

Status of dental schools providing dental health coverage for dental students

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Abstract

Background: Dental students' health affects their academic performance, professional growth, and quality of life. To achieve good health, students should have access to health care, including dental care. It is unclear if dental students, who are the future dental care providers, are offered school endorsed dental plans for their own dental needs. In this study we examine whether dental schools are offering school endorsed dental plans to dental students.

Methodology: Websites of 57 dental schools across the US were thoroughly searched. Data was collected on each dental school including, provider company name, type of provider, type of plan offered, and fee per year. Descriptive statistics were derived using excel software.

Results: As of July 2011, 43 of the 57 dental schools offer some kind of dental plan. Five schools do not offer any dental plan and nine schools provide no information on dental coverage in their websites. The major dental providers include Aetna (36%), Delta Dental (14%), and plans offered through the school itself (10%). Only 5 out of 43 dental include dental plan fee in the cost of attendance. Plans including dental coverage range from \$0 to \$3698 per school year.

Conclusions: Based on the data available on the dental school websites, 9% of the schools do not offer any dental coverage. Dental students and non-dental students in those universities may not have dental coverage. Therefore, we advocate for better access to dental care through school endorsed dental plans for all university students.