



Dental Public Health Activities Descriptive Summaries

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Wisconsin "GuardCare" Program

GuardCare is part of a national initiative that utilizes medical, dental and supporting units of the National Guard to provide community health service projects in underserved areas of the state. This activity serves as part of the training requirement for these units. In Wisconsin, GuardCare is a collaborative effort between the Wisconsin Army National Guard (13th Medical and Dental Detachment), the state Division of Public Health, local public health departments, health professional education institutions, and community organizations and agencies. A GuardCare program has taken place in Wisconsin each summer since 1995 and varies in length from one to two weeks. Selected sites in both urban and rural areas are determined by the need for oral health preventive services and by the interest and request of local public health departments. Usually two to three counties are served each summer with two days of clinics in each county. The dental component of GuardCare consists of the provision of free dental sealants to children in underserved areas of the state. Staffing for the dental component usually includes: four to five dentists and four to five dental technicians with the National Guard; one public health dentist and one public health dental hygienist with the Division of Public Health; one to two local public health dental hygienists; six fourth year dental students; five to ten dental hygiene students; one to two local dental hygienists; and several local volunteers for patient flow and patient education. The Wisconsin Army National Guard, state Division of Public Health, local public health departments, Marquette University School of Dentistry, and communities contribute staffing and related costs for GuardCare Program. GuardCare programs are conducted in school settings. Portable dental equipment from the Guard and state and local health departments is utilized. Local health departments are responsible for the recruitment of patients. Local media, social service agencies, health professionals, and school districts are utilized in recruitment efforts. All children from ages 7 to 16 are eligible for services. For 2001, 218 patients were treated. There were 1,495 sealants placed on 1,050 teeth (averaging 4.8 sealants per child). The value of the sealants based on usual and customary fees in the area was \$31,500.

Contact Person(s) for Inquiries:

Warren LeMay, DDS, MPH, Chief Dental Officer, Division of Public Health, Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, One West Wilson Street, PO Box 2659, Madison, WI 53701-2659, Phone: 608-266-5152, Fax: 608-267-2832, Email: lemaywr@dhfs.state.wi.us