



WEST VIRGINIA ORAL HEALTH IMPROVEMENT ACT 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

December 2022

West Virginia Oral Health Improvement Act 2022 Annual Report

This report has been prepared by the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau for Public Health, Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health, Oral Health Program to comply with the requirements of W. Va. Code §16-41-6.

Introduction

The mission of the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR), Bureau for Public Health (BPH), Office of Maternal, Child and Family Health (OMCFH), Oral Health Program (OHP) is to promote and improve the oral health of all West Virginians. OHP functions to provide the leadership and consultation necessary to enable oral health education and promotion; and improve accessibility to and quality of oral health care for all West Virginians. The major components of OHP include adult services, oral disease prevention, and dental workforce. OHP is currently staffed with seven positions. Other than the State Dental Director, all positions are funded through federal grant awards. Through state funding and receipt of six federal grant awards, OHP is achieving success and recognition both statewide and nationally. Accomplishments of OHP are a result of collaborative efforts with other government agencies and community partners.

Summary of Improvements in the Oral Health of West Virginia's Residents

The oral health of West Virginia's residents, regardless of age, is improving; fewer young children have untreated tooth decay, more low-income children can access a dentist, and fewer adults have missing teeth. Although improvements have been made, West Virginia continues to lag behind national averages and OHP is working to overcome barriers, so the oral health of West Virginians continues to improve.

- During school year 2021-2022, there were 6,261 children served by the school-based oral health programs.
- In 2019-2020, 79% of West Virginia's parents reported that their child aged 1-17 years had a preventive dental service during the past 12 months compared to a national average of 78%.
- Since 2013-2014, the percentage of third grade children who have ever had tooth decay decreased by 18%, while the percentage with untreated tooth decay decreased by 38%.
- Since 2013-2014, the percentage of third grade children with protective dental sealants has more than doubled, increasing from 28% to 62%.
- The percentage of older adults (65+ years) with no natural teeth decreased from 34% in 2012 to 22% in 2020.

**Number of employees, both full- and part-time, who devote time to the
West Virginia Oral Health Program**

State-funded employees	
Title/position	Full-time employee (FTE)
State Dental Director	.50
Oral Health Coordinator, Marshall County, WV	0.125
Total (N=2)	0.625 FTE

Federally-funded employees	
Title/position	Full-time employee (FTE)
State Dental Director	.50
Program Manager	1.0
Adult Services Supervisor	1.0
Adult Services Specialist	1.0
Adult Services Specialist (Vacant)	1.0
Prevention Coordinator	1.0
Outreach Worker	1.0
Water Fluoridation Specialist	1.0
Total (N=8)	7.50 FTE

**Estimated number of residents served by the
West Virginia Oral Health Program annually**

Project	Estimated # of residents served (FY2022)	
Fluoride Varnish Project¹ Target population: Children ages 0 – 6	Dental Providers (D1206)	37,127
	Medical Providers (99188)	3,463
Fluoride Water Testing Target population: Children ages 0 – 12	29	
School-Based Oral Health Services Target population: Students in grades K – 12	6,261	

¹ DHHR, Bureau for Medical Services Data Report for FY2022 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022).

Project	Estimated # of residents served (FY2022)
Donated Denture Project Target population: Low-income adults 50+ or ≤ 50 and receiving SSI, SSDI, or SS	728
Pre-Employment Project Target population: TANF-eligible adults re-entering the workforce	504
Jobs and Hope Project Target population: Adults in recovery who have a barrier to career employment	331
General Oral Health Education Target population: State residents (children and adults)	6,143
Estimated total served	54,586

Fiscal Year 2022 Updates on Duties and Directives of State Oral Health Program (W. Va. Code §16-41-3)

1. *The development of comprehensive dental health plans within the framework of the state plan of operation ... to maximize use of all available resources.*

- Senate Bill 648 – Providing dental coverage for adult Medicaid recipients.

“The Department of Health and Human Resources shall extend Medicaid coverage to adults ages 21 and over covered by the Medicaid program for diagnostic and preventative dental services and restorative dental services, excluding cosmetic services. This coverage is limited to \$1,000 each budget year. Recipients must pay for services over the \$1,000 yearly limit. No provision in this section shall restrict the department in exercising new options provided by, or to be in compliance with, new federal legislation that further expands eligibility for dental care for adult recipients.”

The State Dental Director and OHP will support and monitor the new adult dental benefit in collaboration with DHHR’s Bureau for Medical Services (BMS) and licensed dental providers across the state.

2. *Providing the consultation necessary to coordinate federal, state, county and city agency programs concerned with dental health.*

- The State Dental Director works in collaboration as a member of the Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors (ASTDD).

- The State Dental Director worked with the West Virginia Board of Dentistry, the State Dental Association, and DHHR's Center for Threat Preparedness to coordinate resources and information for oral health providers during the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. *Encouraging, supporting, and augmenting the efforts of local boards of health and boards of education in the implementation of a dental health component in their program plans.*
 - OHP continues to collaborate with the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) on providing school-based sealant programs (SSPs) throughout the state. Services were affected by the pandemic because in-person instruction was limited during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years. This work is supported by a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Oral Disease Prevention Project (Grant No. NU58DP006482).
 4. *Providing consultation and program information to, at a minimum, health professions, health professional educational institutions, school educators, extension specialists and volunteer agencies.*
 - The State Dental Director and OHP provide ongoing consultation and program information to oral health professionals. Of note this year, the OHP worked with the West Virginia University (WVU) School of Dentistry to support ongoing establishment of a pediatric residency program through support from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Cooperative Agreement focusing on State Oral Health Workforce (Grant No. T12HP28878).
 5. *Providing programs aimed at preventing and detecting oral cancer in the state, with a primary focus of meeting the needs of high-risk under-served populations, with the intent to reduce oral cancer mortality.*

AND

6. *Providing programs addressing oral health education and promotion, including:*
 - (A) *Public health education to promote the prevention of oral disease through self-help methods, including the initiation and expansion of preschool, school age and adult education programs.*
 - OHP provides ongoing education and outreach to both dental and non-dental health care providers supporting fluoride varnish initiatives. Eligible children under the age of 21 may receive four applications of fluoride varnish annually as a Medicaid member; eligible children under the age of 19 may receive four applications of fluoride varnish annually as a member of the West Virginia Children's Health Insurance Program (WVCHIP). Fluoride varnish is a topical prevention tool to reduce the incidence of early childhood caries (ECCs), tooth decay in children under the age of six.

(B) *Organized continuing health education training programs for, at a minimum, health care providers, school educators and extension specialists.*

- The State Dental Director and OHP provide ongoing continuing health education for various health professionals for human papillomavirus (HPV) and tobacco cessation. Tobacco cessation education is conducted by the WVU School of Dentistry, a certified National Tobacco Treatment Practice Center.
- The State Fluoridation Specialist worked with public water systems to connect water operators with CDC's continuing education regarding fluoridation of community water systems.

(C) *Preventive health education information for the public.*

- OHP worked with DHHR's Office of Communications to share public messaging about the importance and benefit of community water fluoridation.

7. *Facilitation of access to oral health services, including:*

(A) *The improvement of the existing oral health services delivery system for the provision of services to all West Virginia residents.*

(B) *Outreach activities to inform the public of the type and availability of oral health services to increase the accessibility of oral health care for all West Virginia residents.*

(C) *Assistance and cooperation in promoting better distribution of dentists and other oral health professionals throughout the state.*

- The State Dental Director and OHP work with WVU School of Dentistry to support ongoing establishment of a pediatric residency program through support from the HRSA Cooperative Agreement focusing on State Oral Health Workforce (Grant No. T12HP28878).
- OHP collaborated with the West Virginia Board of Dentistry to disseminate and collect Dental Workforce Surveys for licensed dentists and dental hygienists. This surveillance is collected every two years to monitor the state's dental workforce.

8. *Providing programs specifically targeting prevention of tooth loss and the restoration of existing teeth to the extent that funds are available.*

AND

9. *Providing oral or dental health services to individuals in need, to the extent funds are available for the services.*

- The State Dental Director and OHP administer three projects related to prevention of tooth loss and restoration of existing teeth to individuals in need to the extent that funds are available. The Pre-Employment (PE) Project provides both dental and vision services to persons eligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (the WV WORKS program) benefits with the goal of preparing persons to re-enter the workforce. The Denture Project provides dentures and partials to persons experiencing tooth loss. Eligibility is determined based on age and/or income. OHP collaborates with DHHR's Office of Drug Control Policy to address the potential needs of persons participating in the Governor's Jobs & Hope West Virginia Program. OHP administers the Jobs & Hope West Virginia vision and dental services in alignment with the PE Project.

10. Provide evaluation of these programs in terms of preventive services.

- OHP provides ongoing monitoring and evaluation of all dental health programs and projects it administers. Of note this year, OHP completed the State Surveillance Report and the State Burden of Oral Disease.
- (A) *In consultation with dental care providers, the Commissioner shall develop and implement ongoing oral cancer educational programs in the state:*
- 1) *To train health care providers to screen and properly refer patients with oral cancers.*
 - 2) *To promote the cessation of the use of alcohol and tobacco products with a primary focus of meeting the needs of high-risk under-served populations.*
- (B) *The programs developed and implemented under this section shall address:*
- 1) *The risk factors that lead to oral cancer.*
 - 2) *The signs and symptoms of oral cancer.*
 - 3) *The high-risk behaviors that may lead to oral cancer.*
 - 4) *The accessibility of screening to detect oral cancer.*
- The State Dental Director and OHP are active members of the State Cancer Coalition, Mountains of Hope. The Program works collaboratively with the Coalition, as well as DHHR's Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Program, to address education about prevention of oral cancers related to HPV.

Recommendations

1. Expand scope of practice for dental health professionals during a local, state, or national emergency.
2. Include licensed dental health professionals as providers of telehealth services in insurance plans.
3. Expand access to operating room time for dental procedures through ambulatory surgery centers.