Rates of adult tooth decay are higher in older adults yet patients aged 20 to 34
have Medicaid for both preventative care and for treatment. The high numbers of Medicaid patients visiting the ER for ACS dental problems suggest a lack of access to dentists or oral healthcare clinics accepting Medicaid for both preventative care and for treatment.

Floridians absorb the cost of Medicaid and uninsured ER dental visits in several ways including higher health insurance premiums and healthcare costs, increased tax dollars needed to fund the state Medicaid program, increased local tax dollars to support local public hospitals, and lost productivity.

HARDEE COUNTY ORAL HEALTH FACT SHEET

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT USE BY RESIDENTS FOR PREVENTABLE CONDITIONS: 2011 & 2012

Visits for Young Children for Preventable Conditions

Charges for Young Children for Preventable Conditions

High numbers of Medicaid patients visiting the ER for ACS dental problems suggest a lack of access to dentists or oral healthcare clinics accepting Medicaid for both preventative care and for treatment.

ER visits during the regular work day and traditional business hours, combined with ACS diagnoses, suggest visits being made to the ER in lieu of a clinic or dental office.

Rates of adult tooth decay are higher in older adults yet patients aged 20 to 34 years comprise the largest segment of ER visits, suggesting that lack of dental insurance or an inability to meet high co-pays is driving such visits.

Policy Indicators

Indicators to consider in shaping policies to increase the overall health of Floridians while decreasing costs to the state’s healthcare system:

- High numbers of Medicaid patients visiting the ER for ACS dental problems suggest a lack of access to dentists or oral healthcare clinics accepting Medicaid for both preventative care and for treatment.
- ER visits during the regular work day and traditional business hours, combined with ACS diagnoses, suggest visits being made to the ER in lieu of a clinic or dental office.
- Rates of adult tooth decay are higher in older adults yet patients aged 20 to 34 years comprise the largest segment of ER visits, suggesting that lack of dental insurance or an inability to meet high co-pays is driving such visits.

1 Source: Emergency Room Database, Florida Agency on Health Care Administration