



Dental Public Health State Activity Submission Form

ASTDD’s goal in collecting information about successful state Dental Public Health activities (e.g., practice, program, service, event, or policy) is to share this information with other states, territories, and stakeholders who may be interested in implementing similar activities. We thank you for your time and willingness to share your experiences.

Please complete the form below and return to Lori Cofano, ASTDD Best Practices Project Coordinator, at lcofano@astdd.org

FIRST CONTACT PERSON FOR INQUIRIES	
Name:	Prasida Khanal, BDS, MPH
Title:	State Oral Health Director
Agency/Organization:	Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), Oral Health Program Center for Health Promotion
Street:	85 E. Seventh Place P.O. Box 64882
City, State, Zip Code:	St. Paul, MN 55164-0882
Phone:	(651) 252-7000
Email:	prasida.khanal@state.mn.us

SECOND CONTACT PERSON FOR INQUIRIES	
Name:	Bilquis Khan, MSc. (Epi), MBA, MSc. (Stat)
Title:	Professional Technical Evaluation Contractor
Agency/Organization:	Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), Oral Health Program Center for Health Promotion
Street:	85 E. Seventh Place P.O. Box 64882
City, State, Zip Code:	St. Paul, MN 55164-0882
Phone:	N/A
Email:	bilquis.khan@state.mn.us

STATE DENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH ACTIVITY (e.g., practice, program, service, event, or policy) Minimum=300 Maximum=500	
Activity title:	Developing Data Queries in Open-Source Dental Practice Management Software to Support SEALS Reporting
State/Territory:	MN
Summary overview, which may include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives Rationale Personnel Key partners Costs & sustainability 	

In 2011, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) introduced the Excel-based Sealant Efficiency Assessment for Locals and States (SEALS) data reporting system for grantee states to report consistent and uniform sealant data. This system evaluates the effectiveness and efficiency of school sealant programs.(SSPs).

Through periodic evaluations since 2008, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) has recognized the need for a comprehensive, coordinated, and consolidated data collection and reporting system for the state's network of school sealant programs (SSPs), referred to as [SEAL Minnesota](#). A key informant interview with SSP coordinators and feedback from data stewards indicated that programs experienced significant barriers when reporting data to SEALS. MDH collaborated with one of the dental clinics to closely examine their dental practice management software. There was a need to download the data from different areas of clinic's database and adjust the format to be compatible with SEALS and then upload the data. CDC's recent efforts to revamp and relaunch SEALS and the introduction of "Batch Data Load" Excel Workbook to report SEALS measures have resulted in new tools to report data. However, SSPs may still face challenges in needing to re-enter data.

Six of eleven SEAL Minnesota partners used "Open Dental" as their dental practice management software. MDH consulted with Open Dental to explore queries to standardize data collection and reporting. MDH and Open Dental worked with partners to develop and implement custom queries to generate data reports directly from Open Dental into CDC's format of reporting SEALS Child Level Data. This automation significantly reduced administrative costs, including staff time associated with data entry and reporting. It also minimized discrepancies between requested and reported measures. The pilot project was cost-effective and successfully simplified the data reporting process. Reports that previously had to be compiled manually or could take many hours now can be generated by simply running the query.

Lessons learned (Successes and **Challenges**):

Many SSPs used Open Dental; however, each program had a unique setup for data collection and other operations. Furthermore, the utilization of software differed sometimes within the same program. For example, Auto Note is one of the available features in Open Dental. SSP staff saved information in various areas within the Auto Note. Information that one staff entered in line 4 of Auto Note was added in line 5 by another staff, resulting in intra and inter-program discrepancies in data storage. Therefore, there is no "one-size fits all" approach unless all the staff within the same SSP and across SEAL Minnesota partners enter the required measures in the same location/position in Open Dental. These logistic issues must be considered while attempting to automate data extraction.

A good team of Open Dental query developers, CDC statistician and SSP team leveraged MDH's vision and thought process exponentially. MDH realized that writing the query was actually not the problem. More often than not, learning and solving problems took time. Developers met with MDH, CDC and SSPs to understand the needs and specifications for SEALS data measures. Finally, the queries were developed, tested and implemented. Setting realistic timelines and expectations from developers helped MDH become better at dealing with ambiguity. The more experience MDH and developers got, the better and efficient we became at customizing queries.

TO BE COMPLETED BY ASTDD	
Activity Number:	26015
Submission Date:	May 2022
Submission Filename:	SUM26015MN-open-dental-data-sbsp-2022