

West Virginia Oral Health Program Update



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Office of Maternal, Child & Family Health
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2012 Legislative Report

Oral Health Program

Introduction

The mission of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR), Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health (OMCFH), Oral Health Program (OHP) is to promote and improve the oral health of all West Virginians. The goals of the Program are to provide preventive education, improve access to oral health care and monitor the oral health status of the citizens across the State. Over the past year, West Virginia has made significant progress in the area of oral health, including securing additional funding from outside sources dedicated to improving the oral health of West Virginia citizens. Accomplishments of the Program are a result of collaborative efforts with other government agencies and community partners. Activities of the OHP continue to be guided by an Oral Health Advisory Board (OHAB) consisting of key stakeholders. The OHAB was established in 2008 and continues to meet on a routine basis to advise the OHP in addressing oral health issues of West Virginia.

Accomplishments

Infrastructure:

Full-time State Dental Director – The hiring of Dr. Jason M. Roush, DDS, marks the first time in State history that West Virginia has had a full-time State Dental Director. Previously, this position was a part-time contracted position. This accomplishment is particularly important because it demonstrates the State’s recognition of oral health as a vital part of overall health and its dedication to making oral health a priority in the State. Since being hired, Dr. Roush has become involved in various community organizations and other state health programs. His dedication to making oral health a priority for West Virginia is evident in his involvement on a national level as well. This past year he was nominated and selected to serve on the board of the Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors (ASTDD). His commitment to the mission of the Program is apparent, as he continues to provide direct services to children in school-based health centers and conducts oral health trainings and education across the State.

Full-time Epidemiologist - A full-time Epidemiologist was hired to work exclusively for the OHP, who will be one of the primary personnel members involved in the creation and implementation of an ongoing statewide oral health surveillance system. The Epidemiologist will evaluate the oral health status of West Virginia citizens, oral health programs, and update the State Oral Health Plan; all of which is important to address statewide needs and measure the effectiveness of the programs and initiatives.

Grant Awards:

Health Resource Services Administration – The West Virginia OHP recently received grant funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) for the Dental Workforce Project. Over the next three years, the Program will be awarded approximately 1.5 million dollars to improve access to oral health care in West Virginia. The goals of the Dental Workforce Project are to increase the number of dental school graduates choosing to provide services in West Virginia and to increase the number of persons with an identified dental home within dental health provider shortage areas. West Virginia proposes to accomplish this by: a) assisting communities in forming relationships with dental students to increase recruitment and retention in West Virginia communities; b) providing financial and technical support for graduates agreeing to practice in West Virginia and; c) providing technical assistance to dental service sites to facilitate financial viability and sustainability of services.

DentaQuest Oral Health 2014 Grant – The Oral Health 2014 Initiative aims to eliminate barriers that limit access to oral health care by fostering strong community partnerships committed to collective impact. The OHP received additional funding to support the second phase of this Initiative. During Phase 1, the West Virginia OHP worked to develop multi-dimensional community partnerships and engaged them in the development of an oral health action plan to address building prevention and public health infrastructure and improving medical/dental collaboration. In Phase 2, the West Virginia OHP will develop a statewide oral health surveillance system, expand existing school-based dental sealant programs, and partner with WVU School of Dentistry to create dental curricula to train medical professionals and their ancillaries.

Statewide Surveillance:

West Virginia Offices of the Insurance Commissioner – In March 2012, the OHP secured \$144,000 for oral health research from the West Virginia Offices of the Insurance Commissioner (WVOIC). The funding has been used for several different projects including a consumer survey of dental insurance and a workforce study. The consumer survey consisted of a series of phone interviews to consumers in an effort to gain knowledge pertaining to dental insurance coverage. The workforce study was conducted in collaboration with the West Virginia Board of Dental Examiners and WVU School of Dentistry. This survey of all practicing dentists and dental hygienists regarding workforce, practice, and patient population was completed and is currently being analyzed for publication. Remaining funds will be used to support an oral health surveillance of the adult and geriatric populations, conduct statewide community oral health forums, and create oral health educational materials.

Universal Pre-K – Thirty-five (35) classrooms throughout West Virginia were randomly selected to participate using a probability proportional to size sampling scheme to assure a sample representative of the entire State. All 35 sites agreed to participate. Screenings were conducted by trained examiners during the 2011-2012 school year. A total of 504 preschool children participated.

Key Screening Findings	Percentage
Untreated Decay	20.80%
Decay Experience	33.80%
White Spot Lesions	34.50%
Need for Dental Treatment (Early/Urgent)	21.00%

Statewide Oral Health Coalition:

Oral Health Coalition Update - A key piece of the OHP's infrastructure is the West Virginia Oral Health Coalition (OHC). The OHC serves as a valuable source of community input from key stakeholders and oral health advocates. As recommended by the OHAB and the State Oral Health Plan, the OHC was established in 2010. The OHC is still in its infancy and is ever evolving. The OHC recently joined the Association of National Oral Health Coalitions, and is active within that group. Membership into the OHC is open to anyone who has an interest in oral

health and requires no fee. The OHC currently receives no funding and relies on its membership for support. The OHP handles a majority of the OHC's administrative functions and logistics; for example, quarterly meetings and outreach. Currently, there are three workgroups within the OHC; oral health policy, medical/dental collaboration, and adult access to care. These priority work groups were established by the membership in an effort to maintain focus and activity on the most crucial issues. The OHC is served by an Executive Council which is elected by the membership in accordance with the OHC by-laws. The Executive Council is charged with providing guidance and leadership to the OHC. All goals and issues taken on by the OHC are reflective of the State Oral Health Plan. This allows for open communication and flow of information, and assurance of a common goal.

Membership of the OHC is comprised of critical partners and stakeholders representing diverse interests. These members include an array of local, state, and community associations as well as several national organizations and agencies. These members are representative of a wide variety of demographics. The OHC has made great strides since its inception and is a true testament of the collaborative statewide efforts centered on oral health within West Virginia.

Children's Dentistry Project

The Children's Dentistry Project provided approximately \$280,000 to support oral health education activities around the State. Below is a summary of those activities:

Fluoride Water Testing - The Children's Dentistry Project provides water test kits to families for testing fluoride levels of private water systems. This component of the OHP helped 253 families test for elevated fluoride levels during the FY 2012.

Fluoride Rinse Project - The Project provides a fluoride rinse program in schools. A permission form is provided to the schools for parental consent. This mouth rinsing project is restricted to first through sixth grades. Kindergarten classrooms may participate, if adequate supervision is available to make sure the rinse is not swallowed. All materials and supplies are provided to the schools free of charge. Fluoride is the most cost effective means of prevention in oral health care. During the FY 2012, 10,712 children participated.

Oral Health Educators - Oral Health Educators provide oral health education to children and families in all 55 counties through schools, early childhood programs and community health fairs. The curriculum teaches prevention through proper oral hygiene, including instructions on brushing; flossing; choosing healthy foods; tobacco and drug prevention; and the importance of establishing a dental home. During the FY 2012, 96,855 children received these educational services.

The OHP is currently undergoing a redesign of the current oral health education system in effort to meet the needs of the citizens. The OHP has contracted with Marshall University to implement a standardized oral health curriculum that can be used in schools and by community groups and to hire full-time Oral Health Coordinators that will be located regionally throughout the State to serve as community oral health resources. By placing the Coordinators in the communities, the Program can reach more people, encourage grassroots involvement and build community relationships. The Oral Health Coordinators will provide oral health education, promote good oral hygiene and work with local water systems on fluoridation.

Expansion of School-Based Dental Sealant Program - The OHP has begun working with Marshall University to expand the School-Based Dental Sealant Program. The current program offers dental sealants at school-based health centers in 25 West Virginia counties. To maximize the efforts of the program, the OHP will expand this system statewide. A Dental Sealant Coordinator, contracted through Marshall University, will help facilitate the expansion so that all West Virginia counties are served.

WV Medical Infant and Child Oral Health Training Program – The OHP worked with the WVU School of Dentistry and their partners, to develop and implement a training program for medical personnel and their ancillaries to apply fluoride varnish as a preventative oral health measure. The West Virginia Medical Infant and Child Oral Health Training Program delivers on-going, evidence-based information that is open to all primary care physician's (PCP) in West Virginia. The Program also provides a source of continuing education credits to participants who complete the training course. Program participants receive a training manual that includes a copy of the presenters PowerPoint presentation, program implementation guide, coding and billing information and templates for West Virginia Medicaid and West Virginia CHIP's (Children's Health Insurance Program), and parent education and dental resources. To date, the

Program has trained 37 PCPs with an additional 30 PCPs pending certification in the immediate future.

Donated Denture Project

The OMCFH administers the Donated Denture Program in which dentists donate their time to fit a patient (low income senior citizens and adults with disabilities deemed eligible under the program's guidelines) for dentures/partials and then are reimbursed up to \$500 for the lab fee. The Program has 70 dentists throughout the State participating and a waiting list for eligible individuals per county is maintained. State funding is limited to \$40,000 yearly which generally covers 100 to 125 eligible persons being placed for services. However, in FY 2012, the Donated Denture Program received extra funding from expiring grant monies and therefore, 444 individuals actually received services. Most persons on the current waiting list will be placed with a dental provider to get dentures or partials within two months of their approval if they are "denture-ready" (do not need extractions done or other dental work which may keep them from wearing dentures).

Pre-Employment Project

The OMCFH administers the Bureau for Children and Families' Pre-Employment Dental/Vision Program FY Year 2012, around 3,000 dental and vision referrals were issued by county DHHR workers to eligible individuals on the West Virginia WORKS Program and the referrals are good for one year. Dental services (up to a lifetime benefit of \$3,300 as determined by the Pre-Employment fee schedule) include exams, cleanings, fillings, extractions, dentures/partials, root canals, and crowns. Vision benefits cover an exam and glasses, if needed, to assist such clients in becoming "employable." In FY 2012, close to three million dollars was spent on dental and vision services with approximately 2,000 clients utilizing their referral. Throughout West Virginia, 305 dentists and 202 vision providers participate in the Pre-Employment Program (recruitment is on-going) with some areas of the State being better represented than others. With fee increases implemented for many dental services on August 1, 2010 and again on September 1, 2012, the average amount spent per client went from \$1,000 to \$1,500 this year.

Future Plans

The OHP, along with the OHAB, will continue to:

- Develop a surveillance system that can be used to assess the oral health of all West Virginia residents;
- Build on existing programs;
- Strengthen partnerships;
- Support the OHC;
- Continue to restructure the Oral Health Educator System;
- Monitor and address the Dental Workforce;
- Build capacity for future efforts;
- Continue School-Based Dental Sealant Expansion;
- Train additional medical personnel and their ancillaries on fluoride varnish application; and
- Monitor and update the State Oral Health Plan