

LOCAL Dental Public Health Infrastructure: A Voice from the Field

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How did I get into this?

- Define “this”
- Infrastructure as a requirement for ongoing, sustainable, systems-changing approaches within local programs to ultimately affect change in oral health status

Personal Story

- Value of Infrastructure
- Do others in local health department programs feel as I do?
- Do we commit to working together?
- Do we think about mobilizing and making more of an effort to enhance and expand our experiences together?
- Do we look to our state and national leaders and ask them to help enhance the relationship between state and local oral health offices and programs?

Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors

- Ad Hoc Group was formed to accomplish an agenda that will serve the larger purpose in many areas of dental public health
- Ad Hoc Group on Local Programs
 - Review the current information
 - Identify the benefits
 - Identify what is missing
 - Make recommendations to the ASTDD Best Practices Committee
 - Make additional recommendations to address needs

Binding Ties of the Ad Hoc Group

- State Directors; Local Directors; long term Directors, new Directors.
- Variances in the level of infrastructure balanced by the similarities in approaches to getting our jobs done.
- Stories out there? Things we can all learn together? Shared points of view; recognize differences; recognize likenesses; recognize strengths and recognize differences. How do we capitalize on this diversity of experiences??
- Other End Users? State Directors and their importance to all of us; Local Directors (and their programs) and their importance to the State Directors. (oft times hear that “rubber meets the road” analogy)

Views from the Ad Hoc Group

- We are all in this together
- Oral health efforts are strongest when there are excellent local connections
- Size matters
- Local programs funding include multiple streams
- Local programs personnel differ
- Strong local capacity will result in strengthening our organizations/programs and ultimately, improving oral health

Another way to say it.....

- Issues to reflect upon
- Certain needs of locals
- Can't do this alone
- Find opportunities to come together
- Move the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Local Programs through the ranks

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- Share our findings/final report with the EC
- Continue the work begun by the Ad Hoc in another committee within ASTDD or an organization whose infrastructure would allow for continuation of this work
- Build better communication with local oral health programs
- Build better infrastructure at a local program level
- Disseminate our findings/information so the efforts to find answers for the local folks continues to draw others into our project

In closing.....from a personal perspective

- Much work still to be done
- Value of and *NEED* for local program infrastructure
- Value of and *NEED* for local program best practices
- Need for me to take my Boston experience, realistically analyze the outcome and *NOT* walk away from the issues

QUESTIONS?

