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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 17, 2017

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Two dental plans recommended for Healthy Kids Dental program administration

LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) today announced the dental plans recommended for Michigan’s Healthy Kids Dental program contract. The Healthy Kids Dental contract provides dental services to approximately 1 million youth under the age of 21 statewide. The recommended statewide dental plans are Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan and Delta Dental of Michigan, Inc.

Healthy Kids Dental is a dental benefit program for children with Medicaid and covers dental services such as X-rays, cleanings, fillings, extractions, sealants and more at no cost to families. In May 2000, the State of Michigan initiated the Healthy Kids Dental program as a pilot program to help improve the dental health of Medicaid-enrolled children. After years of continued investment and expansion into additional counties, on October 1, 2016 Healthy Kids Dental became available to all children statewide under the age of 21.

“Under the leadership of Governor Snyder and our legislative partners, Healthy Kids Dental has consistently evolved into the comprehensive statewide program that it is today,” said Nick Lyon, director of the MDHHS. “We are proud of the commitment our state leaders have made to this program and are confident that these chosen dental plans will continue to uphold this success.”

Tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood disease in America, affecting 50 percent of first-graders and 80 percent of 17-year-olds. A child with poor access to care and untreated dental problems is less prepared to succeed in the classroom and more likely to miss school. Estimates show 51 million hours of school are missed nationally each year because of oral health issues.

MDHHS issued a Request for Proposals in May 2017 seeking to further improve the quality and access of oral health services for youth served through Healthy Kids Dental. The new contracts announced today will begin October 1, 2018.

In addition to dental plan administration, the recommended dental plans will be working innovatively to collaborate with other shareholders including Michigan Medicaid Health Plans. Collaborative and innovative efforts will be used to address and overcome dental obstacles that the enrolled Healthy Kids Dental population face, and increase coordination of physical and oral health for Healthy Kids Dental enrollees.

All bids were reviewed by a joint evaluation committee and the recommendations for contract award must now be approved by the State Administrative Board before contracts are final.

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Additional information for beneficiaries, providers and other stakeholders will be made available as the October 1, 2018 implementation date approaches. For more information about Healthy Kids Dental, visit www.healthykidsdental.org.

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