

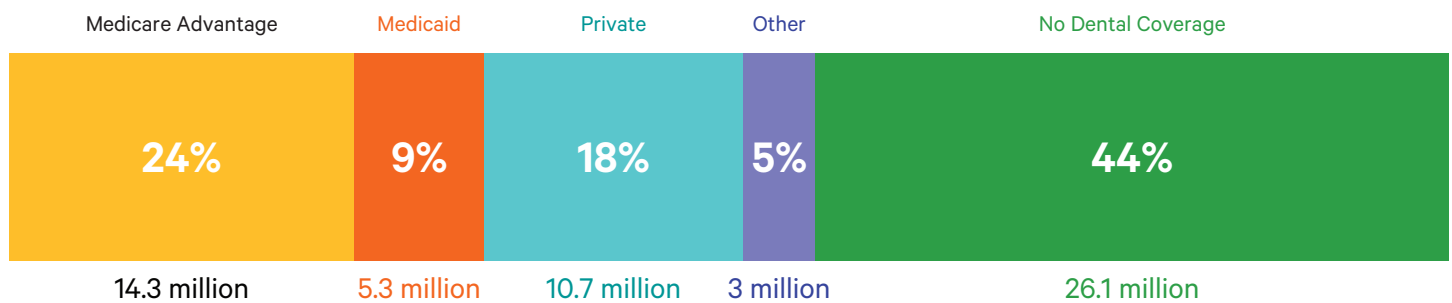
A Snapshot of the 76.5 Million Americans Without Dental Insurance



A recent survey by CareQuest Institute for Oral Health found that an [estimated 76.5 million adults](#) do not have dental insurance. The survey found that adults aged 60 and over were most likely to lack dental insurance. Older populations are already at a [higher risk](#) for oral health symptoms. This increased risk, combined with lack of dental coverage, is leading to a surge in oral health care needs within vulnerable populations.

Findings from the survey show that Medicare beneficiaries have the largest unmet need for dental coverage. The graphics below indicate estimated rates of dental coverage among those with different types of health insurance.

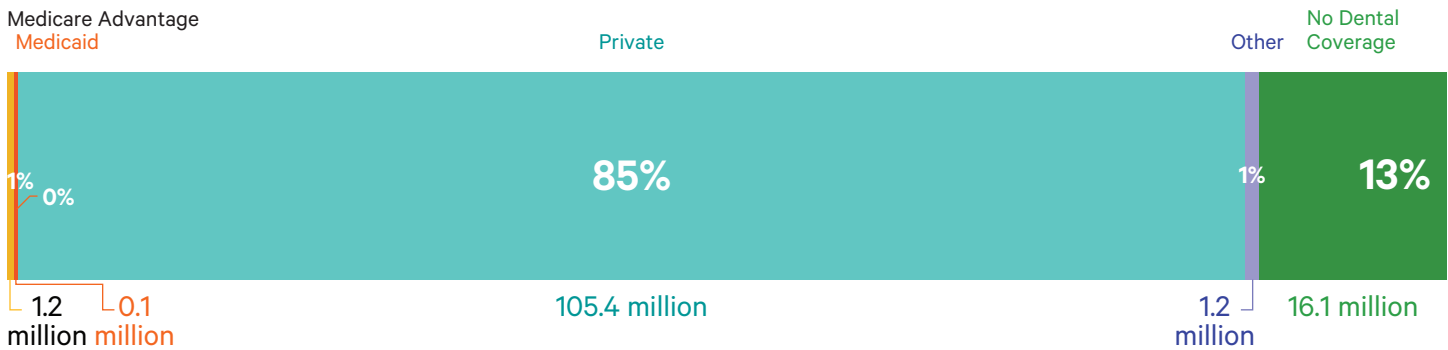
Share of Medicare beneficiaries (59.4 million) with access to dental coverage, 2021



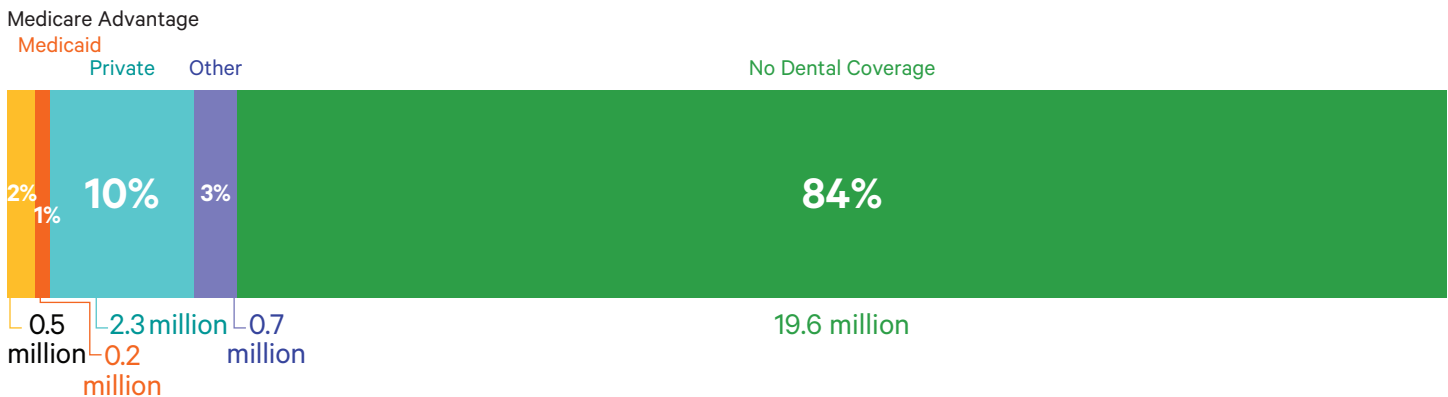
Share of Medicaid beneficiaries (28.4 million) with access to dental coverage, 2021



Share of privately insured Americans (124.0 million) with access to dental coverage, 2021



Share of uninsured Americans (23.3 million) with access to dental coverage, 2021



The survey found that a quarter of all respondents with Medicare reported that their current dental coverage is insufficient to maintain their oral health. The prospect of expanding government programs to include dental services has garnered significant support among Americans, with more than 90% of respondents supporting comprehensive dental benefits in both Medicare and Medicaid programs. The findings from the survey demonstrate the perceived inadequacies of current dental coverage for aging Americans and broad support, among all sociodemographic groups, for a comprehensive dental benefit.

Methodology:

The State of Oral Health Equity in America 2021 is a nationally representative survey of consumer and patient attitudes, experiences, and behaviors related to oral health. It was designed by CareQuest Institute for Oral Health. The survey was administered in January and February 2021, to adults aged 18 and older, by NORC at the University of Chicago as part of the AmeriSpeak panel. AmeriSpeak is a probability-based panel designed to be representative of the U.S. household population. Randomly selected U.S. households were sampled using area probability and address-based sampling, with a known, non-zero probability of selection from the NORC National Sample Frame. Sampled households were contacted by U.S. mail, telephone, and field interviewers. A sampling unit of 16,986 was used with a final sample size of 5,320, with a final weighted cumulative response rate of 5.2%. All data presented account for appropriate sample weight.

The estimates provided here come from weighted responses to questions about the source of medical coverage, if any, and the source of dental coverage, if any. We used data from the [U.S. census](#) to project estimates from the survey to the adult population of the U.S.

Suggested Citation:

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