

2022-2027 South Carolina Oral Health State Plan Priorities and Strategies

3 GUIDING PRINCIPLES for this State Oral Health Plan:

Optimal Health begins with Oral Health. The separation of mouth from the rest of the body has created a major public health challenge. Oral health advocates recognize that to achieve optimal health, we must start with oral health. This plan outlines strategies that facilitate re-integration through promotion and prevention.

Equity. The sole mission of South Carolina's state oral health plan is to achieve health equity. ***To do this, all strategies in the state Oral Health Plan are focused on improving the oral health of populations disproportionately affected by oral disease across the lifespan.*** These populations include individuals of all racial and ethnic backgrounds who are impoverished, lack health insurance or have inadequate access to oral health prevention and treatment services.

Collaboration. No one organization alone can successfully achieve health equity. Multi-sectoral collaboration is imperative if we expect to improve oral health in South Carolina. Individuals and organizations from a wide variety of settings are needed at the table to implement the SOHP's priorities.

Promotion with Prevention. Increasing access to oral health services alone will not improve oral health. This is not just about service delivery. The integration of oral health policies, practices and messages into our routine activities, regardless of setting, will reduce the need (and costs) for extensive oral health services. By integrating promotion with prevention, we can take steps toward achieving equity in oral health.

CURRENT VISION:

We envision a South Carolina where every citizen enjoys optimal oral health as part of total health and well-being and:

- Prevention and education are priorities,
- Evidence-based treatment is available, accessible, affordable, timely and culturally and linguistically competent; and
- Responsibility is shared among patients, parents, care-givers, providers, and insurers; and
- Collaboration by government, higher education, and the private sector ensures resources, quality and patient protection.

OPTION 1:

Throughout the lifespan, South Carolinians enjoy optimal oral health as part of total health and well-being and:

- Prevention and promotion are priorities,
- Evidence-based treatment is available, accessible, affordable, timely and culturally and linguistically competent; and
- Responsibility is shared among patients, parents, caregivers, providers, and insurers; and
- Collaboration among communities, government, higher education, and the private sector ensures resources, quality and patient protection.

OPTION 2:

Vision: Throughout the lifespan, South Carolinians enjoy optimal oral health as part of total health and well-being.

Mission: Through multi-sectoral collaboration and a focus on equity, we will achieve this vision by:

- Enhancing the state's oral health infrastructure
- Assuring access to affordable, equitable and culturally appropriate care
- Providing up-to-date, evidence-based information about oral health
- Incorporating oral public health competencies in the health profession pipeline.
- Advocating for equity-focused health policies and practices

OPTION 3:

Vision: Optimal Oral Health for All.

Mission: Through multi-sectoral collaboration and a focus on equity, we will achieve this vision by:

- Enhancement of the state oral health infrastructure
- Access to affordable, equitable and culturally appropriate care
- Provision of up-to-date, evidence-based information about oral health
- Incorporation of oral public health competencies in the health profession pipeline.
- Advocacy for equity-focused health policies and practices

2022-2027 Priority 1. INFRASTRUCTURE.

Enhance the state's oral public health infrastructure at the state and community levels to improve the quality of life of populations disproportionately affected by oral disease.

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- 1.1** Secure and sustain long term investments from the state that supports the Division of Oral Health to meet oral health needs and improve the quality of life across the lifespan. Investments of multi-sourced funding streams are targeted at supporting infrastructure and human resources.
- 1.2** Maintain SCDHEC Division of Oral Health's ability to engage in the regulatory process related to oral public health infrastructure and policy.
- 1.3** To effectively achieve SOHP priorities:
- Establish the SCOHI to implement an action plan that supports SOHP strategies.
 - Broaden the SCOHC membership to include community members and business representation.
 - Revisit and update SCOHC structure to support the achievement of SOHP priorities and strategies.

2022-2027 Priority 2. ACCESS.

Assure access to affordable, timely and, culturally and linguistically responsive care that is tailored to individual needs.

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- 2.1** Spread the use of the Medical-Dental Integration Quality Improvement toolkit to facilitate the integration of oral health services and promotion into the scopes of practice of a variety of healthcare settings included but not limited to primary health care, chronic disease management, public health, early childhood and school health systems, pharmacy services, long-term care and perinatal health care.
- 2.2** Provide evidence-based oral health benefits in a variety of public health and healthcare settings, to children and adults, that are disproportionately affected by oral disease, regardless of insurance status. (Refer to settings in Strategy 2.1.)
- 2.3** Leverage nontraditional workforce, such as community health workers, to facilitate and/or provide oral health promotion and prevention.

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2022-2027 Priority 3. PROMOTION.

Provide up-to-date, evidence-based information about oral health for education, health promotion and disease prevention using culturally and linguistically appropriate messaging and materials.

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- 3.1** Continue the implementation of a comprehensive social marketing campaign that emphasizes oral health as an essential component of integrated healthcare and predictor of overall health status.
- 3.2** Maintain and promote the *Connecting Smiles* website's on-line library of public health endorsed oral health education and training resources and care guidelines for specific populations (i.e., pregnant women, long term care residents, victims of domestic violence and abuse)
- 3.3** Integrate evidence-based oral health policies, messaging, and interventions within targeted public health priorities and efforts including, but not limited to, diabetes and cancer prevention HPV.
- 3.4** Increase the number of community water advocacy teams across the state, that includes representatives from the community primary care, dentistry, early childhood systems and local water system operators to monitor local water systems' fluoridation and educate, advocate and promote for optimal fluoridation levels.
- 3.5** Develop a network of advocates who are responsible for providing training on how to identify and report domestic violence and child and elder abuse.

2022-2027 Priority 4. COMPETENCE

Expand the incorporation of oral public health competencies in the health profession pipeline.

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- 4.1** Support the expansion of oral public health knowledge to all health profession programs (i.e. medical, dental, dental hygiene, nursing, public health) students, residents and faculty including those within the state's university and technical college systems. This includes the incorporation of oral public health concepts and/or competencies within training and education curricula.
- 4.2** Educate nontraditional workforce members, such as community health workers, in oral health concepts and/or competencies to incorporate into their routine activities.
- 4.3** Collaborate with AHEC to develop and offer oral public health competency trainings for continuing education credit.

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2022-2027 Priority 5. POLICY AND ADVOCACY

Identify and advocate for equity-focused oral health policies and practices that improve oral health.

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5.1 Develop and implement an expanded oral health advocacy agenda that:

- Supports a long-term investment of core funding in dental public health
- Promotes evidence-based oral health benefits to adults and children enrolled in Medicaid
- Expands availability of oral health services to nontraditional settings including, but not limited to Telehealth, Rural Access Programs, Mobile services
- Enhances incentive programs including the Rural Dentist Loan Repayment Program

5.2 Expand the integration of oral health policies, practices and messaging within routine activities (or workflow) in a variety of settings to include, but not limited to, primary health care, chronic disease management, public health, early childhood and school health systems, pharmacy services, long-term care and perinatal health care.

5.3 Engage oral health policy experts to enhance the state's dental public health environment.

2022-2027 Priority 6. EVALUATION

Collect and report data to assess progress toward achieving priorities and recommend mid-course improvements where needed.

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- 6.1** Develop and implement an evaluation plan that includes a core set of process and outcome indicators to monitor and measure the impact of oral health plan strategies that align with Healthy People 2030 oral health objectives.
- 6.2** Annually communicate oral health plan progress and evaluation results to all stakeholders on an annual basis.

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