

Priority Statements for Policy Development

Background:

The Wisconsin Oral Health Coalition establishes the following priority statements, to fulfill the coalition's historic, long-term commitment to ensuring all Wisconsin residents have access to quality oral health care throughout the lifespan. These statements are organized by the four focus areas identified in Wisconsin's Roadmap to Improving Oral Health and will be updated as needed to reflect emerging issues. Having established priorities will help determine support and guide policy development.

I. Infrastructure

- a) Provide resources to build oral health initiatives and linkages within the regional public health infrastructure and support community level programs that link oral health with general health.
- b) Promote and support innovative models of care that link dental providers to community-based settings, such as school-based programs, local health departments and community health centers.
- c) Support partnerships between Federally-Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and non-FQHC dental practices, to enhance access to care.
- d) Improve data systems to provide timely and reliable access to oral health surveillance data.

II. Prevention and Health Promotion

- a) Maintain or increase the percentage of Wisconsin residents with access to optimally fluoridated water through public water systems.
- b) Support programs and policies that expand the reach of the Wisconsin Seal-A-Smile Program or other school-based programs providing high quality care.

III. Access

- a) Support creative mechanisms to increase access to oral health care for Medicaid/BadgerCare, uninsured and underserved populations, such as rewarding those providers who see a disproportionate share and by expanding community health center and school-based capacity.

- b) Support creative ideas to increase access by providing market-rate reimbursement for services provided through Medicaid.
- c) Support efforts to increase the number of Medicaid certified providers.

IV. Workforce

- a) Expand the capacity of dentists in the state through additional incentives, loan repayment programs or tuition support programs.
- b) Expand dentists and dental hygienists workforce capacity by simplifying the process for qualified dentists and dental hygienists from outside Wisconsin to obtain initial Wisconsin licensure.
- c) Remove regulatory barriers so that dental hygienists may practice dental hygiene or perform remediable procedures without authorization or oversight of a dentist in all practice settings, as described in WI Stat § 447.01(3) and 447.06(2)(d).
- d) Support oral health workforce models that culminate in:
 - I. Graduation from an accredited institution;
 - II. Professional licensure and
 - III. Improved access to patient care
- e) Support interprofessional training, to assure all health care professionals have an understanding of the oral cavity and the importance of oral health.