



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

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STATE DENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH ACTIVITY (e.g., practice, program, service, event, or policy) Minimum=300 Maximum=500	
Activity title:	Special Care Dental Clinic (SCDC)
State/Territory:	Nevada
Summary overview, which may include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives Rationale Personnel Key partners Costs & sustainability 	
<p>Adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD) represent an underserved and vulnerable patient population. Due to specific challenges for dental treatment, such as behavior modifications, guardianship issues, and the possible need for sedation/hospital care, many dental providers lack the experience to provide efficient care to this population. The nature of many adults diagnosed with ID/DD is that they never grow out of their dependence on a family member, caretaker, or a group home. The purpose of this project is to improve access to oral healthcare services to this population through the operation of the Special Care Dental Clinic (SCDC) within the UNLV pre-doctoral program.</p> <p>The SCDC is physically operated out of University of Nevada, Las Vegas, (UNLV) School of Dental Medicine campus. Dental students are rotated through the SSC, and if patients can be treated without general anesthesia, the dental students perform all aspects of dentistry. Approximately 5-8 patients are scheduled for each rotation and approximately</p>	

five rotations are scheduled per week.

Many resources are needed to run the SCDC successfully, such as physical space to provide care and coordination of key personnel from UNLV, the Aging and Disability Services Division (ADSD), University Medical Center of Southern Nevada Hospital (UMC), the Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH), Oral Health Program (OHP), Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (RTC), and public partners. Unless other funding mechanisms are in place, patients or guardians are required to pay for out-of-pocket for services not covered by Medicaid or private insurance. Limits to the number of patients seen are due to the availability of providers at UNLV, the number of dental operatories, and scheduling limitations.

As a result of the SCDC, hundreds of patients have been seen who would otherwise have no access to routine dental services. Additionally, all dental students who graduated after 2015 will have first-hand experience with treating adults with ID/DD. Many of the UNLV graduates stay in Nevada to practice; therefore, the number of dental providers trained to treat this population is increasing.

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

Limitations on the success of the clinic at the university level depend on the support from the administration. A team of individuals dedicated to the clinic would be recommended. Based on the limitations of the SCDC, it is safe to conclude that to operate a successful Special Care Dental Clinic in an educational setting, the following team members and items need to be in place:

- Multiple dental providers available (ideally including an endodontist, oral surgeon, and dental anesthesiologist) with hospital credentials
- GP and Pediatric residents on rotation continuously throughout the year
- Fourth-year dental students on rotation continuously throughout the year
- At least one dedicated assistant with hospital dentistry training/experience/credentials
- A coordinator/scheduler with training/experience in legal guardianship documentation and good communication with UMC hospital for scheduling those who need general anesthesia
- Oral surgery suite with all equipment necessary to handle emergencies resulting from or spontaneously occurring during IV conscious and deep sedation performed on campus
- A portable laptop and digital sensors for taking radiographs in OS and at UMC
- A portable hospital dentistry unit with dental items needed for hospital dentistry cases.

At the beginning of the SCDC's creation, funding was the biggest limitation. However, the state's support and funding have minimized financial barriers and stabilized the program.. Despite the recent grant award from the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services of \$252,520, the current challenge is centered on staffing shortages. The SCDC Director left her position in late 2020 and the position stands vacant. This director was the sole employee within the clinic and without this single position, the SCDC is not able to provide clinical services. The future of the SCDC is unclear but demonstrates the multiple levels of support and continued buy-in from diverse partners that is needed to provide continued clinical services for vulnerable populations.

TO BE COMPLETED BY ASTDD	
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