

Recommendation 5: IMPROVE ACCESS TO CARE BY ASSURING A HIGHLY TRAINED, DIVERSE, APPROPRIATELY ALLOCATED DENTAL WORKFORCE.

Champions: Florida Dental Hygiene Association / Department of Health Volunteer Program

R5	Strategy/Objective/Action Step	Target Date	Responsible Entity	Comments
R5 S1	Strategy 1: Assure that an adequate number of appropriate dental care provider types exist and increase the diversity of dental care providers.			
R5 S1 O1	Objective 1: Determine the types of dental services needed or being provided to disadvantaged populations in the State and where these services are or not provided.			Refer to existing county-specific statewide resource guides.
	Action Steps			
R5 S1 O1 Aa	a) Utilize the county-specific statewide resource guide as baseline information for the gap analysis.			
R5 S1 O1 Ab	b) Utilize information obtained from Behavioral Risk Factor Data collection System oral health questions obtained in 2004 and 2002 county-specific information.			
R5 S1 O1 Ac	c) Identify barriers and professional incentives needed to ensure adequate distribution of the dental workforce to all populations in the State.			
R5 S1 O1 Ad	d) Initiate a study that examines the distribution of specific dental care providers throughout the State – county by county.			General dentists, pediatric dentists, Medicaid dentists, dental hygienists, etc.
R5 S1 O1 Ae	e) Find areas of critical need.			Department of Health professional recruitment for rural areas and their report of Federally Designated Health Professional Shortage Areas, etc.
R5 S1 O1 Af	f) Develop a strategy to increase resources in conjunction with dental, dental hygiene, and dental assisting schools and programs.			
R5 S1 O1 Ag	g) Work with applicable entities to implement strategy to increase resources needed.			
R5 S1 O1 Ah	h) Identify where mobile dental vans are being utilized, what services are being provided, and what services are not being provided and are needed.			

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R5 S1 O1 Ai	i) Collaborate with Florida Baptist Dental van about needs in all the counties they serve.			
R5 S1 O2	Objective 2: Increase the number of minority dentists, dental hygienists, and dental assistants.			
Action Steps				
R5 S1 O2 Aa	a) Research barriers to diversity in dental education programs.			
R5 S1 O2 Ab	b) Establish Mentor programs.			
R5 S1 O2 Ac	c) Establish tuition reimbursement/loan forgiveness programs.			
R5 S1 O2 Ad	d) Develop recruitment and dental career guidance counseling in predominately minority population high schools and colleges.			The American Medical Student Association (AMSA), "Widening the Pipeline", for medical and dental students interested in working with local middle and high school students about careers in the health professions, focusing on underrepresented minorities. Funding from AMSA is available to assist in this effort.
R5 S1 O2 Ae	e) Develop a network of practicing dentists to recruit high school and college students into dentistry.			
R5 S1 O2 Af	f) Develop public service or health education advertisements using minority health care professionals as the health care models.			
R5 S1 O3	Objective 3: Explore the feasibility of a state scholarship, loan repayment or forgiveness programs for minority dental and dental hygiene students.			
Action Steps				

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R5 S1 O3 Aa	a) Research scholarship and loan repayment/forgiveness programs in other states.			
R5 S1 O3 Ab	b) Identify partners who might underwrite a scholarship or loan forgiveness program.			e.g. foundations, dental suppliers, etc.
R5 S1 O3 Ac	c) Establish targeted information and outreach to dental school graduates in Florida and the surrounding states.			
R5 S1 O3 Ad	d) Work with local communities to establish incentive packages.			
R5 S1 O3 Ae	e) Identify funding sources for the loan repayment program.			
R5 S3	Strategy 2: Expand professional training opportunities regarding care for special needs populations.			
R5 S3 O1	Objective 1: Establish baseline of current special needs educational opportunities in the state of Florida.			
	Action Steps			
R5 S3 O1 Aa	a) Define “special needs”			Use a broad definition of special needs. (e.g. gender, race, ethnicity, social/economic, physical and mental disabilities, nationality, age, disease status, etc.).
R5 S3 O1 Ab	b) Compile a list of possible training opportunities for treating special needs patients. -			Contact University of Florida and Nova Southeastern Colleges of Dentistry, dental hygiene schools, dental assisting schools, and Florida Dental Hygiene Association to see what curriculum or continuing education courses they provide.
R5 S3 O1 Ac	c) Disseminate list of possible training opportunities to University of Florida College of Dentistry, Nova Southeastern, Florida Dental Hygiene Association, etc.			

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R5 S3 01 Ad	d) Network with organizations that have expertise with special needs populations to provide training			e.g. Florida Agency for Persons with Disabilities.
R5 S3 02	Objective 2: Improve cultural awareness training within the dental professions through educational programs.			Graduate, undergraduate and technical school programs of dentistry, dental hygiene and dental assisting
Action Steps				
R5 S3 02 Aa	a) Identify social/cultural awareness education programs.			Include those offered by other states, American Dental Association, American Medical Association and medical specialty programs that can be adapted for dentists.
R5 S3 02 Ab	b) Develop mentoring programs.			
R5 S3 02 Ac	c) Identify resources and provide training on interpretive needs			E.g. interpretation services, languages, including sign language forms etc.
R5 S3 03	Objective 3: Encourage implementation of the Developmental Disabilities White Paper plan to develop Centers of Excellence through training of dentists, dental hygienists, and dental assistants in the care of special needs populations.			
Action Steps				
R5 S3 03 Aa	a) Seek funding – research grant opportunities.			
R5 S3 03 Ab	b) Generate Legislative Budget Request (LBR) to seek continued funding.			
R5 S3 03 Ac	c) Establish partnerships between educational institutions that address the oral health care of special needs populations.			Dental schools, dental hygiene schools, dental assisting schools, medical schools, nursing schools and other schools as appropriate.
R5 S3 03 Ad	d) Establish a curriculum – research other special needs education programs.			

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R5 S3 O3 Ae	e) Develop mentoring programs.			
R5 S3	Strategy 3: Expand volunteer incentives.			
R5 S3 O1	Objective 1: Increase incentives for volunteerism - tax breaks or credits, licensure fee discounts, continuing education credits, sovereign immunity/liability insurance coverage.			
	Action Steps			
R5 S3 O1 Aa	a) Work with the Board of Dentistry toward solutions to license issues that inhibit retired dentists from volunteering			
R5 S3 O1 Ab	b) Establish a standard procedure for documenting volunteer participation.			The volunteer services office of the Department of Health is currently working on this.
R5 S3 O1 Ac	c) Research volunteer programs in other states.			
R5 S3 O1 Ad	d) Expand existing volunteer programs.			
R5 S3 O1 Ae	e) Educate professional associations of system changes to encourage volunteerism.			
R5 S3 O1 Af	f) Recruit retired and part-time dental providers.			
R5 S3 O1 Ag	g) Work with Board of Dentistry to determine extent to which dental professionals currently use volunteer work to substitute for continuing education credits			The number of continuing education credits that can be used for volunteer work was recently expanded from five to eight credits. Fifteen was a suggestion.
R5 S4	Strategy 4: Consider reforms to better utilize the existing dental workforce to achieve improved access to care.			
R5 S4 O1	Objective 1: Develop a consensus of key stakeholders directly affected by workforce issues related to access to dental care.			For dental hygienists to provided dental screenings without a dentist present.

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Action Steps				
R5 S4 O1 Aa	a) Encourage leadership of the Florida Dental Association and Florida Dental Hygiene Association to enter into discussion to determine areas of agreement in utilizing the existing dental workforce to solve the access to care issue.	Ongoing		Meetings are scheduled.
R5 S4 O1 Ab	b) Research utilization of the dental workforce in other states for existing models.			