Best Practices in Reaching Out to Underserved Populations

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High Risk Community

Low Income

Only ONE public water system is fluoridated

Low Health Literacy
Our Educational Focus

Clinical skills
Critical thinking skills

But WHERE and HOW do students “Learn” -

Compassion
Effective communication skills

Education

Faculty must model qualities like compassion

Community Service-Learning can provide a venue for students to practice and obtain these qualities and skills.
June 2014

**Education**

Caries is:
- **Preventable**
- Is the most common childhood illness
- Continues to affect children in low-income communities

*Photos: Attribution for the images*

**Education**

*Photos taken by DH student at Perryville clinic*

**Barriers to Oral Health in Cecil County**

Over 47% of CC children are eligible for free or reduced lunch programs

18% of children in CC < 5 yrs of age live at or below the poverty level

There are 3425 people to every dentist

**Transportation**
Education


49% of children in Cecil County enrolled in Medicaid did not receive dental care in 2012.


Education

• Emergency Department fees for dental related visits totaled $2.7 billion in the US between 2008-2010.

• Uninsured patients make up 40.5% of all dental condition-related ED visits.


Education

Maryland 2010

• Average $500/visit/>40,000 visits
• Nearly $24 million
• Tax Payers
Costs of Oral Health Inequities

- Low self esteem
- Poor school and work performance
- Lost time from school and work

Dental Hygienists, whose primary focus is prevention can and must play a role in helping individuals in low income communities increase their understanding of caries prevention strategies.

Health Literacy

“Health Literacy is inextricably linked to improving oral health... especially among low income groups”

Alice Horowitz, RDH, PhD
Oral Health Literacy

- the ability to obtain, process, and understand basic information and services needed to make appropriate oral health decisions.

Healthy People 2010

Oral Health Literacy is Dependent on the **Knowledge** of Consumers and Providers

Patients with limited or inaccurate knowledge

Providers who do not keep current with science-based info. cannot provide accurate information

Health Literacy is Dependent on the **Communication** Skills of Consumers and Providers

Communication skills include: reading, writing, numeracy, speaking, listening and understanding

Alice Horowitz, RDH, PhD
**Education**

“Professional schools in health related fields, including Dentistry should incorporate health literacy and communication training into their curricula and areas of competence.”

**Key Communication Techniques**

- Warm Greeting, respectful
- Eye Contact
- Speak Slowly
- Limit number of concepts presented
- Patient Participation
- Plain Language
- Use Graphics When Explaining
- Use Teach-Back

**Research**

RDH's and dentists could increase their knowledge and understanding about evidence-based caries prevention.

RDH's and dentists need to increase their use of communication techniques to deliver caries prevention recommendations, especially with specific patient populations.
Cecil County Oral Disease Prevention Program

Partnerships

Eliminating Barriers

Transportation

Financial
Goals

- The number of children with a dental home.
- The oral health literacy of children and their caregivers regarding caries disease prevention strategies.
- Evaluate DH students’ and caregivers’ understanding of caries prevention strategies and ID effective communication techniques to transfer science-based information to low-income caregivers and their children.

Flyer

FREE Dental Screenings

WHO: Infants – 12 year olds
WHEN: May 3, 2014
TIME: 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
WHERE: Kado Park Community Room 101 Kado Park Rd. Edgewood, MD

Toothbrushes
Toothpaste
Fluoride Treatments

For details, call: Nancy Crawford 410-328-5618

Consent Forms
** Photo Releases
Study Surveys
Oral Health Screening

- Routine
- Early
- Urgent

Caries disease process
White spots
Fluorides
Sealants
Plaque control
Nutritional counseling
Oral Systemic link

Can be arrested

Must be restored
June 2014

Visuals


Teach Back

Fluoride Varnish
Follow-up/Case Management

Calls
Letters
Reports to Department of Social Services (DSS)

Results so far...

Research:
32 Students
49 Caregivers

Stay tuned.............
Results so far..

Service:
137 Children received prevention services
116 or 85% have a Dental Home

• 89 Routine
• 29 Early 35%
• 19 Urgent

Results so far..

Education
• A health literacy & communication competency has been added to our clinical evaluations.
• Our Community service - learning course has been enhanced.
• An IPE component is being added to the program.

Inspiration

Junior student
“**This heart warming program reinforced classroom material with real life experiences. These rewarding opportunities have been life changing moments for me as I learned to look at things with a different perspective and it made me respect and love the profession of dental hygiene even more.**”

2014 Grad
“I really enjoyed helping out at the last event. If you ever need help, I am available. You have really inspired me! The experience brought a whole new meaning to empathy, thank you Ms. Bress!”