

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

UPDATE ON ORAL HEALTH SERVICES

**Presented to
Governor Bill Haslam
and
Tennessee Dental Association**

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Commissioner**

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I

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The mission of the Department of Health is to protect, promote, and improve the health and prosperity of people in Tennessee. In advancement of this goal, the Department's Oral Health Services Section (OHS) operates on the fundamental principles, of preventing and controlling oral diseases through organized community efforts. This information is a synopsis of the results of following those principles, in support of that mission, during Fiscal Year 2014. The Fiscal Year 2014 expenditure for Tennessee Department of Health dental programs was \$14,671,181 and is broken down by program below.

Key Service Deliveries Fiscal Year 14

Oral Disease Prevention—Cavity Free in Tennessee

- An expenditure of \$81,221 (calculations based on an average of \$4.91 per application) provided 16,542 at risk children with oral health screenings, referrals, and fluoride varnish applications by Public Health Nurses in Tennessee Department of Health medical clinics.

Public Health Dental Clinical Facilities

- A expenditure of \$7,351,167 provided 16,607 children with 27,123 dental visits and 6,252 adults with 11,339 visits to the 42 staffed Department of Health rural dental clinics. A total of 22,859 individuals made more than 38,462 patient visits receiving more than 155,069 dental services (113,431 to children) at an average cost of \$47.41 per service.

School-Based Dental Prevention Project (SBDPP)

- A expenditure of \$6,552,018 provided more than 118,590 at risk children with dental screenings, 12,265 dental exams, and 179,107 with oral health education, and 41,213 received 224,665 sealants in 357 schools at an average cost of \$29.16 per sealant.

Dental Funding Initiatives

- A expenditure of \$539,460 provided 17,982 dental extractions at \$30 per extraction through 17 grants awarded by the Department for emergency dental services for adults¹

¹ Statement of compliance with 2012 Tenn. Pub. Acts, ch. 1061 (the "Eligibility Verification for Entitlements Act" as required by Tenn. Code Ann. § 4-57-106(b)). The Tennessee Department of Health, including local health departments, boards and commissions, has implemented protocols and policies to verify that every adult applicant for "public benefits" is an United States citizen or a "qualified alien," within the meaning of Chapter 1061.

Distribution of Information

- The Department of Health distributed traditional paper literature covering a broad range of oral health information to other agencies and the general public. The Department has an Oral Health Services website to provide information to public health professionals, parents, community leaders, and the general public.

II

INTRODUCTION

This report is provided in response to Tennessee Code Annotated 68-1-303(b), which requires the Commissioner of Health, to provide an annual report to the Governor and the Tennessee State Dental Association (TDA) on the work done by and under the Commissioner in regards to distribution of literature throughout the state to inform the population of the “proper way to care for teeth”.

The mission of the Department of Health is to protect, promote, and improve the health and prosperity of people in Tennessee. In advancement of this goal, the Department’s Oral Health Services Section (OHS) operates on the fundamental principles of preventing and controlling oral diseases through organized community efforts. Statewide school-based dental programs continue to offer high-risk populations preventive services to include sealants, oral health education, and screenings to identify children with unmet dental needs, referrals for these children, and follow-up on those children with urgent needs. Comprehensive dental services for children and emergency dental care to adults, unable to access care in the private system, are provided in fixed facilities located in rural health departments statewide. In an effort to improve access to dental services for high risk children in underserved areas, the Tennessee Department of Health partners with local school systems to offer a School Transport Program. The local school system transports target population children to local health department dental clinics, which provide comprehensive dental services. Currently the Department operates one mobile dental clinic which provides comprehensive care at local health departments without a dental clinic.

Summary of Dental Services

Program	Number Served	Number of Services
Cavity Free in Tennessee Fluoride Varnish Program	16,542	16,542
Public Health Rural Dental Clinical Program	22,859 (16,607 to children)	155,069 (113,431to children)
School Based Dental Prevention Program (Sealants)	41,213 (children)	224,665 (teeth sealed)
Dental Funding Initiatives	7,697	17,982
Total	88,311	414,258

III

ORAL HEALTH

A. Oral Disease Prevention

Fluoride Varnish Initiative

Tennessee Code Annotated 63-5-109(14) allows registered nurses and nurse practitioners to apply fluoride varnish to at risk underserved persons in public health clinics.

The Oral Health Services Section continues to conduct programs such as **Cavity Free in Tennessee**. This program targets children 0-5 years of age being seen in health department medical clinics for preventive dental services. Nursing staff screen these children and refer them to dental providers in addition to applying fluoride varnish.

During Fiscal Year 2014, 16,542 (12,261 were children 0-5 years of age) at risk children were screened, referred, and had fluoride varnish applied by nursing staff in Tennessee Department of Health medical clinics.

B. Dental Services

1. *Public Health Dental Clinical Facilities*

The Department of Health offers comprehensive dental services to children and emergency care to adults on a sliding fee scale according to income. Dental services are available at the 42 staffed local health department clinics located in rural counties and one regional office across the state. Dental services are typically offered from 1 to 5 days per week. During the Fiscal Year 2014, 16,607 children made 27,123 visits to Department of Health rural dental clinics and 6,252 adults made 11,339 visits. In total during Fiscal Year 2014, 22,859 individuals made 38,462 patient visits receiving 155,069 dental services in the Department of Health rural dental clinics.

2. *School-Based Dental Prevention Project (SBDPP)*

This program is a statewide comprehensive preventive program involving dental screenings, referrals and follow-up for dental care, oral hygiene education, and sealants. SBDPP targets children in grades K-8 in schools with 50% or more free and reduced lunch programs. During Fiscal Year 2014, 118,590 children received dental screenings, 12,265 had dental evaluations, 179,107 received oral health education, and 224,665 sealants were placed on 41,213 children in 357 schools. During Fiscal Year 2014 the School Based Dental staff referred 1,432 high priority children with unmet dental needs for follow-up, of which 633 direct contacts were made by Primary Prevention Impact Services.

3. *Dental Transport Programs*

In an effort to improve access to dental services for high risk children in underserved areas, the Tennessee Department of Health partners with local school systems to offer a School Transport Program. The local school system transports target population children to local health department dental clinics, which provide comprehensive dental service. Currently the Department operates one Mobile Dental Clinic which provides comprehensive care at local health departments without a dental clinic. During Fiscal Year 2014 the School Transport Program and the Mobile Dental Clinic provided dental services to 2,381 patients.

4. *Dental Funding Initiatives*

In Fiscal Year 2014, the Department awarded 17 grants for emergency dental services for adults¹ and under these grants 17,982 dental extractions were performed.

5. *Distribution of Information*

The Department of Health's website includes an Oral Health Services site that provides a broad range of information to public health professionals, parents, community leaders, and the general public. The web site address for Oral Health Services is <http://health.state.tn.us/oralhealth/index.html>.

Staff in all of the Department's dental programs distributes literature and educational information to individuals served. This information addresses a wide variety of preventive dental topics such as the importance of oral health and proper oral hygiene techniques. Requests for oral health information from agencies and the public are addressed by staff at the local, regional and central office level.

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