

## HOW TO TALK ABOUT YOUR SCORE

### Excellent: 90-100%

Oral Health America's *A State of Decay*, Vol. IV report recognizes our state's investment in maintaining good oral health for older adults, as we are ranked among the highest in the nation. We have ensured older adults have access to a comprehensive set of dental services in Medicaid, and the majority of people in our state are able to drink optimally fluoridated water. The state has implemented policies to track the oral health status of older adults and has found a majority of the population has seen a dentist in the past year and experience very little tooth loss. The 2018 *A State of Decay* report reinforces the value of prioritizing the oral health of older adults in our state as a key factor in overall health and offers recommendations for us to lead the way in ensuring all older adults can achieve good oral health and wellness throughout their lives.

### Good: 70-89.9%

Oral Health America's *A State of Decay*, Vol. IV report recognizes our state's investment in maintaining good oral health for older adults, as we are ranked highly among all the states. We have ensured older adults have access to most dental services in Medicaid, and most people in our state are able to drink optimally fluoridated water. The state has policies in place to track the oral health status of older adults and has found most have seen a dentist in the past year and experience little tooth loss. The 2018 *A State of Decay* report reinforces the value of prioritizing the oral health of older adults in our state as a key factor for overall health. It also points to the areas in which we can improve. We commit to do more to ensure the older adults in our communities can achieve good oral health and remain healthy throughout their lives.

### Fair: 50-69.9%

Oral Health America's *A State of Decay*, Vol. IV report recognizes our state's investment in maintaining good oral health for older adults. Our state received a ranking of fair, and it is clear we have work to do in order to ensure all older adults have good oral health.

The 2018 *A State of Decay* report reinforces the value of prioritizing the oral and overall health of older adults in our state. It also points to the areas in which we can improve. We commit to **[include specific examples of improvement if you have them]** do more to ensure older adults are healthy and can maintain good oral health throughout their lives.

Determine which variables impacted your state's ranking most. Point out what your state is doing well but make sure to note which areas it can work on. If you have a specific plan of action to address the shortcomings, include them!

For example: **[State]** is committed to improving the oral health of older adults and has been successful in providing optimally fluoridated water and some Medicaid dental services. Currently, there is no State Oral Health Plan with SMART objectives for older adults, but we hope to bring together a state coalition of aging, dental and medical professionals in the coming year.

**Poor: <50%**

Oral Health America's *A State of Decay*, Vol. IV report shows our state the value of investing in oral health for older adults. Our state ranked near the bottom, and it is clear we have work to do in order to ensure all older adults have good oral health as a key factor in being healthy as they age.

The 2018 *A State of Decay* report reinforces the value of prioritizing the oral and overall health of older adults in our state. It also points to the areas in which we can improve. We commit to ensure older adults are healthy and can maintain good oral health throughout their lives.

Determine which variables impacted your state's ranking most. Point out where your state can improve but also make sure to note which areas it has been successful. If methods of improvement fall outside the six variables analyzed in this report, explain what you have done and what you plan to do to improve your ranking in the next report.

For example: [State] is committed to improving the oral health of older adults. Currently, older adults in our state have low dental visits in the past year and high rates of severe tooth loss. Medicaid covers only a few dental services but [organization/state] is working to improve oral health outcomes through

**Additional possible messages:**

- The Medicaid data necessary for this report was not available in our state at the time it was requested. This affected our overall score and shows us that we need to do more to ensure current and accurate Medicaid data is available in our state.
- The Medicaid adult dental benefit changed since the data was collected for this report. This affected our overall score but since the data was collected, we have [reinstated/established X] Medicaid services.
- Our state's overall score on the 2018 *A State of Decay*, Vol. IV report went down from the 2016 *A State of Decay*, Vol. III report. We lost ground on the progress we had made in (Medicaid dental services, community water fluoridation, tracking the oral health of older adults, or the number of older adults who are able to maintain their oral health). The report helps us see the area(s) in which we most need to improve in order to ensure all older adults have optimal oral health, as a key factor in overall health and wellness throughout their senior years.
- Our state's overall score on the 2018 *A State of Decay*, Vol. IV report went up from the 2016 *A State of Decay*, Vol. III report. The 2016 report helped us see where we needed to improve, and our state made progress in (Medicaid dental services, community water fluoridation, tracking the oral health of older adults, or the number of older adults who are able to maintain their oral health). We must continue to work to ensure all older adults have access to the services and support they need to keep their mouth healthy, as a key factor in overall health and wellness throughout their senior years.