

“Children with Special Health Care Needs Oral Health Forum”
Report to ASTDD on the Action Plan and Budget Expenditures
March 15, 2008

Stone Soup Group in collaboration with the Alaska Oral Health Program held the CSHCN Oral Health Forum in February 23, 2007. This meeting discussed issues, including comments from parents/caregivers, on the oral health needs of CSHCN. Discussions also highlighted dental access issues – with a focus on improvements to the Medicaid/Denali KidCare program that could improve access for many of these children. The meeting participants, an overview of recommendations and initial discussion of priorities are outlined in the attached report from this meeting.

A follow-up meeting was held on November 2, 2007. The meeting included a presentation from Dr. Jane Bleuel to discuss changes at the Alaska Native Medical Center/Southcentral Foundation in relation to discussions at the February meeting. ANMC/SCF dental clinics had improved coordination to identify records of children and adults with special needs so dental staff could coordinate care in the appropriate facility (e.g., appointing patients in wheelchairs at the SCF clinic as the ANMC clinic operatories don't accommodate wheelchairs). They have made an effort to include notes in charts on what procedures patients could tolerate in the clinic setting. Additionally, they have regularly scheduled days for individuals with special needs to coordinate dental cleanings, exams and treatment. They have found that dental hygienists can often do prophylaxis and/or scaling in the clinic if it is coordinated so they have an assistant. At the meeting it was arranged to begin coordination with the University of Alaska, Anchorage dental assisting program to have students serve as assistants on these days to gain exposure/comfort in treating individuals with special needs in the clinic setting.

The November meeting then focused on priority recommendations/strategies for the state oral health plan and next steps from the forum meeting and follow-up. Stone Soup Group and the Oral Health Program took input on focus areas to assist parents/caregivers with prevention of dental decay, oral hygiene and information on accessing dental care for a parent/caregiver resource section in the existing parent resource notebook offered by Stone Soup Group (Alaska's Family Voices agency). Finally, the meeting discussed possibilities for continuing education for general dentists for treatment of adults with disabilities – noting that many individuals continue to see pediatric dentists into adulthood as there are limited general practitioners to refer these individuals too.

Next steps include completing the parent/caregiver resource materials for education and tips to reduce caries (e.g., asking about medications with sugar-substitutes) and home care skills (e.g., utilization of bite blocks, floss aides and powered toothbrushes). The Oral Health Program is donating spin brushes to Stone Soup Group to assist parents and also to highlight the oral health section of the resource manual. A number of strategies were included in the priority recommendations and action plan portions of the state oral health plan. The Oral Health Program is utilizing some funding from a grant from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration for implementation of these

strategies and will be looking towards development of provider training opportunities in the future.

Budget Expenditures

Almost all of the expenditures were for meeting facilitation and preparation of the reports. Stone Soup Group reflects \$3,062.11 remaining of the ASTDD grant – funding was not needed for facility costs as the meetings utilized a facility that was without charge to non-profit organizations.

Plans to spend out the remaining funds in 2008 include the development of the resource materials which plan to utilize a CD-ROM for resources (e.g., how to utilize dental hygiene aides, application of fluoride varnish, etc.). Some funds will be used for purchase of oral hygiene aides for demonstration to parents/caregivers (e.g., bite blocks and floss aides). Any remaining funds will be used for facilitation of a follow-up meeting in the fall/winter of 2008 to review progress on strategies, develop next steps for other strategies (e.g., provider-training).

It is the intent to spend down all remaining funds this calendar year. Please contact Stone Soup Group if you have any questions regarding the plans or progress on expenditures this year.