

Expanding the Dental Health Workforce with Dental Therapist- Two Year Post High School Model

2010 APHA
Oral Health
November 9, 2010
Denver, Colorado

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Presenter Disclosures

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The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

"No relationships to disclose"

DHAT Training Students 2 Years Post High School



Rural Alaska Workforce Issues

- 1999 Southeast Alaska Regional Health Consortium generated a white paper that demonstrated:
 - Alaska Native children experience caries rates 2½ times that of the National rate
 - Alaska tribal programs experience a dentist workforce vacancy rate of 25% and a 30% annual turnover
 - Currently there are 120,000 Alaska Natives, of which, 85,000 live in the 200 villages that make up rural Alaska which are not connected by a road system

Why Dental Health Aides?

- Local people trained locally
- Provide the basic services needed
- Meeting the patient where they live
- Cost effective model
- Evidence based model
 - www.wkkf.org



Improved Access

- 25,000 people in rural AK now have direct access to care, 25 communities
- Working in areas where there have never been dentists before
- Continuity of care



New Dental Service Centers

GENERAL DENTISTRY

1. Provide for the delivery of dental services to the community.
2. Provide for the delivery of dental services to the community.
3. Provide for the delivery of dental services to the community.
4. Provide for the delivery of dental services to the community.
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9. Provide for the delivery of dental services to the community.
10. Provide for the delivery of dental services to the community.

Specialized Services

11. Provide for the delivery of dental services to the community.
12. Provide for the delivery of dental services to the community.
13. Provide for the delivery of dental services to the community.
14. Provide for the delivery of dental services to the community.
15. Provide for the delivery of dental services to the community.
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19. Provide for the delivery of dental services to the community.
20. Provide for the delivery of dental services to the community.

DHAT Scope of Practice

- Prevention, Basic Hygiene, Diagnosis and Treatment Planning, Radiographs, Infection Control, Basic Restorative, Urgent Care, Basic Pediatric, Uncomplicated Extractions, Community Projects, Clinic Management, Equipment Repair and Maintenance, Referral Process.
- All ages

How Supervision of a DHAT Works

- Direct and Indirect Vs. General
- Telemedicine
- Daily Communication
- Supervisor Education and Resource Development

2 year post high school Dental Therapist

Funding

- W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Rasmuson Foundation, Bethel Community Services Foundation, M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust, Paul G. Allen Foundation, Ford Foundation, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Denali Commission, Indian Health Service, Health Resources and Services Administration

■ Will need: legal funds, PR funds, solid partnerships, dedicated champions.

DHAT Curriculum

- **Year 1:** basic health sciences, basic dental concepts, introduction to clinic, patient management and facilities management.
- **Year 2:** clinical year, expansion of concepts learned in first year, community project, village dental rotations

Recertification

- 24 hours continuing education bi-annually
- Directly observed by a supervising dentist



- performing 8 of each procedure for which they are certified.
- For example: must be directly observed performing skill of SSC prep 8 times.

Doing Things Differently

- **Our primary goal is to develop trusting relationships with Native patients and to encourage them to return to our clinics regularly.**
- This means, at times, more attention to the person than the tooth.
- **Overcome fear and avoidance.**

ANTHC/ U.W. DENTEX Training Center

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