

Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors

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WHY ARE ASTDD AND STATE ORAL HEALTH PROGRAMS IMPORTANT?



The Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors (ASTDD) is the organization dedicated to the success of State Oral Health Programs located within state and territorial public health agencies. ASTDD and State Oral Health Programs are critical to the success of state and national oral health improvement efforts. State Oral Health Programs provide the infrastructure essential to create, implement and evaluate oral health initiatives and policies. ASTDD supports **State Oral Health Programs** in the development and promotion of national guidelines and competencies, providing expert technical assistance and leadership development. In addition to supporting state activities, ASTDD is a national voice, providing targeted advocacy and expertise in national public oral health efforts. ASTDD is the key conduit between State Oral Health Programs and national partners, providing information, opportunities and leadership on public health issues.

ASTDD AND STATE ORAL HEALTH PROGRAMS IMPROVE ORAL HEALTH BY:

1. **Assessing and tracking disease rates and improvements in oral health.** ASTDD promotes surveillance best practices and provides technical assistance for data collection and analysis. Resources include the National Oral

Health Surveillance System (NOHSS), the Basic Screening Survey and the Synopses of State and Territorial Dental Public Health Programs.

2. **Creating, supporting and evaluating evidence-based community disease prevention initiatives** such as school-based dental sealant programs, fluoride varnish programs and community water fluoridation.
3. **Providing expertise, training and technical assistance.** ASTDD's Best Practices inform oral health programs about evidence-based activities that are effective within the context of their environments. ASTDD's leadership, committees and consultants assist states with data collection/analysis, policy development, evaluation of program effectiveness and sustainability. ASTDD's members and consultants are nationally respected experts in areas such as fluorides, oral health advocacy and policymaking, school and adolescent oral health, perinatal and early childhood disease prevention, emergency preparedness, healthy aging, persons with special needs, oral health worker safety, and infection control. ASTDD hosts active listservs and co-sponsors the premier US dental public health meeting, the National Oral Health Conference.

ASTDD is an affiliate of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials



ASTDD develops position papers, policy statements and state-specific surveillance reports to inform policymakers and the public.

4. Advocating for the representation of oral health in each State Health Agency and the inclusion of oral health in state and national public health initiatives and plans.

ASTDD provides standards and assists states through Guidelines, Competencies, and other resources. The Guidelines are vetted and endorsed by the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) and linked to essential public health services.

5. Promoting access to dental care by supporting community based programs and health centers through data, technical assistance and advocacy.

6. Helping to develop oral health leaders. ASTDD offers state oral health program directors and staff mentoring and other leadership development opportunities.

7. Facilitating active public/private partnerships to promote and support good oral health.

Examples include collaborations with educational institutions, Primary Care Associations, State Dental Boards, philanthropic organizations, professional associations and others to advance oral health policy, provide oral health expertise and assure an adequate and competent oral health workforce.

ASTDD AND STATE ORAL HEALTH PROGRAMS CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF OPTIMAL ORAL HEALTH FOR ALL AMERICANS

- **ASTDD is a vital component of the dental public health infrastructure of the nation supporting State Oral Health Programs as the primary governmental operational unit of oral health surveillance, policy development and community disease prevention programs.**

- **ASTDD coordinates national efforts to optimize and help sustain State Oral Health Programs and initiatives.**

- **ASTDD and State Oral Health Programs serve as critical conveners on the national, state and local levels. Partners include state and local dental and dental hygiene associations; various medical associations; community dental and medical practitioners including those at health centers, tribal clinics and hospitals; early childhood, K-12 and higher education institutions; dental insurance and state Medicaid/CHIP programs; businesses; advocacy groups and others.**

ASTDD and State Oral Health Programs improve the oral health of Americans by preventing and controlling oral and craniofacial diseases, conditions and injuries, and by improving access to preventive services and dental care.

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We would like to acknowledge Henry Schein's assistance with graphics and formatting.