Elder Smiles
Johnson County, Kansas

Program Overview

The goal of Elder Smiles was to improve the oral health of older adults living in long-term care facilities by providing preventive oral health care, referrals for restorative care, and dental homes for ongoing care. For older adults without a dental home, Elder Smiles provided the participant with a dental home in the community or a volunteer dentist that served the facility. The Johnson County Health Department (JCHD) administered the program.

Program History and Development

Elder Smiles started in 2004 after JCHD conducted a survey of all adult care facilities in the county to determine the need for on-site dental services. Eleven adult care facilities, accounting for 40 percent of the total adult care beds in Johnson County, stated that they were interested in bringing on-site oral health services to their residents. With support from initial grant funding, the Elder Smiles program began with two long-term care facilities and grew steadily to enroll 19 facilities.

Program Sustainability

- Elder Smiles was self-sustaining from private pay and Medicaid reimbursements. The cost of a routine dental cleaning was $50.
- JCHD program staff members were responsible for the day-to-day management of the program.
- The REACH Healthcare Foundation provided the initial grant funding to start the program.

Program Impact

- From 2008-2012, Elder Smiles completed 516 visits to residents in long-term care facilities.
- Elder Smiles collected data on patient visits, existence of a family dentist, and numbers of referrals made.
- As of 2012, 444 individuals had received preventive dental services, 247 had received oral hygiene education, 305 had received fluoride varnish, 144 had received nutritional counseling, 13 had received dentures, and 57 individuals were referred to locations with more restorative care services.
- Participating providers advocated to dental schools to include geriatric dentistry in their training curriculum, based on the need found during this project.

Program Contact Information

Program Website: http://archived.naccho.org/topics/modelpractices/database/practice.cfm?practiceID=673
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### Program Features

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Service Delivery Model</th>
<th>Dental and Oral Health Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ 0-17 (Children and Youth)</td>
<td>☑ Dental clinic model (e.g. permanent setting)</td>
<td>☐ Emergency services</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐ 18-60 (Adult)</td>
<td>☑ Mobile-portable model</td>
<td>☑ Basic services</td>
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<tr>
<td>☒ 60+ (Older Adult)</td>
<td>☑ Eligibility and enrollment model (e.g. referrals, care coordination)</td>
<td>☐ Screenings</td>
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<td></td>
<td>☐ Virtual model (e.g. telehealth)</td>
<td>☐ Cleanings</td>
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<td>☐ Event-based model</td>
<td>☐ Fluoride varnish</td>
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<td>☐ Outreach and education model</td>
<td>☐ Sealants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Specific Populations**

- ☐ Homeless individuals
- ☐ Individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities
- ☐ Individuals with physical disabilities
- ☐ Individuals with specific or complex medical conditions
- ☐ Individuals with low income
- ☐ Individuals with no dental insurance
- ☐ Individuals with Medicaid
- ☐ Veterans
- ☐ Refugees/immigrants

**Geography**

- ☐ Rural
- ☒ Urban

**Service Delivery Setting**

- ☐ Hospital
- ☒ Dental school
- ☐ Community/safety net clinic
- ☐ Private dental office
- ☒ Long-term care facility
- ☐ Senior center/community center
- ☐ Private residence
- ☐ Fairgrounds/stadium/parking lot
- ☐ Church
- ☐ School
- ☐ Homeless shelter
- ☐ Public housing

**Staffing**

- ☒ Dentist
- ☒ Dental hygienist
- ☐ Dental therapist
- ☐ Dental assistant
- ☐ Dental/dental hygiene students
- ☐ Nursing staff
- ☐ Community health workers
- ☐ Non-dental clinical staff
- ☐ Non-clinical staff

**Payment for Care**

- ☒ Medicaid
- ☐ No charge to client
- ☐ Sliding fee scale
- ☑ Out of pocket
- ☐ Commercial dental insurance

**Dental and Oral Health Services**

- ☐ Emergency services
- ☐ Basic services
- ☑ Screenings
- ☑ Cleanings
- ☐ Fluoride varnish
- ☐ Sealants
- ☑ X-rays
- ☐ Comprehensive services
- ☐ Fillings
- ☐ Scaling/root planing
- ☐ Extractions
- ☐ Oral surgery
- ☐ Root canals
- ☐ Dentures, partials, relines, repairs
- ☐ Crowns
- ☐ Bridges
- ☐ Orthodontics

**Other Program Services**

- ☒ Referrals to dental and oral health services
- ☐ Care coordination/care management
- ☐ Patient education
- ☐ Caregiver education
- ☐ Provider education
- ☐ Advocacy/coalition

**Program Funding**

- ☒ Foundation/organization grant
- ☐ Public funding (e.g. local, state, federal)
- ☐ Private donations (e.g. individuals, businesses)

**Integration with Services**

- ☐ Medical services
- ☐ Behavioral health services
- ☐ Vision services
- ☐ Pharmacy services
- ☐ Transportation services
- ☐ Translation services
- ☒ Nutrition services

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This profile was prepared using publicly available information. Date of last update: March 2016