



Florida's Action for Dental Health

FIVE-YEAR PROGRESS REPORT



Florida's Action for Dental Health is a comprehensive effort to improve the oral health and resulting overall health of all Floridians.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

In 2014, the Florida Dental Association (FDA) launched Florida's Action for Dental Health to serve as a comprehensive, ongoing initiative to improve the oral health and resulting overall health of all Floridians. Since then, the FDA and its more than 8,000 member dentists have worked to implement the strategies outlined in this initiative. A healthy mouth is essential to a healthy body, and Florida dentists believe everyone – from pediatric to geriatric patients – deserves quality dental care.



As we reach this five-year milestone, we are pleased to share highlights of key successes and positive movement achieved to date through Florida's Action for Dental Health. We also recognize and value the collaboration of stakeholders and partners in helping to drive these achievements.

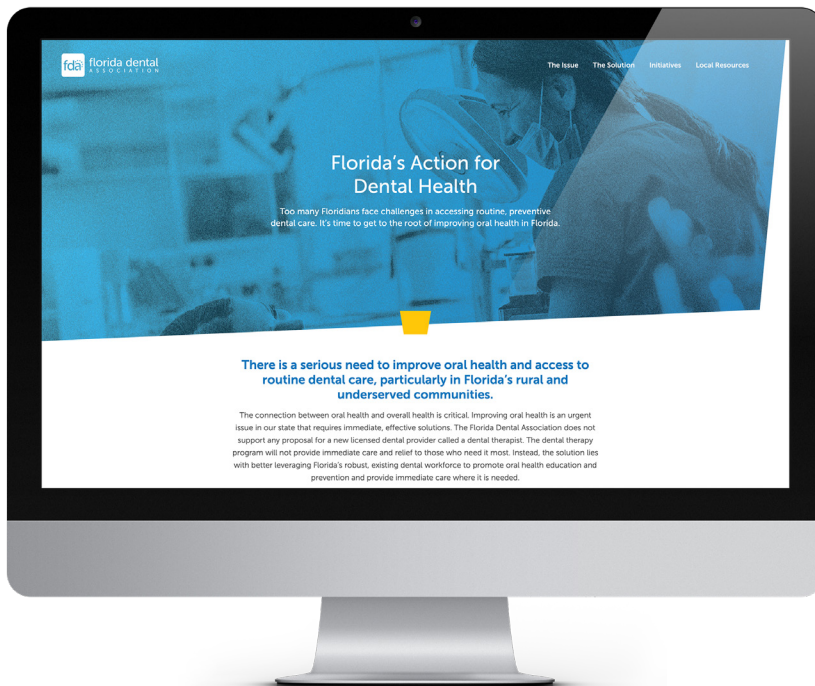
We look forward to continuing to build these partnerships to grow the reach and impact of Florida's Action for Dental Health, and we invite you to join us in this effort to promote oral health for all our citizens.

Rudolph T. Liddell DMD

RUDOLPH T. LIDDELL, DMD
President, Florida Dental Association

OVERVIEW OF FLORIDA'S ACTION FOR DENTAL HEALTH

In 2014, the Florida Dental Association's Workforce Innovation Task Group launched Florida's Action for Dental Health, as they recognized that there was a critical need for improving oral health in Florida and an opportunity to better leverage Florida's robust workforce of dentists and dental team members to address this issue. Among the barriers impacting access to dental care in Florida is the fact that Florida's Medicaid reimbursement rates are among the lowest in the country. Florida's Action for Dental Health identifies key strategies to overcome these barriers and help dentists and dental team members better serve Florida's underserved patients and communities.



Sarasota
Herald-Tribune

SHATTERED SMILES JULY 31, 2016

"People who have poor oral health become a burden on the system, they suffer poor health and they often can't keep a job," said Jolene Paramore, a dentist from Panama City and vice president of the Florida Dental Association.

"Making childhood dental disease go away would affect people for their lifetime. It's hard for us to understand how that investment is not important."

OBJECTIVE 1:

Promote attainable dental care for the uninsured and underserved in Florida.

Key Strategies:

In 2019, the FDA supported the passage of legislation to establish Florida's Dental Student Loan Repayment Program (Florida Statute 381.4019) and Donated Dental Services Program (Florida Statute 381.40195).

- Florida's dental student loan repayment program will help dentists practice in public health programs serving recipients of Medicaid and low-income patients in Florida's rural and underserved communities.
- Florida Donated Dental Services connects volunteer dentists and dental labs with patients who are elderly, disabled and/or medically compromised. Patients in this program are provided ongoing, comprehensive dental services in the dentists' practices, with support from dental labs to provide dentures, crowns, and other services. Since 1997, more than 1,900 patients have received more than \$9 million in donated care.

The FDA is championing for funding to implement these programs, which will help dentists immediately serve as Medicaid providers in Florida's underserved areas and eliminate the waiting list of 500+ patients seeking care through Florida Donated Dental Services. The FDA is working to educate elected officials on the significant impact these programs will have on reducing unnecessary costs to hospitals by providing dental care to individuals who would otherwise end up seeking care in the emergency room.



DENTAL STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM SIGNED INTO LAW, JUNE 26, 2019

Gov. Ron DeSantis signed into law legislation that revives a defunct loan repayment program for dentists who see low-income patients.

"This is a way that we can provide care in those communities that are underserved, be able to reach Floridians who don't have access to a dentist, and be able to have them be a Medicaid provider," said Jolene Paramore, president of the Florida Dental Association.

FLORIDA DONATED DENTAL SERVICES PATIENT STORY



Joseph is a veteran and senior living in Fort Lauderdale. He served in the Army in the 1960s before going on to work as an auto mechanic for 45 years. Joseph was no longer able to work after developing high blood pressure, Type 2 diabetes and degenerative disc disease. Unfortunately, Joseph's dental health was also poor, and he didn't have the financial ability to pay for dental treatment. He had three remaining teeth that were causing him pain when he ate, which then limited his diet.

The Donated Dental Services program gave Joseph the opportunity to become a patient of a volunteer dentist and get the care he needed. Joseph's remaining teeth were extracted, and he was fitted with a full upper denture and implant-retained lower denture with the help of a volunteer dental lab. Through Donated Dental Services, Joseph's dental health and smile were restored, which significantly improved his quality of life.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Collaborate to maximize the current dental workforce to serve Floridians with preventive and therapeutic dental care.

14,000+

DENTISTS WITH AN ACTIVE
FLORIDA LICENSE

14,000+

DENTAL HYGIENISTS WITH AN
ACTIVE FLORIDA LICENSE

16,000+

DENTAL ASSISTANTS
IN FLORIDA

800+

REGISTERED DENTAL
LABORATORIES IN FLORIDA

Key Strategies:

The FDA supported rules recently passed by the Florida Board of Dentistry to expand scope through restorative function dental auxiliaries. As a result, dental hygienists and assistants will be trained to do more restorative care, which will support increased efficiencies in Florida dental offices.

The FDA supports reinstating the Health Access Dental License, which provides an opportunity for out-of-state licensed dentists to practice in Florida specifically in underserved health access settings. This license was repealed on January 1, 2020. Reinstating the Health Access Dental License will continue to allow dentists to provide dental care in rural and underserved areas.

The FDA also supports teledentistry as an opportunity to increase access to dental care in rural and underserved areas across the state. Teledentistry has been piloted in several Florida counties and helped increase access to dental care in these areas. Through teledentistry, dentists are able to remotely provide dental examinations to patients, while hygienists provide preventive services. For cases with severe and immediate needs, the dentist is able to make a referral for the patient to see a nearby dentist for restorative services.

OBJECTIVE 3:

Expand opportunities for public health dentistry to serve Floridians.

Key Strategies:

Support and expand the volunteer safety net programs including Florida Mission of Mercy events coordinated through the FDA Foundation.

- Since 2014, five Florida Mission of Mercy events have been held in five cities, providing a total of nearly 10,000 patients with more than \$9.4 million worth of dental care services at no cost.



Promote community water fluoridation.

- For several years, the FDA has been successful in securing \$200K in state funding to support community water fluoridation in communities throughout Florida. The FDA continues to champion for this funding as water fluoridation is the most effective, safe and cost-effective public health measure to prevent and repair tooth decay. Water fluoridation is proven to reduce dental decay by 25 – 45% and provide \$38 – \$43 in savings for every \$1 invested.
- In 2018, FDA member dentists championed the effort to keep community water fluoridation in Brooksville, educating local voters on the importance of water fluoridation. This effort helped support a victory for water fluoridation, as voters supported a referendum to keep water fluoridation in Brooksville.

WATER FLUORIDATION
FLORIDA'S NATURAL CAVITY FIGHTER
TAP INTO THE FACTS

Fluoride is **naturally** present in **all** water.

Community water fluoridation is the **precise adjustment** of **naturally occurring** fluoride to the level for optimal dental health.

0.7 PPM (parts per million) is the optimal fluoride level in community water.

That means **7/10ths** of a part of fluoride is diluted in **a million parts** of water.

60 years+ of scientific evidence supports water fluoridation as **THE** most effective, safe and cost-effective public health measure to prevent and repair tooth decay.

WATER FLUORIDATION

- 1. Reduces dental decay by 20-40%
- 2. Helps adults fight tooth decay that occurs as gums recede with age
- 3. Helps prevent the loss of approximately 51 million school hours to dental disease
- 4. Provides \$43 in savings for every \$1 invested
- 5. Helps prevent tooth decay - the most common chronic childhood disease
- 6. Recognized as one of the greatest public health achievements of the 20th century

Visit floridafluoridation.org to learn more about how water fluoridation improves Florida communities' health and find out if your community's water is fluoridated.

fda florida dental ASSOCIATION

Support the Florida Partnership for Healthy Schools.

- The FDA is a member of this partnership, which focuses on reducing and eliminating barriers to learning and academic achievement. Through Florida's Action for Dental Health, the FDA supports several initiatives to help children have better academic outcomes through the promotion of oral health literacy and prevention.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The FDA would like to thank our partners and stakeholder groups for their continuous collaboration in helping to improve access to oral health care for all Floridians.

The FDA would like to recognize the members of the Workforce Innovation Task Group for their work in driving Florida's Action for Dental Health.

- Dr. Andrew Brown, Chair
- Dr. Jim Antoon
- Dr. Terry Buckenheimer
- Dr. Chris Bulnes
- Dr. Bill D'Aiuto
- Dr. George Kolos
- Dr. Jolene Paramore
- Dr. Mike Eggnatz, Consultant
- Dr. CJ Henley, Consultant
- Dr. Rick Huot, Consultant
- Dr. Rudy Liddell, Consultant

The FDA would also like to recognize the members of the Sub-Workgroup on Elder Care for their contributions to this effort.

- Dr. Nolan Allen, Chair
- Dr. Terry Buckenheimer
- Dr. Don Ilkka
- Mr. Bob Macdonald
- Dr. Cesar Sabates
- Dr. Rick Stevenson



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