

# Topic Areas of Action Plan Focus

## Financing

The Financing topic area includes “Outcomes” which pursue effective financing of both the system of oral health care and the activities of the state oral health plan. This topic area has overarching impact on all five actions in the National Call to Action and the Healthy People 2010 objectives.

### Priority Outcome #1

Increase, proportionally, the amount of dollars spent on oral health care relative to overall health care.

### Why

Oral health is integral to general health. According to the U.S. Surgeon General’s Report on Oral Health expenditures for dental services were 4.7 percent of the nation’s health expenditures in 1998. Oral health is a critical component of health and must be included in the provision of health care and the design of community programs.

**Strategy 1: Quantify the financial impact of preventing oral disease.**

### Suggested Partners

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Oral Health Program, Colorado Health Institute, Prevention Research Center, Delta Dental of Colorado

### Suggested Action Steps

- Action: Collect cost effectiveness and other data from the literature showing the efficacy of oral health services.
- Action: Summarize information regarding financial impact.
- Action: Share the long-term cost effectiveness of oral health services with stakeholders and policy makers.



### Evaluation

A report summarizing data regarding financial impact is available. Needed studies are underway. Cost effectiveness is documented. Information is shared with stakeholders and policy makers. Increased funding is available for oral health services.

**Strategy 2: Educate and encourage legislators to prioritize oral health financing.**

### Suggested Partners

OHAC! members and collaborating partners who will advocate for oral health financing

### Suggested Action Steps

- Action: Develop and/or support legislation that addresses oral health issues.
- Action: Develop messages and share with members/constituents.
- Action: Encourage individuals to share messages with legislators/public policy-makers and to answer questions.

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## Evaluation

Oral health issues are identified and legislators support bills. Additional funding for oral health is available.

**Strategy 3: Assure that Colorado is utilizing and maximizing all funding for oral health.**

## Suggested Partners

Delta Dental Foundation, Colorado Health Institute, University of Colorado School of Dentistry

## Suggested Action Steps

- Action: Review systematically funding streams for potential use (like Medicaid and Medicare, Health Resources and Services Administration, National Institutes of Health, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Centers for Disease Control)
- Action: Research the possibility of accessing identified new resources.
- Action: Participate in planning to leverage any identified new source of funding.
- Action: Secure funds as new sources are identified and become available.



## Evaluation

Review of possible funding streams is complete, if available, new funding is secured.

**Strategy 4: Identify potential funding sources for adults as well as children.**

## Suggested Partners

Colorado Health Institute, funders, Omni Research and Training

## Suggested Action Steps

- Action: Identify gaps in information and initiate a study to collect missing data.
- Action: Review the activities accomplished within other states to secure federal funding sources for adults as well as children.
- Action: Develop and implement an action plan to secure new or expand federal resources for adults as well as children.

## Evaluation

Funding sources are identified for adults and children.

### Priority Outcome #2

Increase the number of Coloradans who have access to dental insurance coverage.

## Why

“For every child under 18 years old without medical insurance, there are at least two children without dental insurance; for every adult 18 years or older without medical insurance, there are three without dental insurance.” -- U.S. Surgeon General’s Report on Oral Health. According to the “Snapshot of Oral Health in Colorado” 42% of adults in Colorado do not have dental insurance. Those with dental insurance are almost one

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and a half times more likely to visit the dentist than those without dental insurance.

**Strategy 1: Investigate the addition of a dental benefit under Child Health Plan Plus for pregnant women.**

## Suggested Partners

Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Oral Health Awareness Colorado! partners with lobbying capabilities, Department of Health Care Policy and Financing

## Suggested Action Steps

- Action: Determine what regulatory change is needed.
- Action: Secure legislative and department support as needed.
- Action: Quantify medical cost savings of increased oral health coverage to adult populations.
- Action: Determine key messages to policy makers.
- Action: Use cost comparisons, from other state's Medicaid and Child Health Plan Plus programs, to educate policy makers on the importance of a dental benefit for pregnant women.
- Action: Investigate other states that currently have Medicaid benefits.

## Evaluation

Medicaid coverage for pregnant women is expanded. Reduction in Pre-Authorization Requests (PAR) necessary for adult coverage. Expanded services for adults are available. Expanded qualifying conditions for adult Medicaid exist.