

ENHANCING ORAL HEALTH WORKFORCE ACTIVITIES TO INCREASE ACCESS TO CARE FOR POPULATIONS LIVING IN DENTAL HPSAs IN NEVADA

PURPOSE: Increase availability of sustainable oral health services for populations living in Dental Professional Shortage Areas (DPSAs) through workforce development.

GOAL 1 Build internal infrastructure to oversee and advocate for the health of citizens in Nevada counties.

1. Collaborate with other state health agencies to establish County Boards of Health in counties without a Board of Health or a Health Department.
 - a. State-sponsored educational component for board members in public health and guidance by current health districts/boards of health.

GOAL 2 Increase the availability of oral health services, including preventive services, through the use of portable/mobile dental equipment in remote areas.

1. Engage dental hygienists with a public health endorsement as a unique and underutilized member of the dental workforce to staff a school-based dental sealant program, and provide other preventive services to adults, seniors, vulnerable, and at-risk patients in identified DPSAs.
2. Mobilize the dental community practicing in or near DPSAs by creating a statewide program for dental providers—Oral Health Champions (OHC). Dentists practicing in or near DPSAs who complete a training program in teledentistry and portable dental equipment would partner with a public health endorsed dental hygienists to provide oral exams and preventive services in identified DPSAs. Through the use of MouthWatch’s TeleDent Exam system, this dental team would collaborate on the patient's treatment plan. Portable dental equipment would be available to OHC providers who wish to bring dentistry to the patient’s community. Dentists would also receive support for the patient to be brought to their office to complete treatment.
Will offer CE credits through our collaboration with Nevada Dental Association for volunteer hours.

GOAL 3 Establish programs that provide positive incentives for dental providers practicing in DPSAs.

1. As part of the duties of the grant’s manager, explore the feasibility of establishing language within the Public Employees’ Retirement System of Nevada that provides retirement credits to dental providers in exchange for volunteer hours served in DPSA areas in Nevada.
2. Establish an annual recognition/fund-raising event for the OHC program to increase funds for maintenance, repair, and replacement of dental equipment, travel support for dental providers, purchase of perishable supplies, and support for outstanding lab fees and services, etc., to support dental provider volunteer efforts. Each participating dentist and dental hygienist will receive recognition at the event which will include a certificate signed by the Governor’s office.

GOAL 4 Increase access to oral health services through maintenance of oral health leadership within Nevada's Medicaid program.

1. Clinical project administrator would provide support for teledentistry program to include treatment planning when necessary, care coordination/treatment of identified urgent cases, expansion of Medicaid providers by streamlining the enrollment system, presentations, and strengthening the lines of communication between the Medicaid fee-for-service system present in rural Nevada and dental offices.
 - a. Staff the program with a 0.4FTE dentist
 - b. With support and advertisement from both the Nevada Dental Association and the Nevada Dental Hygiene Association, educate the dental community on Nevada Medicaid (enrollment, billing guide, reimbursement schedule, claim submission, fair hearing) through CEUs and presentations that offer assistance with provider enrollment.

GOAL 5 Increase the number of post-doctoral students who provide oral health care with an emphasis on access to care for vulnerable, underserved, and rural populations in Nevada.

1. Offer a one-credit course (~14 weeks) each fall semester for fourth-year dental students and second-year dental hygiene students. The course will include a historical overview of Medicaid and Medicare, an overview of the dental health of Nevada with emphasis on the health challenges of patients in dental HPSAs, Medicaid status of the state, navigating the Medicaid and insurance system, and include innovative treatment options for Medicaid and medically indigent patients in rural communities. Curriculum coursework would include instruction on utilizing teledentistry in the clinical setting.
 - a. The final exam for the course would center on a clinical project. Dental hygiene students would be instructed to use MouthWatch intraoral cameras on a selected patient to document treatment needs and write clinical notes. The data and narrative would be transferred electronically to a dental student to create a treatment plan. The course final would center on presentations by the dental hygiene/dental student teams on treatment plan limitations, barriers to care, communication challenges, and exact treatment provided to patient and patient outcomes.
 2. The curriculum for second-year dental students as part of the treatment planning course would include a brief introduction to teledentistry concepts. The curriculum would include a review of actual cases gathered from patients in rural Nevada. Students would draft a treatment plan presentation from data collected from one teledentistry case in rural Nevada and be reviewed against the patient treatment provided in the field.
 3. UNLV SDM to explore feasibility of establishing AEGD program
 4. UNLV SDM to explore feasibility of establishing a Community Dental Health Coordinator program. Eventually, the CDHC graduates would work with County Boards of Health.
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