This presentation was designed for Health Home Care Coordinators for the Washington State Integration Project with The Health Care Authority and The Department of Social and Health Services. It was presented as a live webinar by Jenny Shuler on July 10, 2014.

This topic is not required but provides Care Coordinators with basic information for working with clients who may need to integrate dental care with their other care needs.
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Washington Dental Service Foundation

WDS Foundation's mission is to prevent oral disease and improve overall health.

The Foundation works closely with partner organizations to implement innovative programs and policies that produce permanent changes in the healthcare arena and improve the public's long-term oral health.

Washington Dental Service Foundation

Community Advocates for Oral Health
Agenda

- Oral health – Overall Health Connection
- Prevention and Treatment
- Client scenarios and discussion
- How to fit today’s information into your work with clients
- Resources
According to the Surgeon General's Report on oral health in 2000:

- Dental care is the most common unmet health need.
- Oral disease can severely affect systemic health.
- Much oral disease is preventable or at least controllable.
- Profound disparities in oral health and access to care exist for all ages.

1. Association between untreated dental caries and inappropriate use of ED. (Cohen et al., 2011; Davis et al., 2010)

2. Link between oral health and respiratory disease. (Scannapieco and Ho, 2001)

3. Link between oral health and cardiovascular disease. (Blaizot et al., 2009; Offenbacher et al., 2009; Scannapieco et al., 2003; Slavkin and Baum, 2000)

4. Link between oral health and diabetes. (Chávarry et al., 2009; Löe, 1993; Taylor, 2001; Teeuw et al., 2010)
Consequences for Clients’ Health

Oral disease is largely preventable but untreated oral disease can lead to:

- Pain that makes it difficult to work, pay attention, sleep, eat
- Poor eating habits and nutrition
- Reduced self-confidence and/or problems obtaining employment because of decayed or missing teeth
- Infections that must be controlled with antibiotics
- Complications of chronic diseases like diabetes
Home Care Coordinators coach and educate the entire team and encourage engagement of client in managing their own care.
Benefits of Addressing Oral Health

- Clients understand the connection between poor oral health and other chronic diseases
- Able to catch disease early and reduce cost and pain
- Reduced dental related ED visits
- Reduced medical costs - savings from reduced diabetic complications
- Increase access to preventive oral health care
Your clients May Be at Risk For…
There are four major oral health problem areas that may affect your clients. We will not cover every possible situation, but will give you information on the ones of most concern to most people.

Gum Disease
Tooth Decay (Cavities, Caries)
Poor Nutrition
Dry Mouth

*Oral Cancer/ Denture Problems*
Gum Problems – Gingivitis, Periodontal Disease

**Bacterial Infections**

Germs clump together on our teeth and under the gums to form “plaque,” which irritates the gum tissues.

**Gingivitis: Red, Puffy or Bleeding Gums**

The first signs of gum problems might be red, swollen, or bleeding gum tissue. This condition is called gingivitis.

Many people avoid brushing and flossing if the gums bleed, thinking they need to “leave it alone” so it can heal.

Brushing and flossing, even if it makes the gums uncomfortable for a few days, will help to improve the gums in the early stages of gingivitis.

**Periodontal Disease: Bone Loss, Tooth Loss, Bad Taste or Odor**

If not treated or controlled, the gingivitis will get worse. The plaque will harden into a crusty material called calculus or tartar, and the bone holding the teeth in place will begin to dissolve. This condition is called periodontal disease.

As the disease progresses, there may be a bad taste or odor, and the teeth may become so loose that they need to be removed.

The early stages of periodontal disease often go unnoticed because there is little or no pain. Your consumer may not be aware of any problems.
Tooth Decay – Process
Here is another way to understand the steps in getting tooth decay:

**Germs** + **Refined Carbohydrates** = **Acid**

**Acid Attacks** + **Tooth** = **Decay**

**Untreated Decay** → **Infection, Abscess, Loss of Tooth**

1. Decay begins with acids attacking the tooth enamel (the outer portion of the tooth).
   Teeth can be kept healthy with daily oral hygiene, healthy diet, and the use of fluoride in drinking water, toothpaste, mouth rinses, and professionally applied gel or varnish.

2. If decay progresses, it creates a cavity or hole in the tooth.

3. If a person has a cavity but doesn’t have the tooth repaired, and doesn’t change the conditions in the mouth, the decay will continue to destroy the tooth. That tooth may become infected or abscessed.

4. Untreated decay and/or an untreated abscess may result in a tooth needing to be removed (extracted).
   In more serious cases, an untreated abscess can lead to serious widespread infection, often resulting in swelling of the face, and sometimes resulting in swelling of the brain or even death.

People who are in a weakened immune state may have difficulty recovering from a dental abscess.

**Note:** Acid attack lasts for 20 minutes, need to neutralize!
Slide 11: Tooth Decay

Photo 6 – Tooth Decay (Caries, Cavity)
When a tooth decays, its enamel surface breaks down and allows acids and bacteria to enter the softer areas inside the tooth. Usually, decay begins as a small whitish area that, if left untreated, grows and darkens. Decay often occurs between the teeth where food particles are more difficult to remove. How many areas of decay do you see on this photo? (At least 7)

Photo 7 – Abscessed Teeth
In photo 7, untreated decay has allowed infection to enter the teeth and move into the teeth roots. Swelling on the gum above these teeth (arrows) indicates infection (abscess) from the teeth that is draining into the mouth.

Photo 8 – Facial Swelling from Abscess
If the infection isn’t treated, the person’s face may begin to swell as the infection spreads from the tooth to the surrounding area in the face or neck.

Widespread infection can make people extremely ill; this is a matter that needs immediate attention.

Often the dentist (or physician) will treat the infection with antibiotics first, then repair the tooth.

Treatment could include placing a filling or crown, root canal treatment (the nerve chamber is cleaned and sealed), or extraction (removal) of the tooth.
More information about the basics of dental insurance will be provided later in the presentation.

Children covered by Apple Health for Kids (Medicaid) have dental coverage with no copay or deductibles.

For those who don’t qualify for Apple Health for Kids, families must purchase dental insurance plans for their children, which are priced separately from medical plans.
Infected teeth can lead to ear infections, sinus infections, and abscesses.

Children with obvious decay may feel embarrassed and avoid socializing. Children in pain from tooth decay have a hard time eating, sleeping, and paying attention in school.

Dental disease is the single most common chronic childhood disease — five times more common than asthma.

40% of kids entering kindergarten in WA have had tooth decay.

Children with oral health problems miss more school days than other children.
When should kids get dental care?

- Kids should have their “First Screening by First Birthday” by a dentist or medical provider.
- As soon as teeth appear, they are at risk for decay.
- Baby teeth are important for good nutrition and speech.

- Care by age 1 is recommended by doctors and dentists: American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Family Physicians, American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry

- Research shows that early preventive care, starting with the very first tooth, helps prevent dental disease and protect a child’s overall health. **Early oral health care saves money by preventing complicated, expensive dental problems down the road.**

- In addition to checking a baby’s teeth for signs of early decay, a dentist or medical provider may also suggest fluoride varnish, a quick and easy way to prevent and even heal early decay, or fluoride drops or tablets if families live in an area without fluoridated water.

- Some parents wonder how important baby are since they are going to fall out anyway. The fact is **healthy baby teeth are very important** for a baby who will soon be learning how to talk and eat solid food. Early loss of baby teeth makes it difficult for children to speak clearly and chew properly. As a child grows, healthy baby teeth can help ensure healthy permanent teeth.
Tooth Decay (also called Caries, Cavity): When a tooth decays, its enamel surface breaks down and allows acids and bacteria to enter the softer areas inside the tooth. White spots, especially along the gums, are often early signs of tooth decay. If left untreated, the decay grows and darkens. Decay often occurs between the teeth where food particles are more difficult to remove. This is why getting kids started early with flossing is so important.
A healthy diet helps children grow and develop. Sweets (candy or cookies), starchy foods (crackers), and sticky foods (raisins, fruit snacks) stay in the mouth longer and easily cause tooth decay. For snacks, fruits, vegetables or cheese are best. It is important to limit how often children have juice, sweet drinks and snacks. Constant snacking on starchy or sticky foods or sipping sweet liquids throughout the day can cause tooth decay.

Babies who go to bed with a bottle of milk, formula or juice are more likely to get tooth decay. When these liquids stay in contact with the teeth while the baby is sleeping, teeth can decay quickly.

If a baby is put to bed with a bottle, it should contain only plain water.
Dry Mouth Side Effects:
- Decay—especially on the root of the tooth in seniors
- Cracks at corner of mouth
- Dry, painful tongue
- Difficulty swallowing
- Possible fungal infection

Saliva Substitutes:
- Biotene
- Orajel
- Xylitol (natural sweetener that helps prevent decay)
Saliva plays several important roles in protecting oral health:

- Cleanses the mouth
- Kills bacteria
- Neutralizes acids
- Remineralizes teeth
- Moistens the mouth, making it easier to eat, taste, swallow, and speak.

Without enough saliva, oral problems can develop quickly.

When there is not enough saliva in the mouth, problems can develop quickly. There might be new decay (especially on exposed root surfaces), fungal infections, or mouth pain.
Poor Nutrition and Oral Health
Poor nutrition can affect a person’s overall health, as well as oral health.

This is a two-sided issue:

1. **Poor nutrition can result in oral health problems**
   
   **Examples:** Certain vitamin or mineral deficiencies may result in mouth problems, like a sore tongue or cracks at the corners of the mouth.
   Food residue on teeth can lead to decay.
   Soft diets can result in food remaining on the teeth, leading to decay.

2. **Oral health problems can result in poor nutrition**
   
   **Examples:** Missing, broken, or decayed teeth can make it difficult to eat a balanced diet or a variety of foods.
   Chewing may become painful with decayed, broken, or loose teeth.
   Dry mouth can make it difficult to taste and swallow.
(91% of clients with heart disease have periodontitis, compared with 66% of people with no heart disease.)


Article Sources:
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News Release, American Academy of Periodontology.
News Release, American Dental Association.
### Populations at Higher Risk

- Clients with diabetes
- Clients on multiple medications
- Older clients
**A Vicious Cycle**

clients with periodontal disease are twice as likely to develop diabetes

Poor glycemic control is associated with threefold increase of periodontal disease

Periodontal disease worsens glycemic control

Treatment of periodontal disease results in 10-20% improvement in glycemic control

**References**


Diabetes – What you should know

- Untreated periodontal disease can lead to costly diabetes complications

- Diabetes affects nearly ½ million adults in Washington

- Improving an individual’s oral health may reduce diabetic complications, positively impacting overall health

*United Concordia study*
UC Wellness Oral Health Study: University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine

Significant results start showing in the first year!

- 61% Reduction in Hospital Admissions
- 41% Reduction in Physician Visits
- 32% Reduction in Medical Costs
Clients with Diabetes – What you can do

- Risk Assessment
  - Any pain or sensitivity in mouth?
  - Time since last dental visit?
  - Does mouth feel dry? Difficult to swallow?
  - Any oral swelling, bleeding, or obvious signs of decay?

- Education
  - Gum disease can make it harder to keep diabetes under control
  - Important to get routine dental care and brush and floss regularly

- Referral to Dental Care (if needed)
Clients on Multiple Medications – What you can do

- **Risk Assessment**
  - Any pain or sensitivity in mouth?
  - Time since last dental visit?
  - Does mouth feel dry? Difficult to swallow?
  - Any oral swelling, bleeding, or obvious signs of decay?

- **Client Education & Potential Solutions**
  - Sip fluoridated water throughout the day
  - Avoid sugary drinks, candy, cough drops
  - Use xylitol products
  - Important to get routine dental care and brush and floss regularly
  - Over the counter dry mouth remedies
  - Talk to doctor about possible changes to medications
  - Fluoride varnish application to prevent caries

- **Referral to Dental Care (if needed)**
Seniors = 65 and over


WA Office of Finance and Management

2)

3) Perio rate from CDC
Education:
Talk about recession and bone loss allowing root caries more easily.
Brush, floss, fluoride
Concerns/Knowns:
• Spreading infection to body
• Spreading disease to baby
• Mother’s are receptive
• PG women can & should get dental care
• Medicaid coverage

Pregnant Women – What you can do

Oral health is important during pregnancy
  • Infections in the mouth can spread to the body, causing complications
  • Mothers with active disease are likely to transmit cavity-causing bacteria to babies, setting their babies up for early decay
  • Mothers are receptive to learning about how to care for their babies during pregnancy

Dental care during pregnancy is safe and important!
  • Pregnant women should receive preventive and restorative treatment
  • Medicaid covers dental care for pregnant women
All Clients

Brush twice a day and floss every day

Use fluoride
  • Fluoride toothpaste
  • Fluoridated water
  • Fluoridated bottled water
  • Fluoride rinse, gel, or varnish

Avoid tobacco products
Limit sweet, sticky, and sugary foods and drinks
See dentist regularly
If all or some of the teeth in the upper or lower jaw are missing, they may be replaced with a removable denture.

**Clean gums, teeth, and tongue**
Use soft toothbrush and a small amount of regular toothpaste for teeth, gums, and tongue.

**Brush denture daily with a denture brush**
Regular toothpaste can scratch dentures.
Use “denture toothpaste” or liquid soap to clean dentures.
Be sure to rinse the denture completely before returning to the mouth.

**Soak denture overnight after cleaning, using commercial products like Polident or Efferdent**
NEVER USE BLEACH because it can remove the natural gum color from the denture.
Let the gums breathe overnight or for several hours during the day, based on the consumer preference and care plan.

**Use care in handling dentures**
They can be very slippery and are easily broken if dropped even just a few inches.

**Check for sore spots on tissue**
If the denture moves when chewing or rubs against tissues, it creates sore spots.

**Do NOT attempt home repairs!**
Improper repairs may cause sore spots or difficulty chewing.
Note: A team member could ask the risk assessment questions (pain, time since last visit), client education, fluoride varnish?, and referral. Provider should do the oral exam.

FV for: young children, clients with dry mouth, geriatric a pts. with signs of root caries.
Possible scenarios...

1. Many dentist who will not care for pregnant women who have other health issues such as diabetes, which is not okay.

2. Many clients do not understand why they have to go back for multiple appointments when they got to the dentist. Such as only getting one filling vs. getting three done all at once.

3. Many clients have rotted teeth and just want to be “done” having teeth all together. They want dentures. How can we help clients understand why this is not a good choice?

4. We need skills to help our clients advocate for themselves when they get to the dentist. What kind of questions do our clients need to ask about oral health?
One dentist reported that nearly 86% of her Medicaid patients failed to keep her appointments. As a result, this dentist was no longer able to serve Medicaid clients.

As Care Coordinators you can:
- help set up appointments
- arrange for someone to transport your client
- provide reminder calls to your client the day before the appointment
- call the day of the appointment to ensure that they keep their appointment.

By calling in advance, if the client must cancel the appointment the dental provider may have time to fill the scheduled appointment.
Medicaid Adult Dental Coverage

Starting January 1, 2014

Coverage Includes:
- Preventive and restorative services

Additional Detail:
- Preventive services
  - 1 cleaning per year
  - routine check-ups
  - periodontal treatment
- Restorative (no dollar limit)
  - cavities
  - root canals
  - complete dentures
  - emergency service
- Crowns NOT covered
Dental Access Resources

Non-profit Dental Clinics

- Geriatric Dental Group, Federal Way
  http://geriatricdental.org
- New Day Dental Clinic, Vancouver
  www.newdaydental.org

Senior Center Dental Hygiene Programs
  www.wsdha.com

- Oral screening
- Teeth and gum cleaning
- Referral to dental care

Dental Access Resources

Offer services at about 40-50% less than other private practice dentists
GDG: 55+
ND: all ages
Dental Access Resources

College Dental Hygiene & Assistant Programs

- Clark College
- Columbia Basin College
- Eastern Washington University
- Lake Washington Technical College
- Pierce College
- Seattle Central Community College
- Shoreline Community College
- Yakima Valley Community College

http://www.wsda.org/dental-hygiene-programs
http://www.wsda.org/dental-assisting-programs/
Dental Access Resources

Donated Dental Care Programs

Free Clinics of SW Washington (Clark)
www.freeclinics.org

Project Access Programs (King, Snohomish, Kitsap)
www.projectaccessuw.org

Whatcom Alliance for Health Advancement (Whatcom)
www.whatcomalliance.org

IDEA Clinic (Spokane)
www.oddfoundation.org/ideclinic.html

Union Gospel Mission (Seattle, Olympia, Yakima)
www.ugm.org
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<th>Dental Access Resources</th>
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<td><strong>Community Health Centers</strong></td>
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<td>(75 provide dental services)</td>
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<td><strong>Oral Health Information</strong></td>
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<td>Seniors' Oral Health</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.WdsFoundation.org">www.WdsFoundation.org</a></td>
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<td>Patient Education Materials</td>
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Thank you!

Questions?

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