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**FROM THE DESK OF THE  
STATE DENTAL HEALTH OFFICER**

*"Sometimes the most ordinary things could be made extraordinary, simply by doing them with the right people."*

*– Nicholas Sparks*

**Oral Health Program Mission:** To protect, promote, and improve the oral health of the people of Nevada.

**Core Values:** Integrity, Compassionate Care, Innovation, Quality, and Hard Work.

In the spirit of informational transparency, I would like to present our latest projects and update you on our progress.

## **Education**

### **Washoe County School District Clinical Services**

Dr. Tongsiri, Liberty Dental Plan Nevada Director, and Dr. Capurro met with the Director, Assistant Director, and Clinical Services Director for Washoe County Clinical Student Health Services who provide oversight of the medical services for students enrolled in the Washoe County School District. This meeting was initially scheduled to discuss dental referral services for ID/DD adult students within the school district. However, after further evaluation of the district's nursing system, it became apparent that the nurses were eager for oral health education and an opportunity existed to complete and collect oral assessment data for specific grade levels.

From this meeting, a contract has been drafted to launch a pilot study to train the Washoe County school nurses to assess the dental status of 3rd and 6th graders in selected Title 1 schools and to collect this data using a national a standardized non-invasive method of intraoral data collection known as the Basic Screening Survey(BSS). This information is invaluable to the Oral Health Program's preparation for application to the next CDC oral health program grant in 2021. A full contract between agencies is in process and professional development training on oral health, dental trauma, and BSS is scheduled for all 47 school nurses on December 20<sup>th</sup>.

### **Oral Health License Plate Launch with Drawing Completion for School-Age Students**

In order to increase revenue streams for the Oral Health Program and to raise visibility for dental public health services, the Oral Health Program is partnering with the UNLV SDM Alumni Association, Nevada Dental Association, and Nevada Dental Hygiene Association to apply for a specialty license plate through the Division of Motor Vehicle (DMV). For each license plate purchased the group will receive between \$20.00 and \$25.00 in



Nevada Department of  
Health and Human Services  
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*Helping People --  
It's Who We Are And What We Do*

fees. Marketing, education, and public awareness are essential components of this project. To create a conversation around oral health, the Oral Health Program in collaboration with our partners will launch a drawing competition in the spring of 2020 for school-age children across the state. The winning picture will appear as the graphic on the license plate. A board of judges will be solicited to review submissions.

### **Licensed Childcare Oral Health Education and Basic Screening Survey**

The Oral Health Program has partnered with the Nevada Department of Education to launch a non-invasive open-mouth basic screening survey, create educational webinars, and build classroom toothbrush stations and protocols for licensed childcare centers throughout rural Nevada. The data collected as a part of this project will be compared to the 2017 Head Start BSS to better understand what health disparities and educational opportunities exist in rural Nevada. The contract is tentatively scheduled to be heard at the January Board of Examiners meeting.

### **UNLV SDM Special Care Dental Clinic**

The Aging and Disability Services Division, the Division of Health Care Financing and Policy, and DPBH, Oral Health Program have partnered to support the UNLV SDM Special Care Dental Clinic. The clinic provides comprehensive clinical and hospital dental services for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. A coordinated effort is needed to ensure patients are able to overcome the multifactorial challenges including financial limitations and guardianship concerns to receive needed treatment. A contract is being drafted which will provide administrative clinical support and financial assistance for patients. Additionally, a dental desensitization event and resource fair is tentatively being planned for late May/early June 2020. If you are interested in participating, please contact Dr. Capurro at [acapurro@health.nv.gov](mailto:acapurro@health.nv.gov).

### **Silver Diamine Fluoride Continuing Education Course**

In the last quarter, the Oral Health Program petitioned the Nevada State Board of Dental Examiners for an advisory opinion for clarification on the scope of practice for public health endorsed dental hygienists to place silver diamine fluoride and glass ionomer as an interim therapeutic restoration. The Board approved placement of silver diamine fluoride and glass ionomer as an interim therapeutic restoration for public health endorsed dental hygienists who completed an educational course on this topic through the Nevada Oral Health Program. The Program is working to develop this hands-on class which is tentatively scheduled for late spring 2020.

### **Conference Presentations and Lectures**

- Nevada Public Health Association: Medicaid Dental Benefits Evolve to Tackle Chronic Health Conditions in Nevada through AB22, Dr. Capurro with Assemblywoman Neal
- Nevada Health Conference: Emergency Room Redirect Pilot Program Using Teladentistry, Dr. Capurro with Dr. Tonghiri
- Nevada Health Conference: Medicaid Dental Benefits Evolve to Tackle Chronic Health Conditions in Nevada through AB22, Dr. Capurro with Assemblywoman Neal
- Presentation to TMCC 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Students in on the NV Oral Health Program as part of their Community Dental Health course.
- Face the State Interview: <https://www.ktvn.com/face-the-state>. Dr. Capurro was invited to share information on the Nevada Oral Health Program and highlight the technology that will be utilized during

the pilot emergency room redirect for non-traumatic dental conditions program.



## Medicaid

### **ER Redirect for Non-Traumatic Dental Conditions**

Contract negotiations continue on the pilot project to reduce emergency room visits for non-traumatic dental conditions at University Medical Center of Southern Nevada. In addition to the Nevada Oral Health Program, the team consists of Liberty Dental Plan, the sole Medicaid dental benefits administrator for Nevada, and Teladentistry. This program is a medical-dental integration pilot that will add a live video streaming dental consultant to the medical team in the ER. Contract revisions continue to meet CMS and regulatory standards.

### **MSM 1000 and Benefit Schedule**

The Medicaid dental benefit schedule has been revised and clinically appropriate changes have been submitted. Additionally, Medicaid Chapter 1000-Dental is being updated to reflect these changes and to streamline often ambiguous verbiage. A public workshop is tentatively planned for December 20<sup>th</sup>. Specific details will follow.

### **Legislative Implementation Plans**

- AB223- the outline of the CMS 1115 Demonstration Waiver continues
- SB366-Medicaid chapter updates, provider mapping, benefit schedule revisions if needed

## Service

### **Special Olympics, Special Smiles, Bowling Tournament, November 16<sup>th</sup>.**

The Oral Health Program joined UNLV School of Dental Medicine to provide oral hygiene instruction, dental screenings, and oral hygiene kits to Special Olympics athletes.



(Pictured: SO Program Reps: Dr. Cicon Gewlber and Dr. Antonina Capurro; Volunteers: Dr. Rassilee Sharma, Dr. Jay Morgenstern, Ashlee Gibson, RDH, Yuxuan Ren, Marnelli Lapitan, Roberto Garcia, , Ghazal Rezaei, Jared Link, Eric Bosman, Soma Santoyo, Adilene Agmilar, Dustin Ballenges, Manere Ross, Andrew Ballard, Roxanna Parga)

## **Homeless Connect Event, November 26<sup>th</sup>.**

The Oral Health Program joined the Southern Nevada Health District and Roseman University of Health Sciences to provide oral hygiene instruction, dental screenings, and oral hygiene kits to health fair participants. Patients were given appointments for dental cleanings from the Southern Nevada Health District and/or received a voucher for dental treatment at Roseman University's GPR Dental Clinic in December.



(Pictured: Sara Mercier RDH, BSDH , Annette Lincicome, BS, RDH, Jessica Woods, RDH, MPH, Antonina Capurro, DMD, MPH, MBA, Amy Tongsir, DMD, and Karina Vara)

## **Infrastructure**

### **Organizational Strength and Capacity**

- Currently, the State Public Health Dental Hygienist position remains unfulfilled.
- Ms. Monisa Riley returned to the Oral Health Program at the end of July; however, her contract was extended only until November 13<sup>th</sup>. Programmatic funds are being identified to continue Ms. Riley's contract as she provides essential administrative and technical support for the program.
- Identification of funding allocation continues for FY21 contract to continue the operation of the Nevada Oral Health Program and associated positions.

### **Oral Health Program Interns for 2019-2020**

- Mr. Marc Chmiel is currently working on a project to deepen our understanding of water fluoridation and dental decay rates in Nevada. He is completing a project to evaluate the association between water fluoridation and dental decay rates in Nevada. As part of this project, a survey has been designed with OHP to evaluate the oral health needs and observations of school nurses throughout Nevada. The survey can be accessed at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/S7LY258>
- Dr. Letti Hale is currently working on a project to review health promotion and marketing techniques and will apply best practices to propose oral health message for Nevada.

## **Quality**

### **Reports**

- Monthly report to the Chief Medical Officer
- Monthly inclusion of state water fluoridation data into CDC WFRS site
- 2017 Dental Workforce Survey Report (in-progress)
- MCH report on Rural Nevada Expectant Mother Dental Access Program. (Completed)



## Growth

### Grant Applications

- **HRSA 20-025**, Rural Health Network Development Planning Program. The DPBH, Oral Health Program partnered with Nevada Office of Rural Health, PACE Coalition, and State Grant Office to create an application for HRSA 20-026, a one year \$100,000 network development planning grant. The application focused on improving the health of individuals with chronic disease in Elko, Eureka, Lander, Lincoln, and White Pine Counties. The proposed program had four foci:
  - 1) to build a collaborative partnership with rural hospitals, healthcare leaders, and community members to create a formalized network to meet the unique health care needs of residents, particularly those with chronic diseases specifically diabetes;
  - 2) to develop a plan to improve chronic disease, mental health, and primary care services through tele-health;
  - 3) to build an interprofessional health care delivery system that incorporates recently authorized expansion of Medicaid dental benefits for diabetic adults;
  - 4) to develop educational resources for training on diabetes; and workforce development opportunities for students in healthcare in targeted counties

The application was successfully submitted at the end of November.

- **Determinants of Nutritional Status Among Patients with Diabetes and Their Impact on Health Outcomes**, a collaborative medical-dental research project to identify the relationship between food insecurity and food deserts in Las Vegas on the oral health and overall health of patients with diabetes. Dr. Capurro is a grant contributor and co-PI along with PI, Dr. Izuora, Associate Professor of Internal Medicine at the UNLV School of Medicine and fellow co-PI, Dr. Cicon Gewelber, Director Special Care Dental Clinic at UNLV School of Dental Medicine.

### Oral Health Initiatives for the 81<sup>st</sup> (2021) Session of the Nevada Legislature

1. Expansion of Medicaid Dental Benefits for Adults Diagnosed with ID/DD
2. Expansion of Scope of Practice for Dentists to Provide Vaccinations
3. Resource and data support for entities that will report as part of the Interim Committee on Health Care Committee meeting on February 19<sup>th</sup>.

Respectfully submitted,

Antonina Capurro, DMD, MPH, MBA

Nevada State Dental Health Officer