

Dental Public Health Activity Descriptive Summary

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New York State Public Health Residency Program

The New York State Dental Public Health Residency Program (NYSDPHRP) trains dentists to assume critical roles in the practice of dental public health. The program is a collaboration between University at Albany (SUNY-A) School of Public Health and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and has formal affiliations with the Jacobi Medical Center, Bronx, and the University of Rochester's Eastman Institute for Oral Health. The program has full accreditation from the Council on Dental Accreditation, American Dental Association. It embodies the model of public health education advocated by the U.S. Public Health Service and integrates academic training with extensive exposure to the practice of public health. The educational setting for the NYSDPHRP is one of the largest and most comprehensive state health departments in the country that is closely allied with a school of public health. The NYSDOH has a comprehensive array of cutting edge public health programs that address virtually every major aspect of public health and provides ideal training opportunities for residents. Faculty at the school of public health and other affiliated institutions and a large number of practicing public health professionals from the NYSDOH and other agencies serve as teachers, advisors, mentors, and role models.

The Bureau of Dental Health (BDH) provides a unique opportunity for dentists interested in pursuing careers in dental public health to receive advanced training and field experience, with primary functions being assessment, policy development and assurance. The NYSDPHRP draws on resources from throughout the department, particularly from public health programs within the Center for Community Health, with residents having access to the nation's best data banks to conduct their research projects at either the BDH or at one of the two affiliated sites. Residents participate in activities related to the CDC Cooperative Agreement, HRSA State Oral Health Workforce Grant, HRSA School-Based Comprehensive Oral Health Services and HRSA Perinatal Oral Health Quality Improvement Project.

The School of Public Health offers a comprehensive array of graduate and professional training programs in core public health disciplines, with Preventive Medicine and Dental Public Health Residency Programs available to physicians and dentists preparing for leadership roles in public health. Recognizing that most leadership positions in public health require solid grounding in both epidemiological principles and health policy and management, dental public health residents may enroll in advanced course work in both residency programs and have flexibility in course selection appropriate to their background in the biological and social-behavioral aspects of health and disease.

Jacobi Medical Center is a teaching hospital with advanced training programs in medical and dental specialties. The dental department provides post-graduate and general practice residency programs and opportunities for residents to be involved in clinical and health services research, program planning, and program implementation, including the administration of school-based programs, community-based dental programs and special services for high risk groups. The Eastman Institute for Oral Health has internationally recognized dental residency programs, vibrant oral biology research that is in the top tier of NIH rankings, and robust clinical services in all dental specialties with a strong community orientation.

Residents are trained to become competent in planning, implementing and managing oral health programs for populations; selecting interventions and strategies for the prevention and control of oral diseases and promotion of oral health; developing resources; evaluating and monitoring dental care delivery systems; designing and understanding the use of surveillance system to monitor oral health;

designing and conducting population-based studies to answer oral and public health questions; and advocating for, implementing and evaluating public health policy, legislation, and regulations to protect and promote the public's oral health.

A steering committee consisting of members of the Health Department and School of Public Health provides overall direction for the program, reviews the program on an annual basis to determine program needs, adequacy of funding and resources, and provides guidance. A faculty committee trains and mentors residents; sponsors a Journal Club and seminars for both the Preventive Medicine and Dental Public Health Residency Programs; assists in the selection of candidates, development of training plans, and supervision and evaluation of residents' training; and participates in field assignments and annual program reviews. The NYSDPHRP is offered free of charge, with stipends available to support up to two FTE residents a year.

Lessons Learned:

- The NYSDOH has continuously supported the Program because we have been able to document the contribution of the NYSDPHRP to assessment, policy development and assurance functions as evidenced by their publications.
- Residents have assisted the Bureau in addressing real questions and programmatic issues, whether it is related to benefits and risks of fluoridation or school-based programs, disease burden or laws and regulations.
- To create opportunities for dental school faculty members, we have created a part-time residency program. However, the success of this approach depends upon the availability of a mentor at the local level to provide assignments and guidance.
- The availability of funds to provide stipends is critical to attracting qualified residents. The unavailability of funds to support the MPH program has made it difficult to create a much broader pool of candidates.
- The lack of the HRSA DPH Residency Training grant has hindered our ability to provide support for the mentors.

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