



Dental Public Health Activities Descriptive Summaries

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New York State Children's Dental Summit

On October 29, 2001, dental professionals, academics, children's advocates and government officials met in Albany to develop an agenda to improve the oral health of children in New York State. This first Children's Dental Summit was convened by the Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy (SCAA), the New York State Public Health Association, the New York State Dental Foundation and the American Academy of Pediatrics, District II (New York State). The Summit was designed to bring together stakeholders to begin thinking about how the state can craft policies to integrate oral health into broader health policies as well as to brainstorm ideas that can lead to immediate improvements in children's access to oral health services. Participants presented their priorities for changes to laws, regulations and state policies they believe can improve the oral health of New York's children. The participants then developed and categorized the strategies that they would like government officials, health professionals and children's advocates to consider as part of an overall plan to address the disparities that exist in oral health. The set of strategies developed at the Summit (neither all-inclusive nor endorsed by all participants) is intended to generate discussion, prompt creative thinking and build a constituency around children's oral health issues. Strategies related to these initiatives:

School-Based Oral Health Initiative

Strategies to amend appropriate sections of the Education and Public Health Laws for improving access to preventive services and clinical oral health care in schools.

Dental Workforce Initiative

Strategies, including financial incentives and revised training requirements, to increase the number of dental providers practicing in underserved areas.

Access to Dental Care Through Expanded Insurance Initiatives

Strategies to increase enrollment in public and private health insurance programs that cover dental services.

Professional and Public Education Initiative

Strategies to devise systems for improving communication between the state and health care providers as well as an educational campaign for the general public.

The summit report (<http://www.mchoralhealth.org/PDFs/NYSummitRpt.pdf>) provides additional details of the strategies. The individuals and organizations that participated in the summit brought with them both experience and their desire to improve the health and lives of children. The summit paved the way for open and frank discussions with state policymakers and among the various interest groups represented.

Contact Person(s) for Inquiries:

Elmer L. Green, DDS, MPH, Director, Bureau of Dental Health, New York State Dept. of Health, ESP - Corning Tower Building, Room 542, Albany, NY 12237-0619, Phone: 518-474-1961, Fax: 518-474-8985, Email: elg01@health.state.ny.us