



Dental Public Health Activities Descriptive Summaries

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Arizona Dental Trailer Leasing Program

The Arizona Department of Health Services, Office of Oral Health (OOH) administers a community-based Dental Trailer Leasing Program. The program has evolved since 1991 and is now formalized with the requirement that any community-based agency or organization leasing a dental trailer uses it as an interim step in establishing a permanent dental facility or program and in expanding the dental workforce to deliver dental care services to high risk populations. Only community-based agencies and organizations providing care to underserved populations are eligible for the loan.

OOH originally maintained four fully operational dental trailers but retired one in 2006. Each trailer has two treatment chairs, dental equipment, and supplies to deliver treatment services similar to those provided in a dental office. OOH provides consultation and technical assistance to set up and operate the dental trailers. One staff dental hygienist, a state employee, provides the coordination for the program and spends an average of 260 hours per year to administer and work with the communities in the program. A nominal rental fee of \$100/month/trailer is charged to contribute toward OOH's maintenance and repair of each trailer. Additional funding for the program is provided by the state general funds. The program has a formal application process to lease a dental trailer and set requirements related to submitting a plan to develop a permanent facility/program, reporting services delivered in the dental trailer, and maintaining infection control standards. Contract agreements are made with the agencies/organizations leasing the dental trailers. It costs \$500 - \$2,000 yearly to maintain and repair of a dental trailer (higher range for old units needing renovations).

From 1991-2008, dental trailers were leased to eleven communities in the northern, central and southern regions of Arizona (these communities leased a dental trailer ranging from 1 to 8 years). Each dental trailer has been placed in 2-3 communities to date. All communities in the program acquired resources to operate the dental trailers to treat children and adults and expanded the dental workforce for delivering safety net services to underserved populations in their communities. Seven of the eleven communities have subsequently established a permanent dental clinic. Two additional communities are in the process of identifying funds to build a permanent dental facility.

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