

“Social Justice: A Public Health Imperative”

Denturist: Alternative Midlevel Healthcare Providers for Oral Health Screenings and Referrals

“Public Health Imperative” What’s the problem

- Disparities
- Shortage of dentists
- American Dental Association Policies
- High dental care cost due to dentist overhead
- Rural America

Disparity Barriers

Many people are desperate for oral health care but don’t receive care for a variety of reasons listed;

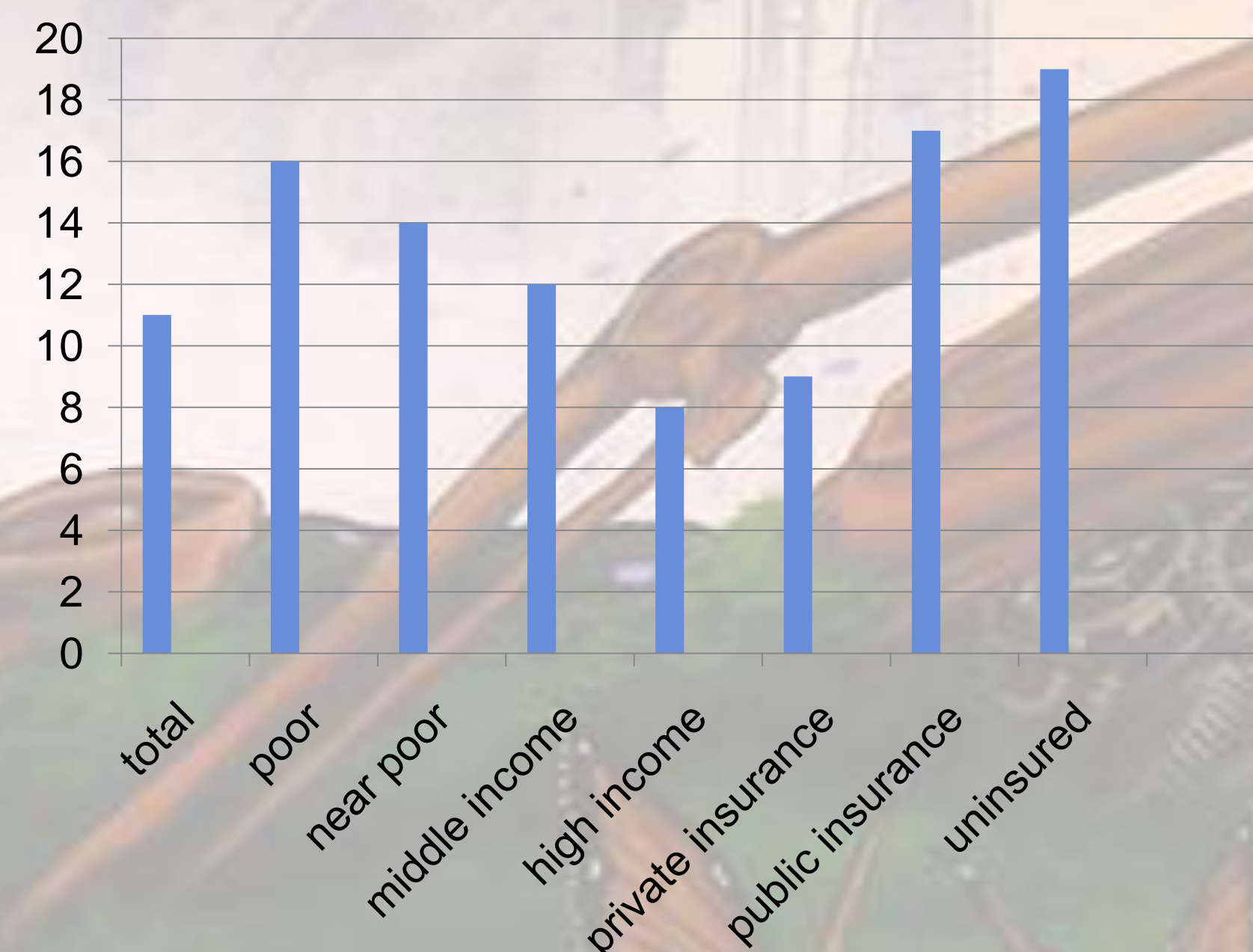
- Economics
- Disabilities
- Location
- Substance Abuse
- Homelessness
- Appearance
- No insurance
- Ineligible for Medicaid

People with no health insurance are less likely to receive medical care, dental care, and prescriptions.

The Facts and Stats

- Adults age 20 to 64 have an average of 24.92 teeth remaining.
- 3.75% of adults 20 to 64 have no teeth remaining.
- Seniors over 65 have an average of 18.90 teeth remaining.
- 27.27% seniors over 65 have no teeth remaining.
- Older adults facing barriers don’t make use of dental services.
- Seniors living in rural America are more likely to have poor oral health and limited access to dental care.

The Need for Care



Source: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Medical Expenditure Panel Survey, 2004.

American Dental Association Discrimination Policies to Discourage Competition

- Discrimination against denturists and denturism .(1976:868; 2001:436)
- Opposition to denturist movement . (2001:436)
- ADA guidelines to preclude the sale of dental supplies to denturist.(2001:436)
- ADA financial aid to support the above. (1997:934;2001:435)

Steps for Improving Access to Oral Health Care

- Promote and apply [denturist] programs that have demonstrated effective improvement in access to care.
- Make optimal use of oral health care providers [denturists] in improving access to oral health care.
- Ensure an adequate number and distribution of culturally competent providers [denturists] to meet the needs of individuals and groups, particularly in health-care shortage areas.

How Do Denturists Help

- They free up valuable dental chair time for emergencies and children.
- Denturists are a safe alternative denture delivery service.
- They are well educated professionals who have been trained and educated to provide oral health screenings and denture care.
- Denturists deliver to all segments of the public including people with disparities.
- They provide affordable denture care to people who would otherwise do without.
- Denturists serve nursing homes and other Institutions.

Social Justice Conclusions and Goals; Moving Society toward Optimal use of its Health Professionals

- The ADA needs to recognize independent practices for denturists, dental health aide therapists, and dental hygienists for better access to affordable oral health and dental care.
- Denturists provide an alternative model for oral health screenings, referrals, and denture care delivery.
- To eliminate disparity barriers ,we need to train and educate health care professionals to have more empathy.
- More schools.
- More community dental clinics.

“Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane.” Martin Luther King, Jr.