

A STATE OF DECAY

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ARE OLDER AMERICANS COMING OF AGE WITHOUT ORAL HEALTHCARE?



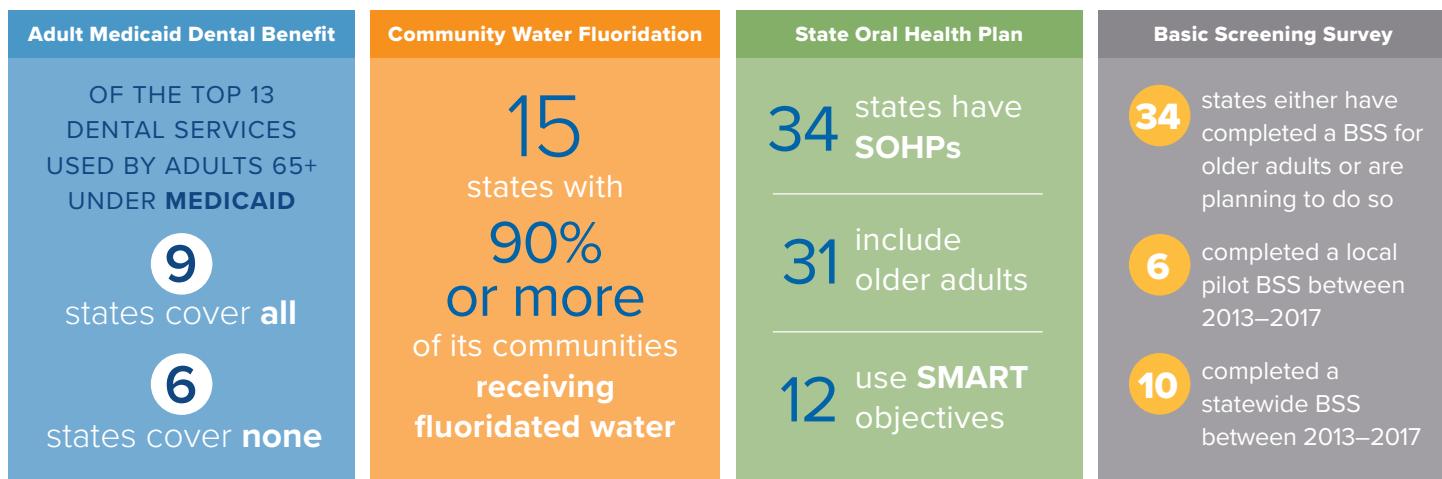
One-third of older adults have lost six or more teeth **33%**

Lower income older adults visit the dentist less frequently compared to their higher income counterparts

MEANING...

- **Difficulty chewing** nutritious foods like fruits and vegetables
- **Loss of self-confidence**
- **Increased risk of chronic disease** such as diabetes, heart disease and gum disease

GOOD NEWS! State advocates have taken action to better the oral health of older adults.



Prioritize the oral health of older adults with these **POLICY RECOMENDATIONS:**

- Reinstate, establish, or maintain an **extensive adult Medicaid dental benefit**
- Integrate **comprehensive dental coverage in Medicare**
- Sustain or expand **community water fluoridation**
- Include **specific objectives for older adults in all State Oral Health Plans**
- Conduct **Basic Screening Surveys of older adults in all states**



Data from OHA's *A State of Decay*, Vol. IV report available at astateofdecay.org

Oral Health America

180 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 1150, Chicago, IL 60601 • 312-836-9900 • oralhealthamerica.org