



2024 Award Recipient

Northeast Delta Dental

Northeast Delta Dental provides prepaid dental insurance coverage and benefits to employers (including associations and union groups) and to individuals. Founded in 1961, Northeast Delta Dental comprises the Delta Dental Plans of Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont.

Bringing Dental Health to Underserved and Underinsured Populations

- Number of people covered by Northeast Delta Dental insurance in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont improved from 275,000 in 1996 to more than 1,050,000 in 2023, superior performance to any dental insurance company in the market.
- As part of the Veteran's Dental Health Program for those who do not meet the Veterans Administration's dental care requirements, Northeast Delta Dental worked with local dentists and Federally Qualified Health Centers to identify options for veterans. In Maine, from 2021 to 2023, Northeast Delta Dental has granted \$335,000 for the dental care of veterans, resulting in 1,141 veterans treated and 2,133 procedures provided.
- Northeast Delta Dental, whose primary areas of focus are underserved and underinsured populations, understood that adults in some rural areas had never seen a dentist. The Smiles Adult Medicaid program, advocated for and administered by Northeast Delta Dental, has facilitated access to dental care for 120,000 adults since its launch in April 2023. The program is now connected to 166 providers, 122 locations, and 11 mobile unit providers.
- In a survey unique to Northeast Delta Dental, the combined good, very good, and excellent rates of satisfaction for participating dentists have improved from about 85% in 2017 to nearly 98% in 2023.
- Market share has improved for each of the three states that Northeast Delta Dental covers from 2019 to 2023, with levels nearing 60%. Northeast Delta Dental has saturated the marketplace, which is one of the drivers to expand Medicaid in New Hampshire.
- From 2016 to 2023, Northeast Delta Dental's retention rate for employer groups (the percentage of employers who renewed their dental plans with Northeast Delta Dental) has been sustained at around 97%.



Highlights

- "March to a Million" journey to one million covered lives has insured 1,055,081 out of 3 million+ population, with a retention rate of 99%
- Net Promoter Score for employer-group likelihood to renew has been sustained between 93 and 95 since 2016; consumer Net Promoter Score sustained at 90 from 2019 to 2023
- Guarantee of Service Excellence™ (GOSE™) for customer service, quick claims, billing errors, ID cards, or marketing contacts has resulted in Six Sigma (defined as 3.4 defects per million opportunities) customer service
- Veteran's Dental Health Program for veterans who do not meet the VA's dental care requirements; in Maine, granted \$335,000 for dental care, resulting in 1,141 veterans treated and 2,133 procedures provided as of 2023



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Guaranteed Excellence Leads to Six Sigma Levels of Customer Service

- The principle of Guarantee of Service Excellence™ (GOSE™) is that customers will be compensated if Northeast Delta Dental does not fulfill a guarantee for customer service, quick claims, inappropriate billing, ID cards, and marketing contacts. For the past five years, seven of the eight processes included in the GOSE™ are at the Six-Sigma level, defined as 3.4 defects per million opportunities.
- The accuracy rate of claims processed has been at 99.9% for each of the past five years and continues to exceed industry expectations for procedural accuracy of 95% and financial accuracy of 99%.
- 100% of letters or emails received responses within one day from 2019 to 2023, while the volume of letters and emails increased from approximately 12,000 to 13,500 during the same time period. This result put it in the top percentile in the insurance industry.
- The speed of answering calls (measured in the number of seconds to reach a knowledgeable customer service representative) has improved from an average of 33 seconds in 2016 to 29 seconds in 2023. This is superior performance compared to two similar nonprofits, at 30 in 2020 and 91 in 2021, respectively.
- Northeast Delta Dental's performance for resolving issues on the first contact has exceeded 95% each year for the past eight years (with some years at 97%). The industry benchmark is about 90%.

Best Possible Performance for Most Workforce Measures

- Employee retention improved from about 85% in 2020 to 95% in 2023, while retention of senior leaders has been sustained at above 95% for five consecutive years.
- Absenteeism has been at the best possible performance of zero days for both employees and senior leaders since 2019. When COVID hit, Northeast Delta Dental voluntarily increased the amount of paid time-off for employees who needed it to prevent a decline in their earnings.

Focus on Philanthropy Leads to Tristate Investments

- Northeast Delta Dental's corporate philanthropy has resulted in \$2,160,560 invested in Maine and 35,192 lives impacted; \$2,050,510 invested in New Hampshire and 12,656 lives impacted; and \$229,231 invested in Vermont and 8,100 lives impacted in 2023. Philanthropy includes the Employee Community Involvement Grant (ECIG)—“Volunteer Involvement Pays” (VIP) Program that allows volunteering employees to apply for a one-time grant on behalf of a nonprofit.
- As part of its COVID relief efforts, from March 2020 to September 2020, Northeast Delta Dental provided \$27 million in community financial relief and aid to the three states it serves.

Technology, Evidence-Based Programs Lead to One Million+ Insured

- In 2015, Northeast Delta Dental set a goal to provide insurance to one million people by 2023; by 2022, the goal was met. Results for Northeast Delta Dental's “March to a Million” journey to one million covered lives have improved from 770,000 total covered in 2015 to 1,055,081 covered out of 3 million+ population in 2023.
- The Health through Oral Wellness® (HOW®)/PreViser® risk assessment process and tool allows dentists to provide more services per year when warranted, supports the ability for the dental practice to graph and track the optimum number of visits per year for each individual patient, and align with the Northeast Delta Dental claims system to facilitate payment for those services.
- Northeast Delta Dental implemented an electronic solution called PreViser® to connect risk assessment results with the claims process to yield immediate approval of additional preventive visits. Studies showed that while the cost of preventive dental care was 14% higher for groups with PreViser® between 2015 and 2020, the cost of oral surgery was 21% lower, cost of prosthodontics was 11% lower, and cost of other adjunctive dental services was 14% lower.

Financial Strength Affords Support for Stakeholders

- Financial reserves have grown from \$8,573,838 in 1995 to \$186,312,734 in 2023. Its reserves allowed Northeast Delta Dental the financial strength during the COVID-19 response to rapidly pivot to provide dentists with masks and personal protective equipment.
- Gross revenue has increased from \$57.5 million in 1995 to approximately \$482 million in 2023. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Northeast Delta Dental did not collect premiums but still continued coverage.

For more information:

Northeast Delta Dental
One Delta Drive
PO Box 2002, Concord, NH 03302-2002
(603) 223-1000
<https://www.nedelta.com>

Baldrige Performance Excellence Program

The Baldrige Program educates organizations of all sizes and from all sectors in organizational performance management and improvement. We also administer the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award®. Our key services are to identify and recognize role-model organizations, share best management practices, and help organizations achieve best-in-class performance levels. We are the only public-private partnership and Presidential award program dedicated to improving U.S. organizations.

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