

Dental Public Health Activity Descriptive Summary

Practice Number: 28005
Submitted By: Office of Dental Health, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services
Submission Date: March 2002
Last Reviewed: February 2020
Last Updated: February 2020

A Strong Collaboration with the State Dental Association

Missouri has a close collaboration with the state dental society and the Office of Dental Health (ODH), which is critical to assuring a viable and effective state oral health program. A strong working relationship provides the State Dental Director with much more flexibility in addressing political issues and can provide important political support for the State Dental Director's position.

Additionally, the state dental association is an important player in many issues of interest to state dental programs, and it provides ideal access to resources, such as literature, data and personnel. Given that dentists are a provider of oral health care, and the state dental association represents the vast majority of dentists, a collaborative relationship should exist to assure good oral health in Missouri. The Office of Dental Health in the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services has cultivated a good relationship with the Missouri Dental Association (MDA) for over 40 years. The State Dental Director's position was reinstated in large part due to the MDA lobbying efforts.

What is being done - The State Dental Director has an outstanding working relationship with and regularly meets with the MDA Executive Director and the Board of Trustees. The Office of Dental Health staff works with MDA members and staff on health fairs, activities related to children's dental health month, Missouri Mission of Mercy, the state's sealant and fluoridation programs, oral health screening, and education activities. This collaboration has resulted in many outcomes that improve oral health and service delivery for the state including: (1) passing legislation regarding Fluoridation Notification and Teledentistry, (2) increasing funds for Medicaid services, (3) revising Medicaid administrative policies, (4) addressing workforce issues that have resulted in the start of a second dental school (Missouri School of Dentistry and Oral Health, affiliated with AT Still University), (5) supporting funding for a dental program to provide care for people with Developmental Disabilities and (6) revising the practice act to require Opioid prescription regulations to meet the CDC recommendations, (7) working to communicate the oral health needs of Missouri population, and (8) participation on response to CWF challenges.

Most of this cooperation and action was done by the Missouri Dental Association as no cost to the Office of Dental Health. At times project expenses have been supported by the Office of Dental Health but the MDA has taken on most of the expenses. Lessons learned are that the Missouri Dental Association's members have strong feelings regarding the limits on the practice of dental hygiene. Access to care needs mean that we will be providing opinions supporting expansion of the scope of care by dental hygienists. So we carefully look for areas of mutual interest. Working together on issues of common interests are usually successful.

Lessons Learned:

- a. The most important lesson learned would be communication with your dental society allows you to clarify issues that may cause friction and helps to find issues that both can work on together. Such as the ad hoc committee on teledentistry included the State Dental Director so there were no misunderstandings of what this would include.
- b. When possible, fund activities of the dental society and other major partners that will help the goals of the ODH.
- c. Belonging to the ADA helps provide the Dental Director with credentials when you are addressing the members.

- d. When a fluoridation challenge happens the MDA is one of the first groups to contact to help identify dentists in the area to help. We had the experience that we had to have an election committee to provide education during a referendum. The MDA was able to complete the application and become an election committee. The ODH can't be part of a local election.
- e. Participate in events of the MDA, Mission of Mercy or MO Dent Pac meetings.

Contact Person(s) for Inquiries:

John Dane, DDS, FAAHD, DABSCD, Dental Director, Office of Dental Health, Missouri department of Health and Senior Services, 912 Wildwood Dr., Jefferson City, MO 65102 Phone: 573-751-6441, Email: john.dane@health.mo.gov

Julie Boeckman, Programs Manager, Office of Dental Health, Missouri department of Health and Senior Services, 912 Wildwood Dr., Jefferson City, MO 65102 Phone: 573-751-6249, Email: Julie.boeckman@health.mo.gov