

SPECIAL BULLETIN

FOR HIGHMARK HEALTH OPTIONS PROVIDERS

FEB. 17, 2016

ATTN: PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS

FLUORIDE VARNISH — THE PHYSICIAN'S ROLE IN CHILDREN'S ORAL HEALTH

Dental disease in children can lead to dietary problems, missed school days, pain, infection, hospital admissions and even life-threatening medical conditions. That is why Highmark Health Options and the Delaware Division of Medicaid & Medical Assistance (DMMA) encourage you to assess children's dental health during each well-child exam. Early intervention and fluoride varnish application assist in preventing decay or caries (i.e., cavities and/or crumbling of teeth). Referring a child to a "dental home" provider by age 1 or earlier, if he/she has high caries risk, improves dental outcomes and reduces long-term medical and dental costs.

Physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants and registered nurses who hold the appropriate state license and have received the certificate of completion for the Smile for Life online training, Course 6, "Caries Risk Assessment, Fluoride Varnish and Counseling," can apply fluoride varnish. Practices with certified medical professionals who administer fluoride varnish can be reimbursed for the service as long as it is provided during an approved well-child visit. (Medical practices must use CPT® code 99188 when billing for this service.)

To be reimbursed for this service, PCP practices must follow these DMMA requirements.

- Providers must complete a caries risk assessment prior to application of the fluoride varnish.
- A child with high caries risk assessment under the age of 1 must be referred to a Medicaid dental provider for treatment.
- A child age 1 with low caries risk should be referred to a dental home provider for routine care.

At a Glance — Smiles for Life: Course 6, "Caries Risk Assessment, Fluoride Varnish and Counseling"

- A mandatory training course for fluoride varnish application and a requirement for reimbursement
- Course focuses on Early Child Caries (ECC) prevention
- Explains the benefits of fluoride varnish, appropriate safety precautions and dosing for fluoride
- Demonstrates fluoride application, sample of caries risk assessment forms and follow-up care

For more information about Course 6, visit smilesforlifeoralhealth.org. For additional information regarding fluoride varnish application or claims submissions, please contact your Provider Representative.

