



State of Vermont
Agency of Human Services
280 State Drive
Waterbury, VT 05671-1000
www.humanservices.vermont.gov

Jenney Samuelson, Secretary
Todd Daloz, Deputy Secretary

[phone] 802-241-0440
[fax] 802-241-0450

Date: August 24, 2023

Re: Public Comments Received for Global Commitment Register notice [GCR 23-041: Vermont Medicaid Postpartum Eligibility Expansion](#)

Comments received are included below.

Comment 1:

To Whom it May Concern;

As a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker in the health care field, I'd like to strongly voice my support of expanding the Medicaid coverage for folks in the postpartum period from 60 days to 12 months. Research and data, as well as personal stories have shown again and again that the support needed by new moms and parents continues well into the first year of post-birth. This will provide important access to not only health care, but mental health care as mom's are able to retain their benefits longer and thus access care. Thank you for considering this important expansion.

Emily Pizzale, MSW, LICSW (she/her)

Social Worker

Gifford Medical Center

Comment 2:

Good morning,

As a visiting nurse working with pregnant and post-partum women in Bennington County, VT I see huge need for this expansion. In Bennington county we have a shortage of dentists and a community with huge dental needs. Most parents with Medicaid don't seek preventative dental care because of the cost. They manage dental emergencies only and it shows. I'm sure you are aware of the implications of this, and with all the contributing factors, I see family cycles of poor dentition. Parents don't create the habit of good oral hygiene for themselves and that passes down to their children. We model what we want them to model and the children don't learn good dental care. Parents don't seek twice yearly prevention exams and they don't practice or model good oral hygiene for themselves or their children. So many of my pregnant

moms try to rush to get teeth fixed during pregnancy but the wait is often long and they aren't able to manage what is needed during the allowed time. I wholly believe extending the dental coverage for post-partum moms for a year will have a huge positive impact on their health and behavior in creating healthy mouths for themselves and their children which, in turn, children will see parents going to the dentist for care which could instill better dental habits by observation.

Please expand the postpartum dental coverage to 12 months. We are in our communities doing all we can to promote healthy dentition but without the money to cover cost we are fighting a losing battle.

Regards,

Lisa Loomis BSN, RN, CLC
Strong Families Nurse Home Visitor
VNA & Hospice of the Southwest Region