

## Dental Public Health Activity Descriptive Summary

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**Practice Number:** 33007  
**Submitted By:** New Jersey Department of Health, Children's Oral Health Education Program  
**Submission Date:** March 2002  
**Last Reviewed:** May 2017  
**Last Updated:** May 2017

### **New Jersey Dental Clinic Directory, "Dial a Smile"**

The New Jersey Dental Clinic Directory, "Dial a Smile" provides a central source of information on public dental clinic services in New Jersey. The clinic services are primarily provided by local health departments, hospitals and Federally Qualified Health Centers.

The "Dial a Smile" Dental Clinic Directory is designed to assist people who have difficulty accessing dental care due to insurance or financial constraints. Since many clinics have financial or residency requirements, patients are advised to call the center and inquire as to required documentation.

Agencies providing services are grouped by county. Each listing includes name, address, phone number, days/hours of operation, ages served, payment methods accepted and services provided.

The New Jersey Dental Clinic Directory also provides a Statewide listing of school-based dental clinics, mobile dental units including location, days of operation and types of services provided.

Additional information contained in the Directory includes resources such as "Dental Lifeline Network" which assists New Jersey residents who are permanently disabled, medically at-risk or 65 years of age or older obtain dental services. The "Smiles Change Lives" Program for children's orthodontics, and the NJ Dental Association Senior-Dent Program for New Jersey residents 65 years and older who have a Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged and Disabled card are also included.

"Dial a Smile" is distributed to school nurses and multi-disciplinary health care professionals to assist individuals obtain dental care services and secure a dental home.

The New Jersey Dental Clinic Directory is available on-line at:  
[http://www.nj.gov/health/fhs/oral/documents/dental\\_directory.pdf](http://www.nj.gov/health/fhs/oral/documents/dental_directory.pdf)

The Directory is usually updated every two years. Agencies are contacted via mail to complete a survey that requests updated information if applicable.

### **Lessons Learned:**

The Dental Clinic Directory has been published since 1997. Rather than lessons learned, the following are tips to incorporate if replicating this Practice.

- Advise consumers that dental clinic hours, services and methods of payment accepted are subject to change and at the discretion of the agency.
- Since scheduling of appointments is done specifically at each site, make appointments as soon as possible to eliminate potential wait times.
- Include as much information as possible for payment methods accepted and services provided by each clinic.
- When updating the Directory, telephone follow-up may be necessary to increase survey response and completion rate.

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