

NIDCR Must Remain an Independent NIH Institute

- The President's FY 2026 budget proposes a radical restructuring of NIH, including eliminating 4 Institutes and Centers (ICs) and collapsing the other 23 ICs into 8, which would merge the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) with two unrelated institutes.
- Distinct institutes create an infrastructure, including a research community, leadership, specialized training programs, and a dedicated funding mechanism, for studying specific organs, body functions, and diseases.
- Situating NIDCR under a broader institute would mean the loss of the largest oral health research institution in the world, and a vastly diminished U.S. focus on dental, oral, and craniofacial health and disease, including disease prevention, early detection, and treatment strategies.
- Merging NIDCR with other ICs would result in a drastic reduction of federal investment in oral health research, stifle scientific progress, and lead to adverse oral health outcomes.

NIDCR'S UNIQUE MISSION AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Pioneered research into the oral cavity and oral microbiome, which contain an intricate system of tissues and regulatory mechanisms not found elsewhere in the body
- Uncovered connections between oral diseases (e.g. gum disease, tooth decay) and systemic diseases, such as diabetes, dementia, cardiovascular disease, preterm birth, HIV/AIDS, and certain cancers
- Partners with NIH on its HEAL Initiative® to support interdisciplinary studies of the temporomandibular (jaw) joint and new approaches to pain relief
- Only institute that provides the scientific underpinning for the prevention and treatment of dental diseases - the most common diseases affecting Americans

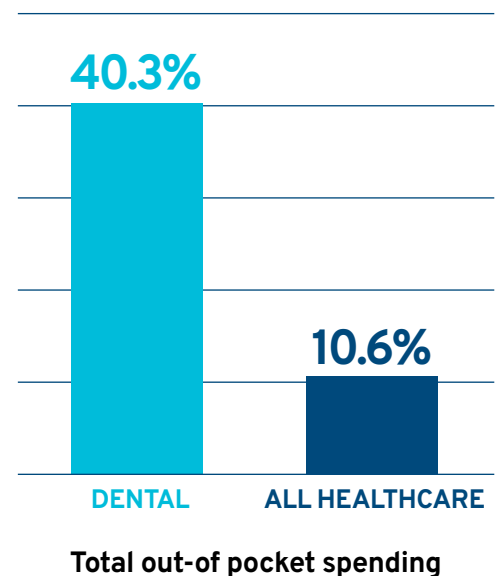
¹ <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp2118478>

² <https://www.cms.gov/files/document/highlights.pdf>

Oral diseases continue to place an undue health burden on Americans, particularly vulnerable populations.¹

- **Dental caries** remain one of the most common childhood diseases.
- 47% of U.S. adults over 30 years old have **periodontal disease**.
- HPV-associated **oropharyngeal cancer** is more prevalent than HPV-associated cervical cancer.

Americans spend almost **\$175 billion annually** on dental care, with a much higher percentage of that coming directly out of pocket compared to other health care services.²



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