

WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY AND HOME-BASED ORAL HEALTHCARE PILOT?



Functionally dependent older adults are seeking care outside of traditional long-term care settings such as nursing homes. Home and community-based services (HCBS) can meet patients where they are and provide care in non-traditional settings, including the home. This is an opportunity for dentistry to expand and establish a standard of oral care within HCBS settings. This pilot will continue the core overall health goal of bridging the gap between medical and dental services.

- Providing Preventive Care in Community Settings: Reach those with barriers to good oral health where they are.
- Professional Development and Staff Retention:
 - Support additional training of skilled hygienists identified by dentists interested in providing care in public health settings.
 - Public health dental hygienists (PHDH) participate in a learning collaborative to provide resources and skills needed to successfully provide preventive oral services in a public health setting.
 - Provide job growth opportunities for hygienists and future dental professionals to treat patients in public health settings.
- Broaden the Patient Reach of Dental Providers:
 - Patient Outreach: Expand the dental practice population without using chair time, by utilizing PHDHs in public health settings. Allow dentists to work at the top of their training.
 - Advances in Tele-dentistry: Use of electronic communication and mobile dentistry technology to provide and support dental care delivery in different settings to create efficiencies of care both on-site, and if needed, in the dental office.
- Establish New Lines of Business: In addition to increased adult Medicaid rates comparable to neighboring states, pilot participants will be incentivized to see patients with needs beyond what can be provided in the home. Home-based oral care model can exist beyond the pilot and supplement current dental clinic funds.
- Bridge Medical-Dental Gap in Healthcare: Train traditional HCBS providers to perform oral health risk assessment, screening, and daily mouth care. Support integration of an oral care plan within HCBS agencies' medical care plan and EMR.
- Prevention and Oral Health Literacy: Educate HCBS patients on the importance of oral care and how it affects their overall health and quality of life.

WHY IS THIS PILOT NEEDED?

As adults transition from receiving care in a nursing home to their own home, it is important to ensure those standards of care transition with them. This is an opportunity to bring daily oral care and consistent preventive oral health services to these homebound individuals. Oral health is a long-standing area of health inequity in our state, and this is an innovative care model to address a growing gap in care.



- From 2004 to 2014 the population of people aged 65 and older **increased by 28.3%**, however the number of people in this age group living in a nursing home **decreased by 11.7%**.^{1,2} People are living longer and choosing home and community-based services over a nursing home.
- Disparities in oral health outcomes continue to grow as patients with the greatest need experience the greatest barriers to care. **About 20%** of Rhode Island dentists accept Medicaid (children and adults), resulting in **only 15% of adults** with Medicaid receiving preventive services.
- Individuals unable to access a dentist seek treatment from emergency departments (ED) ill-equipped to address oral health concerns. In 2019, over 5,000 people presented to an ED with untreated dental pain and infection. This **equates to over 14 people per day**, and over half of these patients are Medicaid Beneficiaries. These ED visits for dental emergencies **cost around \$18,000,000 per year**.

¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Health, United States, 2016: With Chartbook on Long-term Trends in Health. (2017)

² U.S. Census Bureau. Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2004 and 2014.

WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM THIS PILOT?

The Oral Health in HCBS Pilot is designed for all Rhode Island adults to achieve optimum oral health now and in the future. Improving services is needed for families particularly in the BIPOC community, those with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and adults with chronic illness.

- Increase access to preventive oral care services for homebound adults by removing barriers and meeting them where they are.
- Provide training and integrate an oral care plan for home and community-based providers.
- Expand the practice patient population for dentists without requiring space within the clinic, and receive workforce supports to ensure success.



WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE FOR THIS PILOT?

Increase equitable access resulting in improved oral health outcomes for all.

- Establish an oral healthcare model within HCBS agencies.
- Increase the number of HCBS patients receiving preventive oral care services.
- Increase HCBS workforce oral health literacy and ability to aid with daily oral care tasks.
- Increase the number of dental providers engaging with adult Medicaid clients.
- Reduction in emergency room visits for preventable dental conditions.



HOW DOES THIS PILOT ALIGN WITH EOHHS' STRATEGIC PRIORITIES?

PRIORITY 2: Promote continuums of care that deliver efficient, effective, and equitable services across the life course.



1. Educate home and community-based services providers on the effects of oral health on overall health and close the gap between the medical and dental care patients receive.
2. Provide daily oral care to homebound adults receiving care from home and community-based services agencies.
3. Utilize the skill set of public health dental hygienists to provide preventive dental services to patients outside of a dental clinic.

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS PILOT AND GET INVOLVED?

To learn more about this pilot, please visit: <https://eohhs.ri.gov/providers-partners/dental-services>

- EOHHS has created a resource page for dentists and dental providers, including information about new the Oral Health Transformation Initiative, increased adult Medicaid reimbursement rates, and resources for practice success.
- Please contact EOHHS staff member Sophie Asah at sophie.asah.ctr@ohhs.ri.gov.



OUR CORE VALUES

VOICE

CHOICE

EQUITY