



Emergent Issues Important for Dental Public Health and State Oral Health Programs

The following list of emergent issues is based on the input of Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors (ASTDD) members and stakeholders obtained during April-June 2006.

Public Policy Issues

- Medicare: No dental benefit for seniors ages 65 and older (baby-boomers are aging)
- Medicaid: Potential impact on dental benefit of federal and state regulatory changes (i.e., state waivers, Deficit Reduction Act, and changes to EPSDT)
- Lack of provider compliance with 1) EPSDT; 2) requirements by Medicaid programs; 3) obsolete EPSDT dental regulations (i.e., referral to dentist at age 3)
- Mandated school-entry dental screenings or examinations
- Changes to traditional dental provider delivery and reimbursement system, i.e., variety of providers (Dentist, RDH, DA, EFDA, MD, and others) and broader reimbursement mechanism (fluoride varnish reimbursement for physicians)

Clinical Issues

- Methamphetamine use and “Meth Mouth”
- Mouth and Teeth Grills (removable cosmetic dental appliances/dental jewelry)
- HPV (Human Papillomavirus)
- Emerging infectious disease including drug resistance
- Newly released fluoride studies
- Use of ART (Atraumatic Restorative Treatment)
- Fluoride varnish
- Efficacy of dental sealants and school-based dental sealant programs – report of the CDC Expert Sealant Panel
- Oral therapeutics: use of chlorhexidine, xylitol and others in community programs
- HIV diagnostic/preliminary screening tests in dental settings (i.e., oraSure rapid HIV oral test)

Safety and Preparedness Issues

- Terrorism and natural disasters: role of state dental director and other dental public health infrastructure
- Dental care provided by non-dental or other non-traditional providers
- Need for training in dental forensics

Organizational Policy Issues

- Operationalizing AAPD, ADA, and AAP guidelines for dental home and age one dental visit
- Lack of oral health clinical guidelines and professional organization policies for pregnant women
- ADA’s 2006 policy on professionally applied fluoride
- Head Start mandate for every child to have dental home: examination by a dentist and completed treatment (not just screening)

Research

- Recent scientific evidence, i.e., bisphosphonates (Fosamax) and osteonecrosis of the jaw
- Research related to: the improvement of both oral and systemic health, health disparities, community water fluoridation, the recommendations of the NRC report, safety of amalgam, development and enhancement of workforce research issues, health communication and health promotion, and clinical therapies.
- Performing regular evaluation of oral health programs and activities.

Ongoing Issues

- Sustainability of state oral health program infrastructure and key programs (financial/workforce related)
- Fluoridation
- Workforce issues: specialty training (CSHCN, infants and elderly), development, expansion, and changes to traditional dental provider delivery system (i.e., Dentist, RDH, DA, and EFDA applying fluoride varnish)
- Communication with state dental associations
- Diminished access to care for persons with special health care needs
- Amalgam and mercury
- National licensure

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