



## Dental Public Health Activities Descriptive Summaries

---

**Practice Number:** 42001  
**Submitted By:** Pennsylvania Department of Health  
**Submission Date:** March 2002  
**Last Updated:** March 2002

### Community Primary Care Challenge Grants

The Pennsylvania Department of Health, Bureau of Health Planning, administers the Primary Care Community Challenge Grant initiative program. The Challenge Grants aim to: (1) Promote the recruitment and retention of primary health care practitioners, with an emphasis on dental providers, in order to increase clinical capacity for dental care availability and access; (2) Encourage primary care systems development in underserved areas; (3) Stimulate community based approaches to this development; and (4) Encourage maximum community participation through the local health improvement partnership in the planning and development of a comprehensive primary health care system. The program's primary target is to increase primary medical and dental care to underserved populations in rural and urban areas. For 2001, each Challenge Grant has a maximum of \$125,000 for up to 24 months. Applicants must be in a federally designated DHP SA. A 100% community match is required and in-kind matching is allowed. The challenge grant funding can be used for hiring personnel, equipment purchasing, and minor facility renovations, but not for capital purchases of buildings, land, or for building a new structure. The challenge grant alone is not sufficient to start and run a program, so other funding sources are needed. Most awardees have listed dental personnel and/or equipment purchases as the main use of the challenge grant funds. The Challenge Grant Program has been in place for seven years and has provided a total of fifty awards. Twenty-three of the awards were for dental projects, twenty-six for primary care projects, and one was a combined primary care/dental project. About 13 of the awards resulted indirectly in new dental clinics and 10 resulted in expansions of existing dental clinics. To date, almost all the 23 projects are still functioning, most without any more Challenge Grant or Pennsylvania Department of Health Assistance. The continuation of the clinics after the grant expires will require much local support and ingenuity to keep the clinics operating after the grant.

---

#### Contact Person(s) for Inquiries:

Howard Tolchinsky, DMD, State Public Health Dentist, Pennsylvania Department of Health, 7<sup>th</sup> & Foster Street, Room 1008, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17111, Phone: 717-787-5900, Fax: 717-783-5498, Email: [htolchinsk@state.pa.us](mailto:htolchinsk@state.pa.us)

Marina Matthew, Bureau of Health Planning, Pennsylvania Department of Health, P.O. Box 90, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17108-6525, Phone: 717-772-5298, Email: [mmatthew@state.pa.us](mailto:mmatthew@state.pa.us)