FILLING THE GAP
A statewide plan to address the dental workforce shortage in Kansas

THE PROJECT
OUR PARTNERSHIP

• Building on each of our organizational strengths, KAC, KAMU, and KHCC joined forces to create the Kansas Dental Project.

• The Kansas Dental Project is being supported by the Kansas Health Foundation, United Methodist Health Ministry Fund, REACH Healthcare Foundation, Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City, and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

• 41 national and statewide associations are partnering with us as members of our coalition.

THE GOALS OF THE KANSAS DENTAL PROJECT

• Begin to address the dental workforce shortage by adding a new mid-level professional to the dental team.

• Provide more Kansans in rural and underserved communities with access to the dental care they need.
THE PROBLEM

When it comes to dentists, we have a workforce shortage in Kansas.

- Dental Health Professional Shortage Areas.
- 28 are whole county designations, including counties that have no dentist at all.
- The average dentist in Kansas is approaching retirement age with no plans for another dentist to replace them in their practice.
SAFETY-NET CLINICS NEED MORE DENTAL WORKFORCE

- 17 dental clinics across the state continue to see increasing demand.
- Between 2006 and 2010, safety-net clinics have more than doubled the number of patients served.
- Clinics have difficulty retaining dentists for more than a few years.
- An additional member of the workforce team will greatly increase the reach of safety-net clinics to uninsured and underinsured Kansans.
Registered Dental Practitioner

- A new member of the **dental team** designed to extend the reach of a dentist.

- An **already licensed dental hygienist** with additional hands-on, intensive training.

- Works under the **direct supervision of a dentist** before written protocols are established that allow an RDP to work under the general supervision of a dentist.

- A provider that can practice in **community settings** with written protocols from their supervising dentist.
KEY COMPONENTS OF LEGISLATION

- Qualifications
- Supervision
- Practice locations
- Scope of practice

IMPACT ON ACCESS TO CARE

- RDPs will expand the reach of safety-net clinics and private practices.
- RDPs will increase access in rural and underserved areas of the state through the use of general supervision.
- Each RDP is estimated to provide approximately 2,000-3,000 appointments per year.
NATIONAL MOMENTUM

- Kansas is one of 17 states considering or currently using a mid-level dental provider.
- Association of Public Health Dentistry published a journal issue solely dedicated to the education of new dental professionals.
- Kansas is poised to be a leader in access to dental care and education of dental professionals.

STATUS OF LEGISLATION IN KANSAS

- Identical bills, HB 2280 and SB 192, introduced during the 2011 Legislative Session
- Each bill received a hearing and was supported by dentists, KDHA, clinics, and advocacy groups.
- The bills did not receive hearings during the 2012 Legislative Session.
- Committed to staying the course!
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