Philanthropy and Oral Health: Roles in Dental Workforce Development

Len Finocchio, Dr.P.H.
Senior Program Officer
California HealthCare Foundation
California HealthCare Foundation

- Independent philanthropy committed to improving the way health care is delivered and financed in California

- Three strategic areas of work:
  - Market and Policy Monitor
  - Better Chronic Disease Care
  - Innovations for the Underserved
Philanthropic Tools

• Fund direct services
• Build capacity for service delivery
• Commission research
• Inform policy making
• Communicate and advocate
• Convene, consensus building
• Catalyze & spread innovations
Improving Oral Health

- Drinking water fluoridation
- Oral health literacy
- Medicaid/CHIP expansions
- Delivery system capacity
  - Clinics, operatories, dental public health
- Workforce development
  - More in the pipeline, diversity of providers
  - Expanding providers with dental expertise
  - Incentives & programs in underserved areas
CHCF Strategies to Improve Oral Health

1. Research and illuminate access, capacity and policy challenges

2. Inform policy makers to facilitate decision making & optimize public resource use

3. Explore & promote innovative models that address challenges
Philanthropy and Workforce Development

• Commission research
  – Define research questions
  – Support data collection & analysis

• Agenda development & consensus building

• Inform policy making
  – For legislators, educators, providers

• Strategic funding & leverage
Workforce Research

Supply

- Number
- Composition by type
- Demographics
- Location
- Skill set, productivity, regulation
- Pipeline/training

*Benchmark where possible (e.g. - per 100,000)*
Demand

- Need
- Utilization
- Unmet need
- Identify disparities

*Benchmark where possible (e.g. – preventive visits per year)*
Supply-side Solutions

- Train more providers
  - Existing
  - Create new categories
- Expand scope of current providers
- Increase productivity
  - Clinical efficiencies
- Expand dental expertise of medical providers
Demand-side Solutions

- Improve oral health literacy
- Better self care
- Improve dental public health
- Routine preventive visits
- Expand insurance coverage
Addressing Unmet Need

• Prioritizing populations in need

• Assessing solutions:
  – Cost-benefit
  – Available resources
  – Programmatic hurdles
  – Political and policy hurdles
  – Timeframe
Other Considerations

• Philanthropies seek to:
  – Catalyze innovation
  – Leverage existing resources
  – Make long-term systemic change
  – Address policy barriers
  – Make solutions sustainable without on-going philanthropic support