population</i>
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
22-34	9	30%	29%	31%
35-54	14	47%	36%	40%
55-64	7	23%	14%	17%
65+	0	0%	20%	12%
Mean age	43.9		48.9	45.4

Table 5. Number of Participants and Percent of Population by Gender

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Interviewed Participants</i>		<i>Sample</i>	<i>Total Population</i>
	Number	Percent	Percent	Percent
Female	24	80%	59%	58%
Male	6	20%	41%	42%

Household size ranged from a single person living alone to up to seven in the household (*Table 6*). Two-thirds of participants said no children were living in their homes (*Table 7*).

Table 6. Number of Participants by the Number of People in the Household

Number in Household	Interviewed Participants	
	Number	Percent
1/Living Alone	8	27%
2	8	27%
3	3	10%
4	4	13%
5	4	13%
6 +	3	10%

Table 7. Number of Participants by the Number of Children in the Household

Number of Children	Interviewed Participants	
	Number	Percent
0	19	63%
1	2	7%
2	6	20%
3	2	7%
5	1	3%

Resources and Support

The interviewer asked participants a series of questions about their housing, food security, and internet access.

Housing

All participants said they had a safe, stable place to sleep and store their possessions. Participants reported living in their home for an average of eleven and a half years. Four participants had lived in their home for two years or fewer, and 12 had lived in their home for over ten years.

Food Security

Eleven participants said that within the past 12 months, they worried about whether their food would run out before they had money to buy more. Seven of these participants experienced this very often or all the time. Four participants said it occurred occasionally. Nine participants said they use a food pantry to get food support. One participant noted their access to food stamps as a resource for food, and one said her brother has helped her with food. One participant who said she did not worry about food noted that her access to food pantries was the reason she did not worry about her food running out. A second participant said her food stamps were the reason she was food secure.

Internet Access

The qualitative interviews also explored participants' access to the internet (*Table 8*). All but two participants confirmed internet was available to them at their home. Three participants reported other access. One participant said he goes to the library to use the internet, and another said she uses the computers available at her nursing home. One other participant said he has vision issues, which prevented him from using the internet, but his partner has access and assists him. Two-thirds of

participants (N=20) reported access to the internet through their cell phone. Fifteen participants said they use a computer, and two participants said they have a tablet. Thirteen participants said they accessed the internet through more than one device.

Table 8. Number and Percent of Participants by Access to the Internet

Regular access to the internet	Number	Percent
Phone	20	67%
Tablet	2	7%
Computer	15	50%
Other	3	10%
Do not have	2	7%

Ten people said they had challenges with their online access. Six participants said connectivity was an issue. One participant said, *“Sometimes, it just doesn't want to load. I have Verizon, and I use my mobile hotspot. I would say it's a connectivity issue.”* Another participant shared, *“I'm in Cornish, and we don't always have the best of service when the wind blows.”*

Four participants said they had challenges with their internet service provider. One participant said, *“We've had issues with Comcast forever. I think it all depends on the devices and how many kids are using them. I know they say we have the best one, but I don't think we do.”*

One participant said the cost of internet service could be burdensome.

Experience with Dental Coverage through DentaQuest

The facilitator asked participants to describe their level of understanding of their dental benefits, their access to information about their benefits and customer support from DentaQuest, and their experience getting answers to questions. In addition, participants were asked to share their experiences, both positive and negative, with DentaQuest. Most participants reported limited or no understanding of their dental insurance and very few participants said they had received information from DentaQuest about their benefits. Those who had received information believed it was clear and easy to read. Only a handful of participants reported receiving encouragement to access dental care and mentioned information they received about the Mobile Dental Clinics. Participants found out about the Smiles Program/DentaQuest initially through a variety of venues, including their child's dental insurance, dental providers, social media, text messages about the Mobile Dental Clinic, and word-of-mouth. They suggested a variety of methods would be effective for outreach. Participants said their dental providers were the best source of help for navigating challenges with their insurance. Participants often commented on their appreciation for the coverage available through DentaQuest, especially access to routine care and the low-cost of care. While most participants said they have experienced no challenges in dealing with DentaQuest, several mentioned a lack of providers in the DentaQuest network. The vast majority of participants were unaware of DentaQuest's complaint process.

Understanding of Dental Care Coverage

Half of participants (N=15) expressed some level of understanding of their dental care coverage. Some participants said they know only the basic information about their insurance. One participant shared, *“I know it covers cleanings and x-rays. Honestly, beyond that, I don't really know.”* Another participant said, *“Honestly, I know some, but I don't know a lot. I know they cover my cleanings. They covered most*

of my fillings and other than that, I really don't know much. I'm learning as I go. For the longest time, I never had dental insurance. I used to pay out-of-pocket." A participant noted she could find out information on the state website. She said, "I want to say I understand it pretty well, but I'm not an expert. When I go on my NH EZ portal, that's pretty helpful."

Thirteen participants said they did not understand their coverage at all. One of these participants said he believed he could look up the information if needed. He said, *"I guess I don't understand. I'm sure I could look it all up and know what coverage I've had. I've experienced it as a pleasant surprise over the last couple of years. I think I learned the first time by going for a routine check-up and finding out I didn't have to pay. Then, I heard people talking about it. I have an appointment today. I'm getting a mouth guard. They say it will be covered too, which was a surprise. I learn what is covered as I'm going along. I don't know when the program started, but I've had this pleasantly surprised thing when things are covered."* One other participant said she needed help to understand her options. She said, *"I don't understand it. That's why I wanted to do the interview. I've called so many times to ask about it and nobody can tell me anything about it. They keep sending me to different people. They have nothing that is available in layman's terms. I don't know what you're allowed to get. When you go to the dentist, they just tell you what they want to do, not what you were asking them to do."*

"They sent a card, but not much information about what was covered."

Some patients did not understand that access to the Mobile Dental Clinic is part of their dental coverage. One participant said, *"I don't even know if I have dental coverage? I've been paying out-of-pocket. I went to a free thing with the mobile clinic. I got an exam, x-rays, and a consultation. They told me the things that were issues. They said I could come back and get it all fixed for a discounted price compared to what it would be."* Another participant said, *"I didn't even know I had insurance. I thought you were talking about the Mobile Dental Clinic. There's one that's taking patients."*

Two participants said they are learning about their coverage. One participant said, *"I'm starting to understand it a little more. This winter, I had a wisdom tooth rupture and I've been trying to find care. It has been a learning curve. I did just get really good news that I got approved for surgery for my wisdom tooth, but I'm having trouble finding a primary care dentist that will do regular checkups."*

Some participants noted they were skeptical that the insurance was legitimate at first. One participant said, *"To be honest, the first time I got the card, I didn't think it was real. I was afraid it was a scam. So, I didn't use it at first, but then I did research and then I made an appointment. Now, I understand it."* One other participant shared, *"I don't understand it all. No one explained it to me. I got a card in the mail, but nobody told me what it covered. My dentist told me it covers care over a calendar year. I haven't even had a card since the beginning. I thought it was fake. There was no other information. I thought it was a scam. I found out it wasn't at the dentist. The dentist knew I was on Medicaid."*

Access to Information

The interviewer asked participants to describe the information they received from DentaQuest about their dental benefits, including the readability of the literature and the challenges participants experienced trying to understand the program. Many participants (N=23) said they had received no information from DentaQuest about their coverage. One participant said, *"I have not received anything*

at all. Not even a card.” Another participant said, “I only got the card. There was no other information about the benefits. I called my insurance company and asked them about it. They were very helpful.” Another participant said, “I actually had to find out through my prior dentist where I was paying out-of-pocket that it was available. I called WellSense, and they directed me to the folks to get in touch with.”

All the participants who reported receiving information (N=7) said the information was clear and easy to read. One young adult participant said, *“I have gotten updates on what the insurance is about. I get what they’re saying, sometimes. But I have to have my mom and dad read it with me so I can clearly understand what it means.”* Another participant shared, *“They notified me, which is how I knew about the program. I knew they covered a couple of visits. It turned out I had a cavity, and they covered it. I am figuring it out as I’m going through. It was easy to read.”* One other participant said, *“When I first got approved for DentaQuest, they sent me some paperwork with the card. I thought it was very helpful.”*

Encouragement to Get Care

The interviewer also asked participants whether DentaQuest had provided any information encouraging them to get care. Participants nearly universally reported not receiving any such information. Two participants said they had received a survey from DentaQuest, but did not believe it was about encouraging care. Four participants said they received messages from the Mobile Dental Clinic reminding them about appointments or informing them of upcoming clinics.

Other Information about the Smiles Program

When asked where else they had heard about the Smiles Program, three participants said they had found out through their dentist.

Three other participants noted they received information about their child’s dental coverage and found out about adult coverage. One participant said, *“They sent me a Smiles thing to remind me about the kids. It said you can go online to find a dentist. There weren’t any local dentists listed, but I ended up calling around to find one.”* One participant said she had been researching online and found information about adult coverage. She said, *“I was online looking up a dentist for my daughter, and I stumbled upon the information that adults have DentaQuest through the state.”*

One participant said she took part in the Smiles Program as a child and transitioned seamlessly to it as a young adult. She said, *“I had whatever it was before through the state as a kid. Then I got older, and they said ‘this is what you have’.”*

Two participants said they first heard about the program from text messages related to the Mobile Dental Clinic. One participant said, *“They called me and let me know about it. I guess they started coming to Claremont. It was only five minutes away. It was in the parking lot at the visitors’ center.”*

Two participants said they heard about the program through word-of-mouth. One participant said, *“I heard other people talk about it, like my neighbors. It sort of came up and I told them my story, and they said their check-up was covered. It was a surprise.”*

One participant said she had a memory of seeing a billboard advertising the program, but could not be specific about it.

Best Outreach Methods

The interviewer asked participants the most effective way of reaching them with information about their dental care and benefits (Table 9). Participants most frequently said receiving information in the mail was effective (N=15) followed by text messages (N=10) and emails (N=8). A handful of participants said they prefer telephone calls and social media. One participant noted his visual disability significantly affected his preference for telephone calls. He said, *“Usually the phone is the best for me. Voicemail usually works, texting can be a good backup. Written things are very difficult for me. My partner filters through things for me.”* One participant said he prefers to rely on himself to ask questions. One other participant said she likes to get her information from her case manager. She said, *“The best thing is if my case manager receives stuff and then she can call me to come and go over it. I get things in the mail, I may look at them, but between head injuries and brain seizures, my memory is just not there.”*

Table 9. Preferred Outreach Methods by Type

Best Outreach Methods	Number	Percent
Physical mail	15	50%
Email	8	27%
Telephone calls	4	13%
Text message	10	33%
Social media	4	13%
Other	3	10%

Challenges Understanding Insurance

The interviewer asked participants about the challenges they experienced trying to understand the program. Half of participants said they did not have any issues understanding their dental benefits. Three participants reiterated they did not understand their coverage, one of whom was not concerned about her lack of understanding.

Challenges included how to find a provider who accepts their insurance (N=2), having difficulties navigating technology to gather more information (N=2), and intellectual and mental health disabilities interfering with understanding (N=2).

One participant said she is figuring out her benefits, but did not note any particular challenges doing so. Another participant noted she had difficulties trying to lodge complaints about her dental insurance. One other participant shared she was relying on her dentist to help her understand the coverage.

One other participant said he simply does not understand how and why the dental coverage is available. He said, *“In my mind, dental insurance was above and beyond what I was going to get. For example, I had two teeth removed, and that was paid for. I had this cynical attitude that was the extent of the dental care I would get. But then, I was really taken aback when a routine check-up was covered along with the x-rays. I meant to look into it more, but never did. I think I got some stuff in the mail, but it never really laid out what was covered for me. It feels surprising to me that this program has been started. It seems like it's a period where social services would have been chewed away from me rather than added. It feels like a gift.”*

One participant said she would like more information about her benefits, and one participant said she had not used the insurance and had not tried to figure it out.

Help Received Navigating Challenges

The interview also explored how participants received help when they had questions about their coverage. Fourteen participants said they had had no questions.

Four participants said their dentist had supplied answers to them. One of these participants said, *"I usually ask the dentist because they seem to know the answers. I go to Claremont Community Dental, and they seem to know most of the rules about every single insurance they take."* Another participant said, *"I have a mouth guard that is super old and cracked, and I asked if they would cover it. I got a letter from DentaQuest that said it was covered, but then the dentist explained it wouldn't cover the full cost and I would have had to pay out-of-pocket. The dentist said it was way more expensive than the coverage allowed."*

Three participants said the staff at the Mobile Dental Clinic had answered their questions. One participant shared, *"One of the gals running the program was super helpful. I didn't know of the event happening. I found out at the tenth hour by stumbling upon it at a local parking lot. I popped in and said I wanted to make an appointment, but they were booked up. I got a number to call, but then she reached out to me and let me know there was one in Newport. She was super helpful. That's been a good experience for sure."*

Two participants reported calling their MCO. One participant said, *"I called WellSense first, and they transferred me to DentaQuest."* Another participant said that while her MCO directed her to DentaQuest, she did not actually get her question answered. She said, *"I called NHHF first because I ended up losing the dental card. They redirected me to the DentaQuest website. I typed in my insurance number to find providers in my area, but I haven't actually been able to find a provider."*

Two other participants said they tried to contact DentaQuest with poor results. One participant said, *"Talking to them is very hard. I kept getting disconnected. They would say certain things were covered, but then they're not. They said I could get a cap and a bridge, but I don't qualify for that. It's all out-of-pocket."* The other participant said, *"Two years ago, I asked for a list of dentists in my area. I called every one of them, and they said they didn't accept the insurance. This went on for two years before they sent me to the Mobile Dental Clinic."*

One participant said the nursing home staff had answered her questions. Another participant said his primary care physician answered his questions. One other participant relies on her parents for support when she has questions. One participant said she speaks with her case manager at the mental health clinic. Another participant reiterated she was not aware that she had dental insurance.

Positive Experiences with DentaQuest

The interviewer asked participants to describe what they like best about DentaQuest. Six participants said they like the coverage available to them, though some participants were not specifically thinking of DentaQuest as the source of that coverage. One participant said, *"I've been getting my dental care through a mobile clinic that accepts the insurance. I'm not sure if I'm plugging the clinic or the insurance. I've been able to get some needed basic dental care. I guess DentaQuest makes it possible."* Another participant said, *"I just appreciate that they cover dental care. It's really important for people. I appreciate the level of communication."*

Five participants mentioned the low costs associated with their dental insurance, including the lack of a deductible, as positive aspects. One participant said, *"I love that I'm not paying out-of-pocket going to*

the dentist. I literally haven't paid anything since I've gotten it." Another participant said, *"I like the reduced prices. That's a big help. Having to only pay 10% of [the cost] is amazing."*

"I love that I can take care of my teeth. I have a bone disease and it affects every part of my body. I've always been very careful. I floss constantly. So, the thought of being able to get my teeth cleaned felt like a blessing."

Three participants said they like the availability of routine dental care they now have through the program. One participant shared, *"It was just that dramatic shift from what I was accustomed to. The health care coverage I got through the Medicaid previously had this cynical attitude that your teeth aren't part of your body, and they would only cover extractions. When the DentaQuest program was initiated, and I was being covered with routine care, that was a very affirming thing. It seemed so reasonable and civilized to help people keep their teeth rather than just taking them out."*

Three participants remarked on positive customer service they experienced. One participant said, *"Everything has been good with the information and getting me in there so I could get a procedure done. I would say, so far, it's been a good experience."*

Two participants said they liked the accessibility of care. One participant said, *"I think the mobile dental pop-up has been really nice. I can see how that's really helpful for people. It was right down from my house. They saw me right away, and it was convenient. I think that's been a great service, because it has been a challenge getting a permanent dentist. That's been helpful."*

Two participants said they like the provider options available to them. One participant said, *"I guess the best experience is they let me go to this program in Nashua. They have a better program there than in Manchester. They were willing to work with me about my needle phobia. They explained everything very clearly. I appreciate having the dental care. There are a couple of teeth I didn't have to have pulled, so I'm thankful for that."*

One participant said she appreciated being able to get dentures.

Six participants said they did not have enough information or experience with DentaQuest to have an opinion. One participant said, *"I haven't really personally dealt with DentaQuest. They just appeared and I'm very thankful. It's been very difficult being on my own. I went through a big economic change in 2017, where I had to go on assistance. It's been very helpful. Before, I could pay for my dental care. After 2017, I couldn't. It's very helpful. My family helped me a little by paying for my teeth maintenance, but thankfully DentaQuest is helping now. I'm very grateful for it."*

Negative Experiences with DentaQuest

When asked about the most challenging experiences they had with DentaQuest, 20 participants reported either no difficulties or no experience with DentaQuest.

Five participants said the biggest problem with DentaQuest was the lack of providers who take the insurance and who also provide quality care. One participant shared, *"There are literally no places for us to go. The places they allow us to go want to concentrate on what they want to do. They want to get as much as they can from the insurance. They told me I had to have my teeth deep cleaned before I could do*

anything else. The other dentist said I didn't need a deep clean first. So, the first dentist was taking all the money in my yearly amount to do that." Another participant noted concerns that the dentists available were not high-quality providers. She said, "Finding a provider is hard. I just started seeing this one dentist that takes the insurance because

"I asked for a list of dentists in my area. They gave me a list, but I called every one of them and they said they didn't accept the insurance. This went on for two years before they sent me to the Smile mobile clinic."

it's difficult to find someone who does. It's a new practice, and I've had a lot of issues so far. I have a cavity to be filled, and I've had to go back four times. There was difficulty last week, and I called because it fell off. The dentist was already home and told me to get some cement and take care of it. To be completely honest, I used to work in healthcare. You don't see your life taking a turn like it has. I know how it works on the other side. It's a business. It's very difficult nowadays to find a provider that not only cares but also takes your insurance." One additional participant remarked on the quality of providers available to her. She said, "Not being able to find a provider is the biggest issue. Also, I saw a doctor for a consultation with my wisdom teeth. He was very abrasive and gave me worst-case scenarios, not trying to be positive or to give options. I was confused about what the appointment was and how the insurance worked. I was asking questions that were not really applicable. The doctor was not helping."

One participant remarked on poor communication between DentaQuest and her dental provider. She said, "The dentist I go to had submitted a request for coverage for a partial. It's been over a year, and we never heard back from that. They resubmitted again recently. They've never responded."

One participant said DentaQuest had denied coverage for prescription toothpaste. He said, "The only thing is that I'm on a fluoride prescription toothpaste, which costs \$15-\$20 a tube. There were a couple of times that it was covered, and that felt like a bonus. But last week, it was denied. It's a minor thing, but it felt confusing. That's indicative of my general relationship with all of this stuff. I don't really understand it."

One participant said the coverage was too limited, and another participant said the Mobile Dental Clinic's location was inconvenient.

Awareness of Complaint Process

Twenty-six of the 30 participants said they knew nothing about DentaQuest's complaint process, two of whom said they did not have any complaints. Two others said they could find the information if needed.

Two participants reported negative experiences with the complaint process. One participant said, "I filled out a grievance because I wanted to report to the dental insurance company the trailer was completely filthy and they had no handwashing facility at all. How do you have a dental facility without having a handwashing station? When I reported that, I got a very nasty letter from the insurance company. I also got something concerning my food stamps. I don't know why my insurance company would have anything to do with my food stamps. One thing has nothing to do with the other. It's not that I don't understand the complaint process. I don't understand the mentality that recommends me to a dental provider and when I say there is a problem, why don't they address the issue instead of attacking me? They ignored my grievance, but told me that if I chose to have my teeth pulled, it was my choice. But my new dentist said there was no reason for having them pulled. They never addressed the issue about

the lack of handwashing station. I was in medicine for 20 years. You have handwashing stations all over the place.”

Another participant said she had received no support with her complaints. She said, *“I do it through DHHS. Doing it through DentaQuest, they will send you a thing saying they’ll be looking into it, but you don’t get any information. I had to stop going because I had a stalker through the transportation program. DHHS also did not give me any feedback.”*

One participant said the complaint process was easy to use when she helped her father fill out a complaint. One participant said he received a telephone number to call if he had a complaint.

Experience with Dental Care

The facilitator asked participants to describe the dental care they had received during the past year, the challenges and barriers associated with accessing dental care, and their perception of their dental care provider. Participants reported receiving a range of dental care services, including routine cleanings and x-rays, fillings, wisdom tooth removal, and dentures. The bulk of participants had received at least one cleaning. Most participants also had a second cleaning or had a plan for their second cleaning. The most frequently mentioned barrier to accessing dental care was the lack of providers. Participants also said cost-sharing was a challenge. Participants said they liked that their providers were friendly and open with their communication. Mobile Dental Clinic users agreed the providers were friendly, but also mentioned the convenience of the location as a positive aspect of the program. Most participants did not experience any challenges with their dental providers, but several said they could not receive care when they needed it. Mobile Dental Clinic users said appointments filled up quickly and the design of the program made it impossible to get emergency or urgent care. A third of participants had or needed specialist dental care. Participants noted difficulties with delays in care, cost, and quality of care from specialists. A third of participants said they had paid out-of-pocket for dental care in the past, all of whom said it was a financial burden. Worries about specific dental issues, such as gum recession and tooth loss, and fears about not being able to find a provider were top concerns reported by participants. Some participants also worried about a loss of dental coverage, which will cause deteriorating dental health. Participants believed access to dental care insurance had improved their oral health, their mental and emotional health, and their physical health. Participants frequently mentioned that the insurance had made it possible for them to address dental issues they would not have been able to take care of in the past.

Where Participants Received Care

Nearly equal numbers of participants received dental care from a dentist’s office and the Mobile Dental Clinic (

Table 10). Four participants had received care at both a dentist's office and the Mobile Dental Clinic. Two participants reported not receiving dental care. One participant received care from a dentist at her nursing home.

Table 10. Number of Participants by Location of Care

Location	Interviewed Participants	
	Number	Percent
Dentist's Office	12	40%
Mobile Dental Clinic	11	37%
Both	4	13%
None	2	7%
At nursing home	1	3%

Types of Dental Care Received

Participants reported receiving a wide range of dental care services over the past year. Seven participants said they had received routine cleanings and x-rays. Another 11 participants had received fillings along with preventive care, cleanings, and x-rays. One participant shared, *"There was a deep cleaning of my teeth that included my gums. That was done in two different appointments. There were also some fillings. One other thing, my gums had receded on my front teeth. The part that shouldn't be showing was showing, and the dentist fixed it. It was a necessary cosmetic thing because it would be a problem later on."*

Two participants said they had received fillings, but no cleanings or preventive care. Two other participants were waiting to receive additional care. One participant said, *"I had a cleaning and check-up at the mobile clinic. It had been five years since I'd seen a dentist. They did x-rays and a cleaning. Before that, I went to a dentist for an emergency. My wisdom tooth had an infection. They just did x-rays and gave me a referral to an oral surgeon. I had a consultation with the oral surgeon. I just got a letter from the insurance that my surgery was approved. I made an appointment for the surgery."*

Five participants reported receiving extensive dental care. One participant said she had her *"teeth capped, dentures, fillings, cleanings."* Another participant said, *"They drilled my tooth at the mobile clinic, and then I had to have an emergency tooth removal and my wisdom teeth pulled. The time they drilled my tooth, they did a cleaning."*

One participant said she received dentures.

Two participants had received no dental care in the past year. One of these participants said she did not know she had dental coverage. She said, *"It's been a long time since I've been to the dentist. I had an abscess a few years back, and I paid out-of-pocket. I didn't know I had coverage."* The other participant who had not received care said she did not have confidence in dentists. She said, *"I don't trust dentists, usually. In the past, I needed a tooth extracted, and then they took eight out."*

Access to Dental Cleanings

Of the 28 participants who reported having dental care, 26 had at least one cleaning. One participant who had not had a cleaning noted she had dentures. The other participant said her provider was waiting until her other dental care was completed before getting a regular cleaning. She also noted that it was difficult to see a provider. She said, *"You can't always get in when you want. I have to get rides there. They have waiting lists as well. I think they're almost done with whatever they're supposed to do. I think at that point, they'll do regular cleanings."*

Eleven participants reported having two cleanings in the past year. Of the 15 participants who had not received a second cleaning in the past year, four said they were not yet due for their second cleaning, and five said they had an upcoming appointment.

Two participants said they had a conflict with the timing of the Mobile Dental Clinic schedule. One participant said, *"I was working during the second pop-up clinic. They reached out to me, but I couldn't go."* Two participants said they had to finish other dental procedures before getting their second cleaning. One participant shared, *"I had other dental care that needed to come first. I plan to go in this next year for cleanings, but I have other teeth that have to be taken care of first."*

One participant said she was afraid to get care at Mobile Dental Clinic based on a negative experience, and she could not find another provider. One other participant said he did not know about DentaQuest, and he could not afford to pay out-of-pocket for his second cleaning.

Barriers to Care

The interviewer asked participants to describe the barriers and challenges they had experienced when trying to access dental care. Half of participants (N=15) said the lack of providers was the biggest problem they experienced. One participant said the lack of providers meant she had to travel to reach one. She said, *"My new dentist is an hour and a half away. It's the closest they could find for me."*

Another participant said access to the Mobile Dental Clinic has helped with the dearth of providers. She said, *"There are not a lot of providers that take DentaQuest, but since they made the Mobile Clinic available, that has helped. They come to my area every three or four months. That's made a big difference."*

"There are a lack of providers that take insurance. If there wasn't a dentist that took the insurance, I couldn't get care. So, in that sense, there is financial concern. I couldn't afford to go to a normal dentist without the insurance. Especially, since there were lots of things to be done because it had been a long time."

Seven participants noted cost as one of the most significant barriers to care. One participant said, *"I think sometimes the cost sharing has been hard. I work a lot, but if my insurance covers only part of it, I have to pay the rest out-of-pocket."* Another participant said that cost was an issue in the past, but the dental coverage addressed the problem. She said, *"I would say the only thing that has gotten in my way of dental care has been my disability and finances. DentaQuest is helping with the finances, and I'm working hard on being able to get there. I deal with mobility issues. That's been improving with help, too."*

Two participants said transportation challenges combined with a lack of providers were barriers to care. One participant said, *"Not a lot of places take my insurance. I don't have a vehicle. The closest place I know of that I've been able to go to is 30 minutes away. It's just figuring that out. There's nowhere I can walk to that takes it."*

Two participants said providers did not have enough appointments. One participant shared, *"It seems there is a lot of demand, especially on practices like the one I go to where they try to accommodate low-income people. I don't know if all practices honor this insurance. It's felt like there's a lot of demand. This one is very good about trying to serve people, but it's sometimes hard to get an appointment."*

Two participants said they had difficulty managing family needs when trying to prioritize dental care. One participant said, *"I have one kid who has medical needs, so I have to work around him."*

Another participant said her fear presented challenges for getting care. She said, *"I think the main barrier has been my anxiety. I will put it off until I have to go. It's more of a 'me' problem."*

One participant said the coverage was insufficient for her needs. She said, *"They don't cover everything. I know they cover the basics."* One additional participant said he had difficulty figuring out where the Mobile Dental Clinic was located.

Five participants said they did not have any challenges in accessing care.

Experience with Dentist's Offices

When asked where they found their dental provider, participants most frequently (N=6) said through DentaQuest. One participant said, *"There's a website the state provides. You can click in, and they'll tell you who takes what for insurance."* Another participant said, *"I looked online to see who would take the insurance, and she came up. I read some reviews, and people had nice things to say. The first visit was wonderful."* One participant noted the insurance had assigned her a dentist. She said, *"It was on the card with a paper that said 'this is your dental home' where they assigned me."*

Four participants said they had been patients of their dentist for a long time. One participant said, *"I've been going to them for five years. I can't remember, it might have been word-of-mouth that I first heard of them. I liked them a lot right away. I noticed there was a lot of turnover in dentists. I thought I'd like someone, but then they would be gone. It's been part of their mode of not being a big profit practice."* Another participant said, *"I have had the current one for years. I had them before DentaQuest. They had a sliding scale. But, if you weren't already a patient of them, you were out of luck. Or, if you lost your care, they kicked you out of their systems."*

One participant said she found her dentist through her parents. She said, *"My parents go to that same dental office. I used to go to another one, but it was only up to 18-years-old. I stopped that, and I wanted to go to an adult one. I feel better about going to a good dental office."*

Two participants said their dentist is associated with their PCP. One participant noted, *"It's connected with my primary care. They have a medical side and a dental side."*

One participant said she found a dentist who took her insurance on her own. She said, *"I called a bunch of dentists to see if they took the insurance."*

Two participants said they had a local awareness of their dentist. One participant said, *"It's on the road next to my house. I drive past it every day. I finally got AmeriHealth, and my case manager said they cover the basics. So, I went in there and signed up for some cleanings."*

One participant said the dentist came to her at the nursing home.

Positive Experiences with a Dentist

Eight participants said they liked that their dentist was friendly. One participant said, *"They're family-based, and they're welcoming and sweet. They are honest and upfront about your teeth. I love that. I'm going to be a dental assistant in the future. They're always asking me when I'm going to go into the program."* Another participant said, *"Their customer service is really good. The staff is really nice, and they help if you have questions."*

Four participants said their dentist communicates with them effectively and honestly. One participant said, *"It's a small practice. They are very educational. When I had one of my fillings done, they said I'd be numb for a certain amount of time, which I thought was important. The staff gave me one of those exercise balls to squeeze to address my anxiety. They were going to allow me to have gas. They take their time, and they want to make sure you know what they're doing with you."*

Three participants said their dentist was accommodating to their needs. One participant said, *"They're accommodating, wonderful people, and they are very competent and efficient. I come out of there smiling all the time. I get an extraction and I'm smiling. There's no pain from the filling. I've had a lot of dental care in my lifetime, and they get both thumbs up. They have good dentists. They fit me in and are very helpful. The front staff is wonderful, and the support staff is so helpful. Their professionals are awesome."*

Three participants said they liked the quality of care they received from their dentist. One participant shared, *"The office is clean. They are very friendly and accurate. They took a ton of x-rays. The hygienist was very professional, but friendly. The dentist was also very professional and friendly. He asked me where the tooth was that was supposed to be filled and said, 'We don't see any cavity'. It was only what I was told by the other dentist. I was treated very nice. They were very, very nice, but also very professional and clean."*

Two participants liked that their dentist was available for appointments. One participant said, *"I do like that they were able to schedule me quickly. I think they did a good job with the cleaning. My teeth felt good and clean. I actually paid out-of-pocket before, and I thought that previous provider was very rough on my teeth."*

Three participants remarked on the convenience of the location of their dentist. One participant said, *"They just clean my teeth. We don't get personal. I like it because it's near my house."*

One participant said she likes that the same provider can see her. She said, *"I like the continuity. This hygienist is steady. Even though it's not 100% consistent, I like some sense of continuity."*

One participant noted the low cost of care as something she liked. She said, *"I like that they are willing to do the sliding scale. I found one other, but they were so packed all the time, I couldn't get in. This one has more availability and does some walk-ins. That's a nice feature."*

Negative Experiences with a Dentist

Eleven of the 17 participants who received services from a dentist's office said there was nothing they disliked about the dentist.

Two participants noted dissatisfaction with the quality of care they received. One participant reported, *"I'm grateful for them, but I was upset because I have one cavity that was clearly a cavity. They*

explained it, but I was reluctant to get it filled the first time. There was another area in my mouth that wasn't a real cavity, but the gum was recessed and the tooth was in danger. They wanted to put in plastic to bridge the gap. I wasn't comfortable with it. I didn't want plastic in my mouth. I turned down the service. The next time, they said I had two cavities, and they filled both. Then, I found out what they said was the second cavity was the recessed gum, not a cavity. The 'filling' is touching my gum. I was freaked out, and they didn't answer my calls for 24 hours. I wasn't angry. I just wanted to talk about it. They called back and explained why I needed it. But I felt like I was told after the fact. I am concerned about my health, and the decision was made for me. I wish they would leave the decision in the hands of the patient. I asked why they didn't tell me. They said they try to speak in layperson's terms. I educate myself. I will look it up and make a decision. I don't want to be treated like I'm not capable of making my own decisions. I don't think they were being dishonest, but they definitely did not explain it completely. If I'm actively asking, trust me to be able to make my decision."

One participant said some dentists at the practice do not listen to her, but she requests the one she prefers. One participant said the location of the dental office was too far away.

One participant said she could not become a patient of the dental practice, which was disappointing to her. This participant had an emergency issue with an infection, and she had only seen this dentist after making multiple calls. She said, *"I reached out to them trying to find someone who would take the insurance. There was only one office in the whole state that was taking new patients. I called and left them a very desperate voicemail saying I was in a lot of pain. That's why they saw me. They knew I needed help. They ended up calling me and making an appointment. The wisdom tooth was infected, so they did prescribe me antibiotics. But they wouldn't let me be a patient. I was excited to be there, but at the end of the appointment, they said don't come back."*

One participant noted an unpleasant experience with a payment issue with his dentist. He said, *"There was a miscommunication where I paid a lot of money a few years ago to have some gum grafting done. They were really worried about recession and me losing teeth. It cost a lot, and it was a big hardship for me, but I went ahead with it. There was an episode where I could feel a stitch had gotten loose. It was in the evening, and she told me to call her at any time. I called, and she said we better look at it. She met me after hours. I was charged for that. There was this massive payment that I made that should have covered the whole messy experience. That was the way it had been presented to me. I was shocked when the receptionist presented me with the after-hours charge. I think they dropped it, but that was an experience that threw me."* He also noted that there was a lot of turnover of providers within the practice.

Care When Needed

Five of the 17 participants who received care at a dental office said they had not received care as soon as they needed it. Four participants said there were insufficient appointments available with their provider. One participant said, *"There are delays sometimes. This last time, I got an appointment, and it was canceled because the hygienist was sick. I was on the waitlist for cancellation because they couldn't schedule anything soon to replace that one. I was waiting for a month or so. I was getting a little worried, but it resolved."*

One participant said the delays were because of prior authorization requirements. He said, *"There have been insurance delays. For example, I had scheduled seven crowns to be done. They had to be scheduled two to three months apart due to insurance. I do a cancellation list with them if they're booking out too far."*

Experience with Mobile Dental Clinic

Fifteen participants received care from the Mobile Dental Clinic. Six of these participants said they had received telephone calls or text messages telling them about the clinic. One participant said, *"They just called me out of the blue. Apparently, it's through Medicaid or DentaQuest. I started receiving phone calls and texts from them."* Another participant said, *"They had reached out to me through Medicaid. They left me a voice mail, and I called back."*

Two participants said they saw information about the Mobile Dental Clinic on social media. One participant said she saw it on a Facebook post from her community health center. Another participant said, *"Someone posted about it on the 'What's Up Claremont' local Facebook page."*

Three participants said they found out about the clinic from friends or family. One participant said, *"Initially, I heard about it through my boyfriend, and then I got a text message about it."*

Two participants said they had contacted their MCO and were directed to DentaQuest. One participant said, *"I called WellSense, and they told me to call DentaQuest, who gave me the website for the mobile dentist."* Another participant initially heard about it through another provider, then she called her MCO. She said, *"I had a dental provider that told me about the benefit. I had asked if they had some program because I had a \$285 bill coming up. I had gone to this dentist previously when I was working, but stopped when I had to pay out-of-pocket. They had some program that you had to apply for, but you had to have credit. I couldn't do that. That's when they mentioned the Mobile Dental Clinics through the state. I called WellSense and asked them about it. I was lucky to find out about it. The dental hygienist I had seen was very kind. I was having difficulty affording care, and she was pointing me in the direction of better oral care."*

One participant said he looked it up online. He said, *"It just came up when I was searching for dental care."*

One participant learned about the Mobile Dental Clinic at her PCP. She said, *"I heard about it at my PCP. I saw a flyer they had posted, so I wrote down the number."*

One participant said her case manager told her about it.

Positive Experiences with Mobile Dental Clinic

Seven participants said they liked that the location and appointment timing was convenient for them. One participant said, *"My partner doesn't work on the weekends, and he was able to take care of the kids so I could go. It was more convenient. It was right down the hill."*

Seven participants said the staff at the Mobile Dental Clinic were friendly. One participant said, *"I think the people there were really nice. I didn't feel judged at all. I like the reminder they sent me about coming in. It was in a place that was easy to find."* Another participant said, *"I like that they can come to Tamworth. That's big because I have kids. I had to bring them with me, and they were amazing with my kids while I was getting my teeth worked on. They're really good people. I just love them."*

Six participants commented on the knowledge of the staff and the quality of care they received. One participant said, *"They were very professional. Everything about it was great. They were a team and had a good rapport. They kidded around and were regular people. It wasn't all stuffy. The dentist I have is quite a hoot."* Another participant said, *"Everyone was really knowledgeable and friendly. Even though it*

was a weird little trailer, they were on top of it, and explained every single thing of what they were going to do. I don't like the dentist. I had bad experiences when I was a kid. It's really hard for me to go."

Five participants said they appreciated the availability of care. One participant said, *"It's actually more convenient. Getting into your dental office sometimes is tricky, with appointments being so scheduled out in the future. It was more convenient to drive over to where the clinic was."* Another participant said, *"I do like the people. They're very friendly and seem to know what they're doing. I also like that I can go there to get care. These people are giving up their weekends to be there. I feel safe and cared for."*

Three participants said they liked the communication about the clinics. One participant said, *"It was very convenient. They reached out a day or two before, so it was a very quick turnaround to being seen."*

Negative Experiences with the Mobile Dental Clinic

Eight participants said they did not have any negative comments about the Mobile Dental Clinic.

Two participants said they did not like the quality of care they received at the Mobile Dental Clinic. One participant shared, *"I had a very negative experience with the Smile Mobile where they introduced infection. I know it was them because I had no problem with my teeth. I went for a cleaning. I asked about the health of my gums, and he said they were really healthy. I had a very small cavity they wanted to fill. By the time I went back two months later to get it filled, I had a really bad infection and a lot of pain. The dentist that I saw advised me to get my teeth pulled immediately. She said it was a big problem, but she refused to give me any antibiotics because I have stage 4 bone cancer. I went to my doctor, and they gave me antibiotics. It didn't work, so I had to have a second round. I have pain still. I went to another dentist, and they didn't find any cavity. They did extensive x-rays, but I still have the soreness in my mouth in my cheekbone area. I don't know what's going on. My doctor doesn't know what is going on. They don't want to give me more antibiotics. It's not killing it, and they don't want me to overuse them."*

Another participant said she thought her tooth got infected at the Mobile Dental Clinic, which was the main reason she did not have a positive experience.

"I was just happy to get care. It just seemed like a normal dentist visit. It was exactly what I expected."

Two participants said there were concerns about specific staff. One participant said, *"There was one dentist who didn't have a good bedside manner."* Another participant shared, *"One time, I wasn't sure about the dentist was working on my teeth. He was being very confusing to me. In the middle of working on my tooth, he said he could just pull the tooth if I'd prefer. But I was like 'what?' and asked whether it would interfere with my bite. He said it shouldn't. I said no, forget it. It turns out he was talking about another tooth on my upper right side of my mouth. I found that out later at the following visit. I was worried there was something wrong with the man. I'm sure there wasn't, but he didn't make it at all clear that he was talking about a whole other tooth. That concerned me. One other thing that I thought was odd, normally when you go to the dentist, they usually put something on your chest to protect your clothes. One time, when they were doing something, I asked about that and they said, 'we can't afford everything, we're limited'. I thought that was odd and after it was over, I asked if I could have a wet wipe or damp paper towel to wipe my face off and they said 'we don't provide those.' But the last time, I*

definitely remember that the assistant put something across my chest that was appropriate. I don't know if they were out, and somebody didn't know. It hasn't happened again since then."

One participant mentioned the lack of a bathroom as a difficulty. She said, *"They don't have a bathroom, but they're usually set up next to my health care clinic. I suppose they can only contain so much in their units."*

One participant said he wished the clinic had a panoramic x-ray machine. He said, *"I thought [the Mobile Dental Clinic] was the greatest thing. The only thing I wish they had was the new x-ray machine that you don't have to put the cards in your mouth. I have a gag reflex, and it's tough for me. I do it because I have to, but it's uncomfortable."*

One participant mentioned the irregular access to care from the Mobile Dental Clinic. She said, *"I guess I just prefer going to a dentist. The mobile clinic isn't around as often."*

Care When Needed

Four participants said they did not receive care at the Mobile Dental Clinic when it was needed, all of whom noted the clinic is not always available. One participant said, *"They're busy, so you schedule an appointment. If you do have a problem, you can't be seen, because it's only there at certain times. It only works for planning ahead for cleanings or easy fillings."* Another participant said, *"They're only available in our area at certain times. You have to hurry to get an appointment. If you can get in, it's great, but you never know when it's going to be available. In the winter, there wasn't anything available. There was one in February, but I couldn't get in. The spots fill up so fast."*

Specialist Care

Ten of the participants said they needed or had received care from a specialist. Four participants needed care for their wisdom teeth. One participant shared, *"When I got my wisdom teeth out, there were some challenges. They said that the insurance didn't cover it. There was a lot of miscommunication. They covered a little bit of it and the rest was out-of-pocket."* Another participant said, *"I'm getting my wisdom teeth done soon. It's been approved. I am going back to the same oral surgeon who wasn't nice. I called the original office that did the referral to see if there was anyone else, but they haven't called me back. I heard through friends of my family there is a surgeon in Lebanon that takes DentaQuest. I might reach out about that."* She also noted significant delays in getting care from the oral surgeon. She said, *"I started getting the pain in January. The initial appointment with the oral surgeon was supposed to be in July. I was on the waiting list, but I think because the dental office said Urgent on the referral, I was seen pretty quickly. I think they saw me the first week of March. They said it would take a long time for the insurance and initially said the surgery was going to be December. But I just got the appointment for the end of September for the surgery. They offered me a waiting list, so I'm on that."*

Three participants needed help with infections. One participant said, *"I had to go in because I had a cyst. They had a problem with the roots. They had to go in and surgically take it out."*

One person needed treatment for his gums and received care from the oral surgeon, who was associated with his current dentist. He said, *"I'm not sure I would have done it if it wasn't in-house."*

One participant had a tooth pulled by an oral surgeon, but disliked the provider. He said, *"That guy was a jerk. I get you're a surgeon, but I don't care. You still have to have a bedside manner. He literally came*

in and pulled out a tooth, checked another, and left the room. His nurse finished cleaning me up. I don't think I'd go back to him."

One other participant said she needs an implant. She said, *"I need that now. I'm scared. I don't mind the dentist, but I have bad anxiety. I had a tooth pulled once, and she screwed up my entire lower jaw when she did it. I have to get a screw where my tooth was pulled and then an implant in there. It's just pending."*

Dental Care Paid Out-of-Pocket

Twenty participants said they had not paid for any dental care out-of-pocket. Three of these participants noted they would not have been able to pay for any care because of financial constraints. One participant said, *"I'm trying to keep my costs down, so I have not done that."* Another participant said, *"At Aspen Dental, they did an overall look at my teeth, did x-rays, and told me what needed to be done. The estimated cost was really high. They have a program where you get some percentage off, but it's not very much."* One other participant said, *"It isn't within my realm of capabilities. I have very little money left for anything else. I just have enough to barely get by. Dental care and my glasses need to be replaced. Those are the two things that are next to impossible to get taken care of."* One other participant reiterated she had received no dental care in years.

Four participants said they had paid for dental care prior to having coverage through DentaQuest. One participant said it was a significant cost burden. She said, *"Before the Mobile Dental Clinic, I always went to my appointments, but I had to charge it to my credit card. I paid what I could afford on that credit card."* Another participant said, *"At a dentist years ago, my teeth were breaking, so they suggested a partial for a couple of my teeth. I borrowed money to get the partial. When I told them it didn't fit, they told me to keep trying, but it broke the tooth in front of it. I lost all that money and lost the ability to have my teeth fixed."*

Four participants said they had co-payment requirements from DentaQuest for some procedures. One participant said, *"I think I only paid a little out-of-pocket for the fillings, but they paid for the rest."* Another participant said, *"I had to pay for some of my dentures. They worked with me."* One participant said she had to pay a large co-pay for having her wisdom teeth removed.

Two participants said they paid fully for specific care. One participant said he paid for a mouth guard and the other paid for a root canal.

Future Concerns

Participants were asked to describe their biggest concerns about their dental health in the future. Ten participants said they did not have any concerns.

Four participants said they were worried about not having dental coverage or not being able to get care in the future. One participant said, *"My teeth are getting bad because of having kids. I just want to make sure I keep having access to a dentist locally. If I didn't have one locally that took the insurance, I would have to travel over an hour."*

Three participants said they were concerned about not being able to find dental care providers. One participant said, *"I definitely would like a dentist. Not having one is not decent."* Another participant said, *"I'm worried about finding a primary dental office I can keep going back to. Needing surgery and having to wait a long time is a little daunting, but I feel better knowing it's happening."*

Five participants said they had concerns about having access to specific dental care. One participant said, *"I know I need to work on my teeth. I want braces to make my teeth look good. I want stuff done to my teeth to make them look better."* Another participant said, *"I'm not sure whether I'm going to have help in the future for dentures. Thankfully, I'm not dealing with pain right now."* Another participant said, *"I have a 22-year-old bridge that encompasses my two front teeth. That's my biggest concern. I know that sort of thing might be considered cosmetic, but it's also mental and emotional."*

Eight participants had specific worries about their dental situation. One participant said, *"I have bad recession, and I grind my teeth. I'm probably going to lose more teeth because of that. It's pretty hard to solve that problem."* One other participant said, *"I'm most worried about this problem with my gums hurting. I can chew, and I can eat. There's nothing visibly wrong that the dentist can see on an x-ray. My doctor said it's possible there's nerve damage because I had the infection so long without having it treated. That is the only thing that concerns me. My teeth and gums are good. At 64, I have all my teeth minus two."* Another participant said, *"My mom has a degenerative bone disease. My concern is about that. But if I keep going to the dentist, I hope that won't happen. I can't afford dentures."*

One other participant said, *"I'm most worried that my gums want to recess. I did a grafting in the past. I feel like I'm doing all the right things. It looks like they might recede again. I hope I don't need another*

"I guess it's more of me making sure I take care of my teeth better. Which I know I'm doing. I've started doing the things. I have an electric toothbrush. I'm making sure I make my children take care of their teeth."

"I'm worried [the insurance] is going to disappear, or they're not going to keep it affordable. I know it costs about \$300 to have a root canal done because that's what I paid out-of-pocket. I'm so appreciative, but the amount of care they allow you after not having care for years is not enough. You have to have this basic care done first to make sure you're healthy. Then, go for the cleanings. The main thing should be decaying teeth first, then your dental health can stay good. I had a friend who had a rotten tooth, and it spread to his heart. All because he couldn't find a place that would take the dental insurance."

grafting in the future. But if I do, I hope it's paid for. I try to really take care of my teeth, and I appreciate the preventive care."

Positive Outcomes of Access to Dental Care

Participants were asked to describe what it has meant to them to have access to dental care. Twelve participants said they were happy to have improved oral health outcomes. One participant said, *"I've been able to keep my mouth healthy. I had some really bad pain after my son was born. Being able to go to the dentist is really helpful. Without insurance, it might have cost me money that I don't have. I don't have to make sure I've been paid that week in order to go."* Another participant said, *"It means a lot to me. It's been so long since I've been able to have dental care. My teeth aren't terrible, but if I had to wait another five or ten years to get dental care, it would have been terrible. It's been very important to me."*

Five participants commented on the positive effects on their mental and emotional health of having dental care. One participant said, *"I'm not afraid my teeth are going to rot out because I made mistakes in the past of not taking care of them."* Another participant said, *"I have peace of mind because I have professionals I know I can see for a cleaning, or they can refer me somewhere else if there's something big I need done. I just feel better about my oral health and having my teeth looked at every so often."* One other participant said, *"I'm less anxious to go to another cleaning now because I'm doing it regularly. It's less scary to go in."*

"I was extremely grateful for the opportunity that was available, and I was able to get work done."

Four participants said having access to dental care has improved their physical health. One participant said, *"Just having clean teeth is a whole different feeling in your mouth. And it's amazing how much better your immune system functions. My tooth broke and had a hole in it. I couldn't chew on that side, it was so painful. My whole jaw ached. There was an infection in the bone. It wasn't even salvageable. I didn't want to do a crown and all that painful stuff. I just wanted it pulled because it was hurting so much. They did a really good job taking it out gently. I was terrified. I hadn't had any extractions except a couple that hadn't gone well as a kid. They got it all out. I can eat whatever I want now. It's great."* Another participant said, *"The biggest plus to having access is preserving your teeth and oral health. Teeth are very important. A lot of people don't realize how important they are to digestion. That's the most important thing to me."*

"I hadn't been in a dentist in a while. I'm just looking forward to having healthier teeth. It's been several years at least."

Three participants said a positive outcome for them was the reduced cost. One participant said, *"The fact that I don't have to pay for it is a huge help."* Another participant said, *"I very much appreciate it. I probably wouldn't have gotten those cavities filled. I'm in a cost-saving stage. I don't spend anything I don't have."*

Two participants said they feel like they look better. One participant said, *"Getting the dentures and getting my front teeth cleaned up, they're starting to look good now."* Another participant said, *"I've been happy to smile again. It worked out perfectly. I'm grateful for that opportunity."*

One participant who received dentures said, *“Just having teeth in my mouth has been important.”*

Experience with Dental Support Services

The interviewer asked participants a series of questions about their access to, and use of, dental support services, including transportation support, medication, and care coordination. A quarter of participants reported transportation challenges, but most were unaware of the dental transportation assistance program. A third of participants had received medication related to their dental care. The bulk of participants said they received their medications with no issue and reported that their MCO had paid for the prescription. None of the participants received care coordination support from DentaQuest.

Transportation

Seven participants said they have transportation challenges getting to their dental care provider. One participant said she borrows a car, but it is not always available. She said, *“It's been a matter of seeing about borrowing my mom's car when she's not working. Luckily, they've been open when she's not working.”* Another participant said, *“I have to get rides. This upcoming one is going to be a little bit challenging. I don't have lots of friends I can call to help with things. My mother is 85, and she can't be carting me all over the place. I've gotten to know a couple of my neighbors. In the last year, I've asked one of my neighbors to give me rides to the dentist. I feel really bad having to ask her again because she's already done it three times. It's only about 30 minutes, but I'm not able to drive there.”* Another participant noted, *“If the mobile clinic is in Claremont, it's within walking distance. If it's at the other place, I can't go. My partner works crazy hours, so it has to be in Claremont. The cost of a taxi to Newport or Lebanon is too much. If I can't find a ride, I miss out. I stick to whatever is happening in Claremont.”*

Only two participants said they were aware of the dental transportation assistance program. Both of whom had used it, and both had experienced problems. One participant said she had significant issues with the program. She said, *“I have transportation issues getting to any provider. I have a condition where my legs give out. The transportation services are a nightmare here. A driver was following me. He showed up at my house. I don't know his name, so I can't file a report. The insurance company won't give me his name. I just got a letter saying the stalker is no longer an issue, but the guy still drives past my house. I'm actually getting to the point that I will go to the news about it. If it's happening to me, it's happening to others.”* She noted other difficulties with the transportation program. She said, *“Besides the stalker, I had a driver pick other people up first, and then pick me up late. The drivers aren't always safe either.”*

The other participant who used the program said she had problems with the ride service being late. She said, *“The last time I went to the dentist, I was supposed to get a cleaning. I couldn't get it because I was 20 minutes late because of the transportation. She couldn't start me because it would have put them behind. They were kind enough to do my x-rays and make an appointment for the cleaning. They could have turned me away, but they got all my x-rays out of the way. They're willing to work with me.”*

Medication

Ten participants said they had needed medication either before or after a dental visit. One participant said there were delays in getting access to the medication because of her providers. She said, *“When I first went to the dentist, she had explained that she was concerned because the bone looked a little infected under the tooth. I explained about my autoimmune disease. I said I would be more comfortable being put on an antibiotic if there was any kind of infection. She said she was going to hold off. She didn't*

really know me. It was my first appointment. Over the course of a few days, I became ill. I went to my PCP, but they didn't feel comfortable prescribing an antibiotic. I called the dentist, and she did finally put me on it." The other participant reiterated the delays she experienced in getting antibiotics because the dentist refused to prescribe them because of her bone cancer diagnosis.

Nine participants said their health insurance covered their medications. One participant restated that his insurance did not cover his prescription toothpaste.

Care Coordination

None of the interviewed participants received care coordination services from DentaQuest. One participant shared he would be interested in care coordination support. He said, *"Case management services would be something that I would be interested in due to my vision and cognitive issues, which really are quite a barrier. I go to social work once a week at the PCP who helps me do the paperwork or fill out forms online. It's just frustrating. I'm educated, and I've been in front of computers my whole life. Now, I can't anymore."*

Additional Comments

The facilitator offered participants the opportunity to provide any additional comments.

Five participants expressed appreciation for the dental coverage and a desire for continuing care. One participant said, *"Just keep the cleanings coming and don't stop. It's the weirdest thing. A few years ago, I was getting all this Medicare and Medicaid stuff, but they didn't cover eyes or teeth. That's the first thing people lose! Luckily, that has changed for the dental. As far as the eyesight, you're lucky if you get a free exam. You need more stuff for elderly people or for people who are getting there. Losing eyesight and hearing is part of getting older."* Another participant shared, *"I'm just really glad it's an available service for people who need it. I really appreciated everybody's help. Everyone, for the most part, seems very kind and seems to know what they're doing."* A participant who had received care at the Mobile Dental Clinic said, *"I just guess I'm excited to hear I have something for dental coverage. I don't have to wait as much. I can get into the clinic that my boyfriend goes to. The dentist is really nice."*

"I've been thrilled to have it since it's been so long since I've had coverage. I'm very appreciative to have it."

Six participants requested more information to be available about the dental coverage. One participant said he wondered how he would be notified if there were any changes to the insurance. He said, *"The only thing I don't know is if something changes, how I would be informed of that? I don't know how they do things. We don't get notices or anything. The last time I heard from them was when I got the card, and that was a couple of years ago."* Another participant said, *"It would be great if they would send a letter with a breakdown of what is covered and not covered. The regular insurance sends a book every year. It would be great to know what's covered."* One other participant said she wanted to know if DentaQuest information was available online.

One participant who had not received any dental care said, *"I'm going to reach out and try to get more information on it. I don't know who to call. I was going to start with DHHS and ask them what is going on and what is covered. I have a lot of teeth that are bad. I'm missing almost all my teeth."* One other

participant who had not received dental care was curious about what benefits were available, even though she was resistant to receiving dental care. She said she knew nothing about her dental coverage.

One participant appreciated the opportunity to provide feedback. She said, *“I just think it's great they want to know what we think about it. I think it's important to share this. There should be more options to do it anonymously so we can give information without feeling like we will be punished later on.”*

Another participant mentioned a desire for more providers. She said, *“I would just like to see more places take the insurance. I would appreciate not having to travel that far for care.”*

Recommendations

Based on the experiences and feedback interview participants reported, the findings from this report generated four recommendations for the DO and one recommendation for DHHS.

Recommendations for the DO:

Provide information directly to beneficiaries on the dental benefits available

Interview participants frequently noted that they had not received information about their dental coverage and expressed a lack of understanding of the benefits available to them. Less than 10% of beneficiaries in the total population had received a cleaning in the previous year, suggesting the possibility that more beneficiaries are unaware of their coverage. DentaQuest should directly and regularly provide readable and comprehensive information about the dental benefits available to beneficiaries.

Expand the network of dental providers

Participants frequently noted the difficulty in finding a provider who both takes their insurance and is accepting new patients. DentaQuest should continue to expand its network of dental providers to meet this need.

Expand the Mobile Dental Clinic

Participants said that the Mobile Dental Clinic appointments fill quickly, and they cannot always get care when needed. Expanding the Mobile Dental Clinic to offer more dates and locations can be an effective way of increasing access to care. Focusing on sites where appointments fill quickly may be an appropriate first step.

Engage a comprehensive media strategy

Many participants did not understand that they had dental insurance, despite utilizing the Mobile Dental Clinic. DentaQuest should engage in a more robust media strategy that describes care options and the availability of coverage to bridge the knowledge gap. The strategy should include social media posts, outreach to primary care and mental health providers, collaboration with community partners, and direct contact with beneficiaries through mail, text, and email.

Recommendation for DHHS:

Ensure continued dental benefits for adult Medicaid beneficiaries

Participants overwhelmingly expressed appreciation and positive outcomes related to having access to dental care. Previous qualitative studies have included comments from participants on the need for preventive dental care. Continuing to offer dental benefits to adults can address this significant need.

Appendix 1. Recruitment Letter

February 2025

Dear Medicaid Member,

The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services is asking for your help with a project about the New Hampshire Smiles Adult Dental Benefit that is administered by DentaQuest. The Department hired Horn Research to gather opinions from individuals like you to better understand your experience with your dental care and dental insurance plan.

We would like to invite you to participate in a **telephone interview** where you can share your experience about your dental provider and DentaQuest.

We are only asking a small number of people to take part, so **your participation is very important**. You will receive a **\$50 VISA gift card** as a thank you for your time if you participate in a telephone interview.

We will be conducting the telephone interviews between **February 2025 – March 2025**. The interview will take about 25-30 minutes and we can schedule it at your convenience. We have a limited number of interview slots and they will be filled on a first come, first serve basis. All information you share will be kept completely private and will not affect your benefits or health care in any way. No one from Medicaid will see your individual answers. Your personal information will never be made public.

If you would like to schedule an interview, please call Horn Research toll-free at **(888) 316-1851**, text at **(607) 247-0712** or email at **Lisa@HornResearch.com**.

Thank you for sharing your experience and thoughts about the New Hampshire Smiles Adult Dental Benefit.

Sincerely,



Susan Drown, MBA, LICSW
Director, Bureau of Program Quality

Appendix 2. Interview Guide

NEW HAMPSHIRE MEDICAID PROGRAM INTERVIEW GUIDE – DENTAL, 2025

Introduction

The goal of this interview is to try to understand your experience with your dental coverage by DentaQuest and the dental care you received during the past year.

Your feedback is very important and will help the State of New Hampshire evaluate the Medicaid Program. We want to know about your experiences. Your participation will not affect the benefits and services you receive through the Medicaid Program. All the information you provide will be kept completely confidential. At no point will your name or any other identifying information be released.

Thank you for participating in this interview.

I. General information

1. Your current age (Years)
2. Do you have a safe, stable place to sleep and store your possessions? How long have you lived/stayed there?
 - a. How many people live with you? (i.e. spouse/partner, grandparent(s), roommates) How many of those are children?
3. Within the past 12 months, did you worry whether your food would run out before you had money to buy more?
 - a. If yes, did you receive help obtaining food? (i.e. case manager, Managed Care Organization (MCO), food pantry, etc.)
4. Do you have access to a phone, tablet, or computer with internet access? (specify which ones)
 - a. Do you have any challenges/difficulties with online access?)

Note to interviewer: Please refer the participant to NH's 211 resource if the interviewee expresses they would like help obtaining additional resources such as food, stable housing, or transportation.

I would like to talk about your experience with dental coverage. NH Medicaid provides adult dental care coverage through the NH Smiles Adult Dental Program which is administered by DentaQuest.

II. Experience with Dental Coverage through DentaQuest

1. Can you describe how well you understand the dental care coverage available to you through the Smiles Program/Medicaid, such as what is covered and what isn't?

2. Tell me about the information you've received about the dental benefits provided by DentaQuest. Has the information been clear and easy to read? What kinds of challenges have you experienced in trying to understand the program?
3. How have you gotten help when you have had questions about your coverage? Have your questions been answered? What kinds of challenges have you experienced in getting your questions answered?
4. Has DentaQuest provided any information (either by phone or print) about the Smiles Program encouraging you to get care? Tell me about the impact of receiving that information – did it encourage you to seek dental care?
5. Where else have you heard about the Smiles Program? What has been the most effective way of reaching you with information about the program? (e.g. letters, brochures, word-of-mouth, social media)?
6. What do you like best about DentaQuest? (prompt: Can you tell me about a good experience you've had?)
7. What are the most challenging experiences you've had with DentaQuest? (prompt: Can you tell me about any problems you've had?)
8. What do you know about DentaQuest's complaint process? (Prompt: Have you ever utilized the complaint process, including a grievance or appeal? If so, do you feel your concern was adequately addressed? If not, do you feel you could find this information if you needed it? Did you check the member handbook?)

Next, I would like to speak with you about your experience with your Dental Care.

III. Experience with Dental Care

1. What kinds of dental services you have received through the DentaQuest/NH Smiles Program in the past year?
 - i. Have you had one cleaning in the past year? If not, why not?
 - ii. If yes, have you had two cleanings in the past year? If not, why not?
2. What barriers/challenges have you experienced trying to access dental care? (*e.g. lack of providers, lack of appointments, cost sharing*)
3. Where have you received your dental care? Was it at a dentist's office or at a Mobile Dental Clinic?
4. (*If received care at a dentist's office*) How did you find that dental provider? (e.g. called around, called DentaQuest, online)

5. Tell me about your experience with the dental provider you saw. What do you like best about that dental provider?
6. What do you like least about that dental provider?
7. Did you receive dental care from that dental provider as soon as you thought you needed it? If not, please explain why?
8. *(If received care at Mobile Dental Clinic)* How did you hear about the Mobile Dental Clinic?
9. Tell me about your experience with the Mobile Dental Clinic. What did you like best?
10. What did you like least?
11. Did you receive care from the Mobile Dental Clinic as soon as you thought you needed it? If not, please explain why?
12. Have you needed any specialist dental care, such as from an oral surgeon? Tell me about that experience. Did you get specialty dental care as soon as you needed it? Were there any challenges/difficulties with that care?
13. Have you sought out dental care that was not paid for by the Smiles Program/DentaQuest? Tell me about that experience.
14. What are your biggest concerns about your dental health going forward? What are you most worried about?
15. What has it meant for you to have access to dental care – what, if any, has been the biggest positive outcome of having access to dental care? What good things are you looking forward to as a result of having dental care access?

IV. Experience with Dental Support Services

1. Have you experienced any transportation challenges getting to your dental provider?
 - a. If yes, tell me more about that.
 - b. If yes, are you aware of dental transportation assistance available through DentaQuest?
 - c. If you have used the transportation program, have you had any challenges?
2. Did you need medication related to your dental care (either before and/or after receiving dental care)? If so, tell me about your experience obtaining those medication(s) from (name of MCO)? Did you experience any challenges or barriers?
 - a. Did (name of MCO) cover the cost (excluding copayment) of the medication?

3. Care Coordination is a health care process in which a medical professional helps the client and their family navigate the health care system by connecting them to healthcare providers, resources, and services so that the client gets appropriate care when they need it. Do/did you receive case management services from DentaQuest? If so, tell me about your experience with the case management you've received from DentaQuest.

IV. Final Comments

1. Lastly, is there anything else about your dental coverage and dental care that I did not already ask you that you would like to share with me?

Appendix 3. DO-Specific Recommendations for DENTAL_EQRO.01 Report

DQ

Table 11 lists opportunities for improvement from the Member Qualitative Interview Report to include in the DENTAL_EQRO.01 report for DQ.

Table 11. EQRO Findings and Recommendations for Improvement from the Member Qualitative Interview Report to Include in the DENTAL_EQRO.01 Report for DQ

NEDD/DQ EQRO Findings/Recommendations for Improvement to be Included in the DENTAL_EQRO.01 Report		
Member Qualitative Interview Report		
1	DQ-2025-DENTAL_EQRO.01-SSI-01	<i>Provide information directly to beneficiaries on the dental benefits available</i> Interview participants frequently noted that they had not received information about their dental coverage and expressed a lack of understanding of the benefits available to them. Less than 10% of beneficiaries in the total population had received a cleaning in the previous year, suggesting the possibility that more beneficiaries are unaware of their coverage. DentaQuest should directly and regularly provide readable and comprehensive information about the dental benefits available to beneficiaries.
2	DQ-2025-DENTAL_EQRO.01-SSI-02	<i>Expand the network of dental providers</i> Participants frequently noted the difficulty in finding a provider who both takes their insurance and is accepting new patients. DentaQuest should continue to expand its network of dental providers to meet this need.
3	DQ-2025-DENTAL_EQRO.01-SSI-03	<i>Expand the Mobile Dental Clinic</i> Participants said that the Mobile Dental Clinic appointments fill quickly, and they cannot always get care when needed. Expanding the Mobile Dental Clinic to offer more dates and locations can be an effective way of increasing access to care. Focusing on sites where appointments fill quickly may be an appropriate first step.
4	DQ-2025-DENTAL_EQRO.01-SSI-04	<i>Engage a comprehensive media strategy</i> Many participants did not understand that they had dental insurance, despite utilizing the Mobile Dental Clinic. DentaQuest should engage in a more robust media strategy that describes care options and the availability of coverage to bridge the knowledge gap. The strategy should include social media posts, outreach to primary care and mental health providers, collaboration with community partners, and direct contact with beneficiaries through mail, text, and email.

Appendix 4. Research Staff

Table 12. Research Team

Name/Role	Skills and Expertise
Lisa Horn, MILR <i>President/Owner, Horn Research LLC</i>	Ms. Horn has over 20 years of professional consulting experience providing high-quality research and evaluation services for non-profits, academia, and government agencies. Ms. Horn has expertise in research and evaluation activities, including project management, outcome modeling, methodology design, data collection, data analysis, data management, and report writing. Her skills include organizing public input through various methodologies, including surveys, focus groups, round tables, and interviews. She has sub-contracted with HSAG since 2014.