

## Medicaid Managed Care Taskforce Testimony

Ivy Smith's Testimony

August 9, 2023

Good morning, co-chairs and members of the Committee, my name is Ivy Smith. I am a Medicaid enrollee and would like to share some recent experiences I've had on Medicaid, particularly in regard to Idaho's MCO for dental services, MCNA Dental.

Over the past 3 years, I've struggled to find a dental provider that will accept Medicaid. I've spent hours and hours calling providers that MCNA dental lists in their directory to book a simple teeth cleaning. They claim that they keep their provider directory up-to-date with which providers are accepting new patients, what kind of services they provide, and so forth. Yet, when I call these providers that are listed as accepting new patients, they tell me that while they are accepting new patients, they aren't accepting any new Medicaid patients. Last fall, I finally found a provider that would accept Medicaid and felt relieved that I found a provider that would consistently see me as a patient. But, at the end of my first teeth cleaning appointment, the provider told me that this dentist requires having an x-ray and exam done during every tooth cleaning appointment and my Medicaid coverage would only cover 2 teeth cleanings and one x-ray a year. Meaning, if I wanted to have my teeth cleaned again in 6 months, I would have to pay for the x-ray and exam out of pocket.

After running out of other options, I filed a grievance through MCNA Dental that I could not get into any providers for a teeth cleaning that I am entitled to. I received a phone call from a grievance and appeals administrator and had the worst customer service experience I've ever had. I told him the same story that I have just shared with you all. He proceeds to tell me that he "needs me to stick to one story for the sake of his report" and no matter how many times I told him this same story he either couldn't comprehend it or just wasn't listening. Later in the call he very bluntly accused me of trying to commit fraud by going around to different providers to get services and immediately hung up on me. Frankly, I was stunned, I tried calling him back and he didn't answer, and I never received a call back. I expected nothing to come of my grievance until I received a grievance determination letter in the mail a couple of weeks ago. I believe you have all been provided a copy of the letter, so I will summarize it very briefly. The letter has nothing to do with my inability to get into a provider for teeth cleaning. Instead, he contacted the dentist that would require me to pay out of pocket and essentially confirmed what I already told him. He then says that my grievance has been addressed. But I'd like to quote my favorite part of this letter "We cannot tell you the full results of our investigation due to state and federal peer review requirements. However, please be assured that we will take whatever action is needed. We will continue to monitor for any future issues with Dental Care West." I've never even heard of Dental Care West nor have I ever been a patient there.

I came here to share this story with you all to demonstrate that Idaho's only MCO is failing miserably. Not only am I not able to receive the services I am entitled to, but their grievance and appeals process is a total joke. Not to mention the cybersecurity attack that leaked patients' private information such as social security numbers, addresses,

phone numbers, emails, date of birth, driver's license numbers, treatment plans, X-rays, and bills. How did they rectify the issue? Well, they waited approximately 2 months to tell IDHW what happened and almost 3 months to notify the participants whose data was leaked. They also offered to pay for one year of credit monitoring and identify restoration service.

I understand this task force is interested in finding ways to contain costs, but moving the rest of Idaho's healthcare system into managed care is not the answer. Under our current system, I am able to receive high-quality healthcare and mental health services in a timely manner. Idaho Medicaid isn't perfect, but it would be a mistake to spend additional tax dollars to pay a contractor to run our state's Medicaid program, versus investing those dollars into IDHW and provider rate increases.

Thank you for your time, and I will stand for any questions.