



## Roles for State Health Officials: Supporting the 10 Essential Public Health Services to Promote Oral Health in the US

A new report, *State Oral Health Infrastructure and Capacity: Reflecting on Progress and Charting the Future*, by the Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors, reviews efforts and progress in state oral health infrastructure and capacity building since 2000 and provides lessons learned and recommendations to enhance state and local program ability to fulfill critical roles. It emphasizes how state oral health programs address the core public health functions and the 10 Essential Public Health Services to Promote Oral Health in the US and are an integral component of public health .

### Key Messages from the Report

State oral health programs (SOHP) make an essential contribution to public health and must be continued and enhanced.

- A successful SOHP must have diversified funding that includes funding for state and local evidence-based programs.
- A successful SOHP needs a continuous, strong, credible, forward-thinking leader.
- A successful SOHP needs a complement of staff, consultants and partners with proficiency in the *ASTDD Competencies for SOHPs*.
- A successful SOHP needs one or more broad-based coalitions that include partners with fiscal and political clout.
- A successful SOHP must have valid data (oral health status and other) to use for evaluation, high quality oral health surveillance, a state oral health plan with implementation strategies, and evidence-based programs and policies.

## What Public Health Officials Can Do

### to Support Oral Health and State Oral Health Programs

- Position oral health programs in a health agency so that all life stages can be addressed.
- Encourage oral health programs and oral health coalitions to seek diversified public and private funding for sustainability.
- Promote and support leadership and professional development, including public health training.
- Ensure capacity for development, implementation and evaluation of an oral health surveillance system with high quality data analysis and use of the information to guide decisionmaking for programs and policies.
- Facilitate integration of oral health data with other health data.
- Promote integration of oral health messages with other health messages and programs, especially prevention and risk reduction strategies.
- Develop the capacity to conduct comprehensive evaluation of oral health programs, interventions and policies.
- Encourage use of ASTDD resources and technical assistance.

## STATE ORAL HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE ELEMENTS

