

Topic Areas of Action Plan Focus

Health Promotion

The Health Promotion topic area includes “Outcomes” directed at educating the public on the relationship between oral health and general health and on individuals’ roles and responsibilities for their own oral health. This topic area directly relates to the National Call to Action #1 “Change Perception of Oral Health” and the Healthy People 2010 related objective areas in Chapters 7, 11, 16, 23 and 27.

Priority Outcome #1

Change the paradigm of how oral health is viewed by health care providers.

Why

Oral health is increasingly recognized as a component of general health. A continual effort needs to be made in both the medical and the dental communities to emphasize the impact of oral disease on the overall health of Coloradans.

Strategy 1: Increase knowledge and awareness of the importance of oral health as it relates to overall health in the primary care community.

Suggested Partners

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Colorado Community Health Network, University of Colorado School of Dentistry, University of Colorado School of Medicine, Delta Dental Foundation

Suggested Action Steps

- Action: Develop a health promotion communication campaign to educate health care practitioners on the importance of oral health care.
- Action: Design and/or disseminate courses relevant to health care practitioners.
- Action: Create individual and professional health care partnerships around oral health issues.



- Action: Expand existing relationships between the medical and dental professions.

Evaluation

Evaluation plan initiated. Dental in-services and/or Continuing Medical Education courses for medical providers are increased. Curriculum materials and practicum opportunities to merge dental and medical collaboration reviewed. Number of dental referrals from medical providers are increased. Number of preventive services increased.

Priority Outcome #2

Increase at-risk populations’ awareness and understanding of prevention and treatment availability.

Why

According to the May 2000 “Oral Health In America Report of the Surgeon General,” a “silent epidemic” of dental and oral disease affects some population groups. Those who suffer the most from oral diseases are the poor of all ages, including children, elderly and disabled populations. Knowing that 80% of dental disease is found in 25% of the population (Oral Health in America Report of the Surgeon General) it is important to target those at greatest risk in order to reduce the burden of oral disease.

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Strategy 1: Catalog and build a database of health promotion projects focused on increasing awareness and understanding of oral diseases by at-risk populations.

Suggested Partners

Foundation Collaborative (environmental scan), partners currently working with education and health promotion campaigns, 211 Colorado™, local public health agencies, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

Suggested Action Steps

- Action: Convene funders currently working with oral health Initiatives to forge a collaborative effort.
- Action: Investigate other state's health promotion activities.
- Action: Build a database of health care promotions and their funding sources (e. g., Omni Data Resources Index).
- Action: Identify Best Practices.

Evaluation

Catalog exists and is available to stakeholders. Best practices are identified. Awareness among at-risk populations increases.

Strategy 2: Develop a series of health promotion/communication campaigns (e.g., Be a Smart Mouth), directed at targeted groups.

Suggested Partners

Media, Oral Health Awareness Colorado!, Oral Health Awareness Colorado! partners currently working with education and health promotion/communication campaigns, oral and medical health care providers

Suggested Action Steps

- Action: Secure funding for effective health promotion campaigns.
- Action: Create effective culturally competent campaigns for priority populations.
- Action: Design an evaluation plan for campaigns.

Evaluation

Target populations are identified and prioritized. Funding is secured. Campaigns are developed. Evaluation plan is implemented.

Strategy 3: Increase oral health education in schools, medical centers and in the community-at-large.

Suggested Partners

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Coordinated School Health and Oral Health Programs, University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, media, Colorado Community Health Network, Colorado Rural Health Center, Oral Health Awareness Colorado! partners currently working with education and health promotion campaigns, Delta Dental of Colorado

Suggested Action Steps:

- Action: Work with Colorado Department of Education to survey public schools' efforts in oral health education.
- Action: Identify best practices that have demonstrated success in this area.
- Action: Collaborate with Coordinated School Health Program to include oral health initiatives.
- Action: Partner with the 9Health Fairs, Give Kids a Smile and Smile-a-bration to assure that oral health is an integral part of their education activities.

Evaluation

The number of schools providing oral health education increases. 9Health Fair activities incorporating a dental component and are documented. Educational components are included in Give Kids a Smile and Smile-a-bration.

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Priority Outcome #3

Educate consumers about their dental plans in order to maximize insurance utilization and third party reimbursement.

Why

“Insurance is a major determinant of dental utilization.” — U. S. Surgeon General’s Report on Oral Health. With the rapid changes in the health care environment it becomes even more important for health care consumers to understand the implications of their insurance coverage.

Strategy 1: Develop materials emphasizing the importance of preventive benefits for use by third party payers and human resources departments.

Suggested Partners

Third party payers, human resource associations, Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment

Suggested Actions:

- Action: Convene advisory group to develop materials, such as pamphlets, CD-ROMS & DVDs for self-education.
- Action: Pilot test materials for cultural sensitivity.
- Action: Produce revised materials for use by above-mentioned groups.

Evaluation

An Advisory group has convened. Materials have been developed, tested and revised as needed.