



Program for Refugee Oral Health Boston, Massachusetts

Program Overview

The Program for Refugee Oral Health aims to increase oral health literacy and access to dental services among refugees and asylum seekers resettled in Massachusetts regardless of their legal status. The program provides free screenings, referrals for urgent and preventive care, culturally appropriate oral health education, and training for medical practitioners. It focuses on incorporating culturally sensitive oral health screening into medical examinations to increase an individual's comfort level with dental care.

Program History and Development



EXCEPTIONAL CARE. WITHOUT EXCEPTION.

At the Boston Center for Refugee Health and Human Rights, an outpatient clinic that is part of the Boston Medical Center, there was a concern that some individuals had not received dental services or had experienced direct trauma to the oral cavity as a result of torture. The Program for Refugee Oral Health was established in 2001 to address the needs of refugees and asylum seekers, and in particular, survivors of torture. The program also provides culturally sensitive educational training sessions for providers that provide medical care for new refugees in Massachusetts.

After an initial assessment, the program matches individuals with an appropriate dental provider from an updated list of partner clinics to receive additional care as needed. Most partner sites either accept Medicaid or offer services free of charge.

Program Sustainability

- The Program for Refugee Oral Health receives funding from the Office of Refugee Resettlement and the Raymond J. and Mary C. Reisert Foundation.
- The program is staffed by one part-time dentist.
- The annual operating expenses of the program are \$40,000 per year.
- Delta Dental of Massachusetts provided initial funding for the program in 2001.

Program Impact

- Post-implementation data on the oral health status of individuals at the time of the initial screening and the use of clinic services suggest that the program is enhancing access to needed dental care and education in a population that has significant dental care needs and no other means of accessing services.
- As of 2014, this program had provided dental care services and oral health education to approximately 360 refugees and asylum seekers.

Program Contact Information

Program Website: <https://innovations.ahrq.gov/profiles/oral-health-program-enhances-access-culturally-sensitive-dental-care-refugees-and-asylum>



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Program Features

Note: A checked box below indicates an existing program feature.

Age	Service Delivery Model	Dental and Oral Health Services
<input type="checkbox"/> 0-17 (Children and Youth) <input type="checkbox"/> 18-60 (Adult) <input type="checkbox"/> 60+ (Older Adult)	<input type="checkbox"/> Dental clinic model (e.g. permanent setting) <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile-portable model <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eligibility and enrollment model (e.g. referrals, care coordination) <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual model (e.g. telehealth) <input type="checkbox"/> Event-based model <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Outreach and education model	<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Basic services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Screenings <input type="checkbox"/> Cleanings <input type="checkbox"/> Fluoride varnish <input type="checkbox"/> Sealants <input type="checkbox"/> X-rays <input type="checkbox"/> Comprehensive services <input type="checkbox"/> Fillings <input type="checkbox"/> Scaling/root planing <input type="checkbox"/> Extractions <input type="checkbox"/> Oral surgery <input type="checkbox"/> Root canals <input type="checkbox"/> Dentures, partials, relines, repairs <input type="checkbox"/> Crowns <input type="checkbox"/> Bridges <input type="checkbox"/> Orthodontics
Specific Populations	Staffing	Other Program Services
<input type="checkbox"/> Homeless individuals <input type="checkbox"/> Individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities <input type="checkbox"/> Individuals with physical disabilities <input type="checkbox"/> Individuals with specific or complex medical conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Individuals with low income <input type="checkbox"/> Individuals with no dental insurance <input type="checkbox"/> Individuals with Medicaid <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Refugees/immigrants	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dentist <input type="checkbox"/> Dental hygienist <input type="checkbox"/> Dental therapist <input type="checkbox"/> Dental assistant <input type="checkbox"/> Dental/dental hygiene students <input type="checkbox"/> Nursing staff <input type="checkbox"/> Community health workers <input type="checkbox"/> Non-dental clinical staff <input type="checkbox"/> Non-clinical staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Referrals to dental and oral health services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Care coordination/ care management <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Patient education <input type="checkbox"/> Caregiver education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Provider education <input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy/coalition
Geography	Payment for Care	Integration with Services
<input type="checkbox"/> Rural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicaid <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No charge to client <input type="checkbox"/> Sliding fee scale <input type="checkbox"/> Out of pocket <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial dental insurance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical services <input type="checkbox"/> Behavioral health services <input type="checkbox"/> Vision services <input type="checkbox"/> Pharmacy services <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Translation services <input type="checkbox"/> Nutrition services
Service Delivery Setting	Program Funding	
<input type="checkbox"/> Hospital <input type="checkbox"/> Dental school <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community/safety net clinic <input type="checkbox"/> Private dental office <input type="checkbox"/> Long-term care facility <input type="checkbox"/> Senior center/community center <input type="checkbox"/> Private residence <input type="checkbox"/> Fairgrounds/stadium/parking lot <input type="checkbox"/> Church <input type="checkbox"/> School <input type="checkbox"/> Homeless shelter <input type="checkbox"/> Public housing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Foundation/ organization grant <input type="checkbox"/> Public funding (e.g. local, state, federal) <input type="checkbox"/> Private donations (e.g. individuals, businesses)	

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