

REPORT TO THE TWENTY-FOURTH LEGISTURE

STATE OF HAWAII

2007

**PURSUANT TO SECTION 321-63
HAWAII REVISED STATUTES REQUIRING
THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO
SUBMIT AN ANNUAL REPORT ON
DENTAL HEALTH ACTIVITIES,
EXPENDITURES, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**PREPARED BY:
STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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2006 ANNUAL REPORT DENTAL HEALTH DIVISION

Executive Summary

The Dental Health Division is the sole dental public health agency in the state. National Oral Health Report Cards have given Hawaii among the highest grades, with Hawaii ranking among the top in the nation. This recognition is a testament to the hard work of public and private sectors working together to improve oral health in our community. While Hawaii has done well on such national scales, such reports have not considered the problems we continue to face with tooth decay rates in early childhood which far exceed those found on the U.S. mainland. Dental caries, the most prevalent disease affecting children, puts children at risk for potentially life-threatening infection. We continue to have high rates of tooth decay which is costly for families with children. Moreover, it affects our taxpayers who support programs like Medicaid that pay for dental care for about 18 percent of Hawaii residents.

The Department of Health initiated the development of a statewide strategic oral health plan with the support of a variety of private sector organizations and State agencies, including the Departments of Human Services and Education. This plan will address disease prevention and access to basic dental care and is expected to lay the groundwork for community oral health activities for the coming decade.

Program Objectives:

To promote oral health and reduce the incidence and severity of problems associated with oral diseases and abnormalities through preventive programs targeting young children and treatment programs targeting persons with severe chronic disabilities, and by increasing public awareness and professional education.

Program Activities:

New methods of preventing and controlling dental diseases are evaluated, and if feasible, proposed for implementation as public health programming.

1) Dental care services

Dental care services are provided by program personnel to patients housed at Hawaii State institutions, including Hawaii State Hospital and Kalaupapa Settlement as well as to community-based clients at the Department's regional mental health centers. Treatment services are provided primarily to indigent, developmentally disabled, mentally ill and medically fragile Hawaii residents. Over the past three years, the Division treated an average of 2,240 needy individuals and performed over 15,200 dental procedures annually.

2). Prevention Activities

Training: Training is provided for caregivers, professional and para-professional personnel associated with long-term care and oral health and hygiene for disabled persons. This training is required annually for staff providing care for persons in State licensed facilities. Patients housed at State institutions also receive periodic dental examinations and treatment as required.

Education: During FY06, the program had direct contact with over 40,000 school children. Classroom instruction on oral health care by trained staff is available through this program. Assistance is provided to teachers with curriculum development on dental health. The general public is provided with information on various dental health subjects through a variety of oral disease prevention programs.

Topical fluoride applications: Children in selected grades are given the opportunity to receive topical fluoride applications to reduce the incidence and severity of tooth decay. 8,000

children received the topical fluoride application in the last fiscal year.

Oral health screening: Public school children in grades K – 12 are screened for dental problems and appropriate referrals are made.

Fluoride mouth rinse program: Fluoride mouth rinse programs have been implemented in selected schools, targeting schools underserved by the Dental Hygiene Branch due to staffing limitations. This program was created through a partnership of personnel from the Dental Hygiene Branch and volunteers from the school community, including school administrators, teachers and parents.

Program staff work with other State and private agency personnel in the coordination of programming designed to enhance community dental health, including Honolulu Community Action Program, Hawaii Head Start Association, Healthy Start, WIC, University of Hawaii School of Nursing & Dental Hygiene, John A. Burns School of Medicine Maternal and Child Health Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities Project (MCH LEND), The Queen's Medical Center General Practice Dental Residency Program, Clinical Research Center, Hawaii Dental Education Center, Kapiolani Community College Dental Assisting Program, Life Foundation, Pacific Basin Dental Association, Hawaii Dental Association, Papa Ola Lokahi, Hawaii Special Olympics, Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, Department of Corrections and the Department of Human Services. The program has a direct interface with the Med-QUEST Division of the Department of Human Services. Direct involvement includes policy development, program administration, systems research, monitoring and evaluation and clinical case referral and coordination.

Plans to Meet Its Objectives:

The Dental Hygiene Branch has established partnerships with other Department of Health programs that assist in funding activities that the Branch would not be able to accomplish with its current funding level. With these partnerships the Branch will continue to be able to provide dental hygiene programs to every neighbor island in selected schools and grades.

The Division Administration and the Hospital & Community Dental Services Branch (HCDSB) will be able to fulfill the clinical objectives and the interface with Med-Quest Division of the Department of Human Services. Through policy development and program administration, clinical oral health services will be provided to many of the most needy and vulnerable in our community. Currently, the Division provides direct clinical services to this population on Oahu and Kalaupapa, Molokai. The Division lacks the capacity to provide direct clinical services on other islands. Critical problems requiring surgical intervention are addressed by transporting clients at Medicaid program expense to Honolulu for treatment by Division personnel or at The Queen's Medical Center Dental Residency Program for hospital-based dental services.

Program Performance:

In the past few years, program administrators needed to take a more critical and conservative view of opportunities made available at each public elementary school, because needs outweighed the capacity of existing staff. Programs are designed for each school's need. Other programs within the Department of Health that have mandated oral health initiatives, including the Maternal & Child Health Branch, WIC and Hawaii State Hospital, have collaborated with the Dental Hygiene Branch to be in compliance with their program requirements and performance standards.

The HCDSB was integral in planning and developing Hawaii State Hospital's Oral Health Policy and Procedure. Because of the HCDSB's ongoing comprehensive dental care in the State operated clinics and the Dental Hygiene Branch's oral health education, Hawaii State Hospital fulfilled all Joint Commission Accreditation for Healthcare Organization (JCAHO) standards that addressed

dental care, oral health and oral health education for the patients and, in fact, was praised for having “the best dental program” some site reviewers had ever seen.

Many medically indigent and categorically mentally and developmentally disabled Hawaii residents have difficulty accessing dental care through private sector providers. They continue to receive preventive, restorative, prosthodontic, endodontic and oral surgery dental care from Branch dental staff at State-operated dental clinics located in regional mental health centers on Oahu.

The HCDSB Program Manager led a collaboration with Special Olympics Hawaii involving private sector dentists and dental hygienists, student dental assistants and hygienists from Kapiolani Community College and UH Manoa's Dental Hygiene School, and attending staff and residents from The Queen's Medical Center Dental Residency Program. The Branch was involved with the Special Smiles program that screened and provided oral health education to hundreds of special needs adult and youth athletes. Referrals were made to appropriate providers and State dental clinics. The Program Manager is actively involved with the Board of Dental Examiners, The Queen's Medical Center Dental Residency Program and is a consultant to various Hawaii and western Pacific jurisdiction Head Start and oral health programs.

Since August 1994, the administrator of the Dental Health Division has also served as the dental consultant to the Med-QUEST Division of the Department of Human Services. This formal dual responsibility has benefited the State significantly by blending the areas of public health practice and public assistance policy development and oversight. Responsibilities as the Medicaid Dental Consultant include program performance monitoring, systems research, policy and procedure development and implementation, claims adjustment and clinical case management. The collaboration between the Dental Health Division (DOH) and the Med-QUEST Division (DHS) has resulted in a consistent stream of dental referrals of patients without access to private sector care, which is handled efficiently and to the benefit of both the State administration and the community. The Division is presently collaborating with the John A. Burns School of Medicine and Clinical Research Center on the development of an oral health disparities clinical research center in Hawaii. This is occurring with the financial support of a research grant awarded by the National Institute of Dental & Craniofacial Research.

Problems and Issues Encountered by the Program:

Access to dental services

Medicaid recipients, other low income residents and medically compromised individuals have limited access to dental care from the private sector dental care providers. Patients are referred to this program by other state and federal government public health and social service agencies and private sector health care providers for dental treatment. Presently, the Department does not operate dental clinics on the neighbor islands and access to even emergency dental care (to relieve pain and infection) is limited. This is particularly true on the Big Island and Maui. The capacity of Hawaii's system of community health center dental clinics is limited and they have particular difficulty addressing the needs of young children and persons with complex disabilities. While a variety of community surveys have shown that dental insurance coverage and utilization of care rates are relatively high statewide, there is definitely a need for additional pediatric dental specialists and dentists trained and willing to provide routine care for adults with complex disabilities.

Program Recommendations:

The Division will continue to work and collaborate with the private sector providers by making them aware of the problems faced by the uninsured and under-insured population in accessing dental treatment services.

The Division is pursuing potential remedies through the Department and the Departments of Finance and Human Resource Development.

Expenditures for FY 2006

(pos'n ct.)	(25.00)
Personal Services	1,135,129
Other Current Expenses	<u>652,793</u>
TOTAL	(25.00)
General Fund	1,787,922

Expenditure information from July 1, 2005, as of June 30, 2006.