

Definitions

Definition of Dental Neglect

Originating Committee
Child Abuse Committee

Review Council
Council on Clinical Affairs

Adopted
1983

Reaffirmed
1996, 2001

Revised
1987, 1992

Dental caries, periodontal diseases, and other oral conditions, if left untreated, can lead to pain, infection, and loss of function. These undesirable outcomes can adversely affect learning, communication, nutrition, and other activities necessary for normal growth and development.

Dental neglect is willful failure of parent or guardian to seek and follow through with treatment necessary to ensure a level of oral health essential for adequate function and freedom from pain and infection.

Definition of Dental Disability

Originating Committee
Child Abuse Committee

Review Council
Council on Clinical Affairs

Adopted
1983

Reaffirmed
1996, 2003

Revised
1992, 2000

Dental caries, periodontal disease, and other oral conditions left untreated can limit substantially a child's development and an individual's participation in life activities. A person should be considered to have a dental disability if pain, infection, or lack of functional dentition:

1. restricts nutritional intake adequate for growth and energy needs;
2. delays or otherwise alters growth and development; or
3. inhibits participation in life activities.

Definition of Early Childhood Caries (ECC)

Originating Council
Council on Clinical Affairs

Adopted
2003

Early childhood caries (ECC) is the presence of 1 or more decayed (noncavitated or cavitated lesions), missing (due to caries), or filled tooth surfaces in any primary tooth in a child 71 months of age or younger. In children younger than 3 years of age, any sign of smooth-surface caries is indicative

of severe early childhood caries (S-ECC). From ages 3 through 5, 1 or more cavitated, missing (due to caries), or filled smooth surfaces in primary maxillary anterior teeth, or a decayed, missing, or filled score of ≥ 4 (age 3), ≥ 5 (age 4), or ≥ 6 (age 5) surfaces, constitutes S-ECC.

Definition of Medically Necessary Care

Originating Committee
Clinical Affairs Committee

Review Council
Council on Clinical Affairs

Adopted
1997

Revised
2001, 2003

Medically necessary care is the reasonable and appropriate diagnostic, preventive, and treatment services (including supplies, appliances, and devices) and follow-up care as determined by qualified, appropriate health care providers in treating any condition, disease, injury, or congenital or developmental malformation. Medically necessary care includes all health care services that directly support the delivery of dental/oral health care that, in the judgment of the attending dentist, are necessary for the provision of op-

timal quality therapeutic and preventive oral care to patients with medical, physical, or behavioral conditions. These services include, but are not limited to, sedation, general anesthesia, and utilization of surgical facilities.

Dental care is medically necessary for the purpose of preventing, controlling, and eliminating orofacial infection, pain, and disease and correcting facial disfigurement or dysfunction.

Definition of Persons with Special Health Care Needs

Originating Council
Council on Clinical Affairs

Adopted
2004

Persons are considered to have special health care needs if they have a physical, developmental, mental, sensory, behavioral, cognitive, or emotional impairment or limiting condition that requires medical management, health care intervention, and/or use of specialized services or programs. The condition may be developmental or acquired and may

cause limitations in performing daily self-maintenance activities or substantial limitations in a major life activity. Health care for special needs patients is beyond that considered routine and requires specialized knowledge, increased awareness and attention, and accommodation.

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