The Role of the State Oral Health Program in Policy Implementation and Stakeholder Advocacy

“From Oral Health Policy to Practice”

National Oral Health Conference
April 28, 2012

Dr. Harry Goodman, Director
Maryland Office of Oral Health
Domain 3: Inform Policies and Systems

- Use key informants and opinion leaders to assess public perceptions of oral health issues.
- Communicate with change agents that are capable of effecting policy or systems changes.
- Broaden the range of stakeholders who are engaged in policy development.
- Combine data and stories to create compelling arguments to influence policies.
ASTDD State Oral Health Program

Policy Competencies

□ Domain 3: Inform Policies and Systems

■ Develop comprehensive risk communication strategies for oral health issues

■ Apply historical perspective of the development, structure and interaction of public health and health care systems to current oral health policy issues

■ Use health economics and business concepts and language to describe the value of oral health programs
Domain 5: Manage Programs and Resources
- Implement public health laws, regulations and policies related to oral health programs

Domain 6: Use Public Health Science
- Use scientific evidence to inform program and policy decisions
Domain 7: Lead Strategically - State oral health programs create strategic vision, serve as a catalyst for change and demonstrate program accomplishments

- Oversee the development and implementation of a state oral health plan
- Translate policy into organizational plans, structures and programs
- Identify policy agendas for state oral health programs
Leading Strategically:
Challenges for the ASTDD State Oral Health Program
in Putting Policy into Practice

☐ Striking a balance while moving policy agenda forward
☐ Sustaining stakeholder advocacy on the policy agenda
☐ Maintaining stakeholder interest and momentum in policy implementation
Leading Strategically:
Striking a Balance While
Moving Policy Agenda Forward

- Implementation of the policy
  - Maintain momentum
  - Translate recommendations into action
  - Keeping everyone on task
  - Yet – having to strike a balance between what others (and maybe you) think is needed and what is feasible (what you may not be able to do - at least publicly - or want to do)
    - Political environment
    - Strategic partnerships
    - Fiscal realities
    - Administrative protocols
    - Time frame
Leading Strategically While Holding the Middle

Examples:

- Access to care
  - Adult Medicaid coverage
  - Reimbursement for school-based oral health services
- National (top-down) strategies/initiatives that may or may not work in a particular state
  - Mandating water fluoridation statewide
- Workforce issues
  - Mid-level dental practitioners
Leading Strategically:
Sustaining Stakeholder Interest and
Maintaining Momentum in Policy Agenda

- Adequate funding to ensure active, ongoing efforts
- Good leadership - having right people in the right places at the right times
- Frequent communication – have periodic communiqués via social media/email
- Avoid non-productive meetings
- Make sure that the work is planned with clear deliverables and dates
- Everyone on the team must participate in the planning and agree on the results
- Goal setting
- Establish checkpoint milestones
Sustaining Comprehensive Community Initiatives
The Finance Project (April 2002)

- **Sustainability Framework:**
  - A well-articulated vision of what initiative leaders want to achieve
  - The ability to document/demonstrate an initiative’s success
  - The ability to adjust to changing social, economic and political trends in the community
  - Support from policymakers and the public
  - The ability to identify and tap into necessary monetary and in-kind resources
  - The existence of strong administrative and fiscal management systems
  - The involvement of community-based organizations, parents or other stakeholder
  - The existence of a clear, sensible and convincing plan for putting together the key resources that are necessary for an initiative to continue

Leading Strategically: Sustaining Stakeholder Interest and Maintaining Momentum in Policy Agenda

- Develop state oral health plan
  - Policy focus
  - Stakeholder engagement and input
  - Stakeholder workgroups
  - Stakeholder reports
- Engage state and federal policymakers
  - Find oral health champions
- Hold policy “events”, “anniversaries” or “milestones”
Leading Strategically: Sustaining Stakeholder Interest and Maintaining Momentum in Policy Agenda

- Help develop oral health coalition – nurture partnerships
  - Have coalition “own” policy agenda and/or state oral health plan
  - Filter through its own networks
- Needs to continue to seek and collect data
  - Develop data surveillance systems/burden documents
What Do You Do????