



# “Brushing Up on Oral Health”



## MDCH Oral Health Program Quarterly Newsletter February 2012



### Introduction

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide current and interesting information on oral health across the life span to professionals and those that have an interest in oral health.

We are hoping to remind you that the mouth and teeth are part of the body too. The links of oral health to overall body health is well known.

This first edition of “Brushing Up on Oral Health” will introduce the Oral Health staff and give information on what is happening in the Oral Health Program. Future editions will highlight the connection of oral health to systemic health, review new information on oral health, and keep you updated with current, useful information on oral health in Michigan.

### Oral Health Program Staff



**Christine Farrell, RDH, BSDH, MPA**  
**Oral Health Program Director**

Chris became Oral Health Program Director in June of 2010 after 20 years with Medicaid. As Oral Health Director, she is responsible for overseeing and promoting the State of Michigan’s Oral Health program. Her duties include ensuring the program effectively educates the public about oral health issues as well as the implementation of preventive activities to improve the oral health of Michigan residents throughout their lifetime.



**Susan Deming, RDH, RDA, B.S.**  
**Education/Fluoridation Coordinator**

Susan started with the Oral Health Program in December of 2006 and jumped feet first into public health after 30 years of clinical dental hygiene practice. She currently manages the Varnish! Michigan program, Community Water Fluoridation and Education initiatives.



**Rahila Kato,**  
**Student Assistant**

Rahila has been with the Oral Health Program since June of 2011 and is taking classes in Administrative Assistance at Lansing Community College. She is responsible for much of the OHP data entry.



**Jill Moore, RDH, BSDH, MHA**  
**Sealant Program Coordinator**

In 2009, Jill became the Dental Sealant Coordinator at the Michigan Department of Community Health and now manages the SEAL! Michigan school-based dental sealant program, which is recognized as a Best Practice by the Association of Territorial Dental Directors. Jill is also directing a pilot program to implement a basic screening survey on the aging population in Jackson County in hopes of taking the project statewide.



**Adrienne Nickles, MPH**  
**Oral Health Epidemiologist**

Adrienne completed her Bachelor of Science degree in Biology at Graceland University in 2006 and Master of Public Health degree in Epidemiology at the University of Michigan in 2010. She is currently the Cardiovascular Health and Oral Health Epidemiologist for the Michigan Department of Community Health.



## MDCH Oral Health Programs (OHP)

### Community Water Fluoridation

The Community Water Fluoridation program promotes the oral health benefits of this safe and effective public health measure.

- \* The OHP keeps the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Water Fluoridation Reporting system (WFRS) up to date with data from community water systems and help from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).
- \* With help from the State Fluoridation Advisory Committee the OHP continues to help communities initiate or maintain fluoridation with current and accurate information.
- \* By offering the Fluoridation Equipment Grant, funded by Delta Dental, the OHP allows communities to get reimbursed for fluoridation equipment.

### Seal! Michigan

The Seal! Michigan program promotes school based dental sealant programs throughout the state.

- \* Currently, nine grantee agencies provide sealants at over 95 schools.
- \* Education to students and teachers is provided along with fluoride varnish applications and referrals for dental care.
- \* Sealant programs often collaborate with school based health centers to ensure children receive needed care for total body health.

### Education/Collaboration

Oral health is directly related to total body health. One objective of the Oral Health Program is to educate professionals and the public on the link of oral health to general body health.

- \* Oral Health collaborates with other sections of MDCH to include oral health in their work plans for education such as:
- \* Diabetes
- \* Tobacco
- \* Maternal Infant Health

### Varnish! Michigan

The Varnish! Michigan program encourages dental and medical providers to provide oral screenings, apply fluoride varnish and refer children to a dental home.

- \* The Babies Too! Program offers free fluoride varnish to medical providers who offer this service and collect data for MDCH.
- \* As of November 2008, physicians and nurse practitioners can be reimbursed for applying fluoride varnish on infants and toddlers under age three up to four times in a 12 month period.
- \* A new pilot project began January 1, 2012 that utilizes Maternal Infant Health Program nurses to provide oral screenings, apply fluoride varnish, offer oral health education to parents, and refer to a dental home for age one infants.

### PA161 Public Dental Prevention

The PA161 Public Dental Prevention program allows dental hygienists to perform oral health preventive services on unassigned, underserved populations to increase access to care in collaboration with a supervising dentist. Some settings that are utilized by PA161 programs are:

- \* Nursing homes and long term care facilities
- \* Head Start centers
- \* Schools
- \* Tribal health centers
- \* Churches

### Surveillance

Data collection and surveillance efforts have picked up for the Oral Health Program with the addition of Adrienne Nickles, our epidemiologist. Efforts include:

- \* Update on the State Oral Health Plan
- \* Update of Burden of Disease Document
- \* Count Your Smiles Survey
- \* Senior Smiles Survey
- \* Jackson Senior Smiles Survey
- \* Sealant data collection
- \* Varnish data collection

### Contact Information

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