

Putting Workforce in Context: Attributes of an Ideal Oral Health Care System

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Objectives

- Discuss relationship between workforce and health care system
- Discuss role of workforce as contributor to oral health disparities
- Summarize principles of health, health care, and public health according to leading public health authorities
- Based on those principles, identify attributes of ideal oral health care system

Background

- IOM held Feb. 2009 conference, “Sufficiency of the Oral Health Workforce in the Coming Decade”; co-sponsored by HRSA, California HealthCare Foundation
- Addressed 3 key questions:
 1. What is the current status of access to oral health care services for the U.S. population?
 2. What workforce strategies hold promise to improve access to oral health care services?
 3. How can policy makers, state and federal governments, and oral health care providers and practitioners improve the regulations and structure of the oral health care system to improve access to oral health care services?

Workforce and Health Care System

- Discussion of oral health workforce cannot be separated from type of system
- Aspects of workforce -- education, licensure, distribution, financing -- must be considered within principles of system
- Workforce may have contributed to oral health disparities
- Workforce may be able to ameliorate some contributing factors to disparities

Workforce as Contributing Factor in Oral Health Disparities

- Under-representation of minorities
- Little diversity or cultural training in dental education
- Little focus by dentistry on environmental contributors to oral health disparities
- Nature of U.S. dental workforce results in high cost of care
- Low participation in govt.-funded programs
- Maldistribution of dentists
- Little research on reducing disparities

Hilton I, Lester A. Oral Health Disparities and the Workforce: A Framework to Guide Innovation. *J Public Health Dent* 2010.

Approach to Identifying Attributes of Ideal Oral Health

- Used public health orientation
- Examined policy statements & position papers of major public health organizations and initiatives:
 - World Health Organization
 - Institute of Medicine
 - American Public Health Association
 - Healthy People 2010
 - American Association of Public Health Dentistry
- Identified common principles
- Attributes of an ideal oral health care system should be consistent with those principles

World Health Organization

- Basic Principles in WHO Constitution (1948)
 - Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity
 - The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition
 - Governments have a responsibility for the health of their peoples which can be fulfilled only by the provision of adequate health and social measures

WHO Oral Health Action Plan (2007)

- Integrate oral health promotion and disease prevention into programs of chronic disease prevention and treatment
- Provide essential oral health care to pop'n
- Incorporate evidence-based approach to oral disease prevention and control
- Increase capacity to produce oral health personnel to work at primary care level, including dental hygienists and nurses

Institute of Medicine (IOM)

- Part of National Academy of Sciences
- IOM Charter (1970) includes:
 - “Rising expectations of better health and of improved quality of life for all members of our society now include **good health care as a universal human right** and as a goal of this society”
- First report on Oral Health (1980):
 - “**Americans have a substantial unmet need for dental care...At the same time, proven methods exist for preventing and reducing dental diseases**”
- Recommended inclusion of dental services in any national health insurance plan



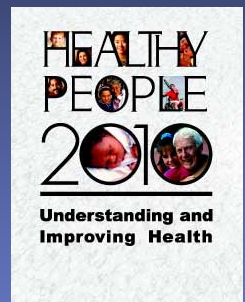
The Institute of Medicine's Five Key Principles on Health Insurance (1980)

1. Health care coverage should be universal.
2. Health care coverage should be continuous.
3. Health care coverage should be affordable to individuals and families.
4. The health insurance strategy should be affordable and sustainable for society.
5. Health insurance should enhance health and well-being by promoting access to high-quality care that is effective, efficient, safe, timely, patient centered, and equitable.



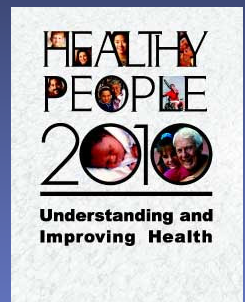
Healthy People 2010

- National objectives for health promotion and disease prevention
- Issued by USDHHS, but represents input of 100's of organizations, 1000's of people
- Two overarching goals:
 - Increase quality and years of healthy life
 - Eliminate health disparities



Healthy People 2010

- “Healthy People 2010 is firmly dedicated to the principle that—regardless of age, gender, race or ethnicity, income, education, geographic location, disability, and sexual orientation—**every person in every community across the Nation deserves equal access to comprehensive, culturally competent, community-based health care systems that are committed to serving the needs of the individual and promoting community health.**”



American Public Health Association

- World's largest, oldest, most diverse organization of public health professionals
- Numerous policies on oral health
- Has promoted universal coverage for health care since early 1990s
- Issued Agenda for Health Reform (2009)



APHA's 2009 Recommendations for Health Reform

- Support population-based services that improve health
 - Community-based prevention, outreach, education
 - Address underfunding of public health system
 - Account for cost savings of prevention
 - Develop/expand programs to reduce disparities
 - Show PH impact of federal policies & programs
 - Require annual “State of Nation’s Health”



APHA's 2009 Recommendations for Health Reform (2)

- Reform Health Care Coverage and Delivery
 - Comprehensive coverage for all
 - Strong public programs
 - Access to affordable high-quality care for all
 - First dollar support for evidence-based clinical preventive services
 - Expand public health and primary care workforce



AAPHD's 2009 Principles for Oral Health Within Health System Reform

- Any reform of health care system must include reform of oral health care system
- Primary goal of reform: optimal oral health for all & eliminate disparities
- High-quality affordable oral health services for all
- Adequately fund federal, state, & local public health programs for core functions
- Increased investment in evidence-based community prevention



AAPHD's 2009 Principles for Oral Health Within Health System Reform (2)

- Adequate resources devoted to training dental public health workforce
- Resources devoted to increase racial and ethnic diversity of oral health workforce
- Greater investment in research for oral disease prevention & service delivery
- Regulation & licensure of oral health personnel should allow most cost-effective use of oral health workforce



Attributes of an Ideal Oral Health Care System

- Integrated with rest of health care system
- Emphasis on health promotion & disease prevention
- Monitors population oral health status and needs
- Evidence-based
- Effective
- Cost-effective
- Sustainable
- Equitable
- Universal
- Comprehensive
- Continuous quality assessment & assurance
- Culturally competent
- Empowers individuals and communities

Where Are We?

- Some progress but long way to go
- Possible to achieve, but would require:
 - Trade-offs among cost, access, comprehensiveness, and political feasibility
 - Public demand
 - Political mandate and will of elected officials

Thank you!

