



Dental Public Health Activities Descriptive Summaries

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Michigan Day of Oral Health OutReach (MI-DOOR)

On May 16, 2009, the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) and a network of partners held a one-day free dental clinic to provide emergency dental treatment to the state's residents who are unable to afford professional dental care. This event was called the **Michigan Day of Oral Health OutReach (MI-DOOR)**. MI-DOOR, initiated by the Governor of Michigan Jennifer Granholm, was intended to raise public awareness of the increasing difficulty for low-income adults to access critical dental care. It is hoped that increased awareness of dental access issues will challenge the public, policy makers, and dental professionals to work together to improve oral health of the underinsured/uninsured and reduce the burden of oral disease in the state.

Much preparation went into organizing the event and building infrastructure to repeat the event annually. Partners included dental professionals, the state dental and dental hygiene professional associations, University of Detroit Mercy, Delta Dental, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, Salvation Army, United Way, Head Start Association, and the Governor's Office. A total of 28 sponsors and partners donated the use of facility and equipment, supplies, volunteer/in-kind services, and monetary contributions totaling \$16,000. MDCH identified safety-net dental clinics for establishing dental homes for the individuals treated at MI-DOOR event. Recruitment of volunteer providers and staff resulted in 74 active and retired dentists, 33 dental hygienists, 22 dental assistants, 167 dental/dental hygiene/physician assistant students, and 37 other volunteers that included nurses, physicians and non-clinical individuals. The University of Detroit Mercy (UDM) School of Dentistry donated the use of their facility for the MI-DOOR event. This provided 120 dental chairs for treatment.

On the day of the MI-DOOR event, more than 1,200 people lined up for free dental services, some began waiting 8 hours before the clinic opened. At the end of the 7-hour clinic, 413 adults received emergency dental care. The value of dental treatment delivered exceeded \$241,000. Approximately 250 individuals, unable to be treated on that day, received vouchers for emergency care that will be provided at the UDM School of Dentistry's student clinic. Over 600 people were turned away as capacity for services had been exceeded. Patients received oral health education, hygiene materials (e.g., toothbrush and floss), and a flyer listing local dental clinics accepting Medicaid. The MI-Door event provided additional services including blood pressure screenings, blood cholesterol testing, diabetes testing, HIV testing, nutrition and health education, and necessary prescriptions (donated and delivered on site from a local Wal-Mart). These non-dental services were facilitated by the UDM Nursing Program and Physician Assistant programs.

Community leaders, radio, the Detroit Free Press, and WDIV Channel 4 Detroit were involved in media coverage of the MI-DOOR event, helping to raise public awareness of dental access problems among low-income adults. MI-DOOR initiated partnerships and their collaborative efforts continued to expand in addressing access to dental care. A survey of MI-DOOR providers and staff showed that all reported that they will volunteer again for another MI-DOOR event. Several volunteer providers have asked MDCH how they can plan a similar event in their community. The event helped dental providers recognize the high unmet dental needs in their own community. MI-DOOR also engaged students and may lead to more public health services when these future health professionals begin to practice.

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