This form has been adapted from the Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors (ASTDD) Best Practices summaries form: http://www.astdd.org/state-and-community-practice-examples/. ASTDD has taken the lead in promoting the development of best practices by state, territorial and community oral health programs to enhance oral health and reduce disparities.

Practice Number: 00001

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Health Center Oral Health Promising Practice

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Make Your HC Stand Out- Workforce Recruitment Strategies

Organization:
Hidalgo Medical Services, Lordsburg, NM

Summary:
The following are some ideas that have been developed to highlight your Health Center and community when recruiting potential dental providers.

How to Promote Your Clinic Location
It is critical to emphasize what is distinctive about the area where the clinic is located. A Health Center should research and provide potential candidates with a wide range of information about the area regardless of whether it is in a big city or a small town. Provide information on housing opportunities, school districts, childcare, and taxes. If the Health Center is in a rural community, how far is it to the nearest city? They may not want to live in the nearest city, however, larger department stores, major concerts, sporting events, and the closest airport are probably in that city. Don’t forget the social aspects of living in the community. Highlight local attractions, entertainment and cultural events. Inquire about what the candidate likes to do in their spare time and highlight those opportunities in the area. The candidate’s spouse should be included in discussions about the community. If the spouse is interested in working, what job opportunities will interest them, and how can the organization support their job search?

Utilizing the Bank
The recruiting team can look for a community bank where one can actually talk to a decision maker and get to know them, i.e. the owner or senior management. Then commit the entire financial relationship of the Health Center - checking, mortgage, etc. Once a relationship is established, the bank will have a better sense of the Health Center’s needs and the benefit of assisting your Center when times are more difficult. Constantly shopping for financial services may save you a nickel in the short term but bankrupt you in the long run. Once a relationship is established with a community bank and you are recruiting dental providers, being able to mention that providers will receive preferential treatment at a community bank can be a good recruiting tool.

For example, one possible benefit could be negotiating home loans. With changes in the mortgage market currently and those to come, follow the advice above. The home mortgage market, products, and people are changing daily. The laws and regulations surrounding these products are changing and many mortgage companies are still on the brink of going broke. Too many people come into a community bank wanting the bank to bail them out after a failed mortgage closing - they do not have an account or relationship with the bank, and their mortgage closing with a Wall Street bank or broker blew up the day before closing. Community banks have a heart, but a small one. As a business, community banks will put time, effort and capital into helping and giving preferential treatment to existing, multi-relationship customers. So, preferential rates and service will be given to those folks.
Involving a Spouse

The spouse of the preferred candidate will play a very important role in the family’s decision to accept or decline a job offer, so involving that person in the recruitment process can be of utmost importance. The Health Center’s goal is to determine the spouse’s level of interest in the position and the community while providing information about the area (specific to the spouse’s needs) and attempting to address his or her professional or career needs.

When interviewing, the Health Center could consider interviewing the spouse as well as the dental provider to determine in advance their professional needs, personal interests, housing preferences, community expectations, etc. When inviting a candidate for a site visit, individualized activities can be set up for the spouse as an introduction to the organization and the community.

Having a dedicated person on the organization’s recruitment team responsible for “recruiting the spouse” can be exceptionally important. The Health Center should look for someone similar to the spouse (consider age group, gender, education level, social background, shared interests, and/or the spouse of another dentist on staff) to play the role of spouse recruiter and coordinate all activities involving the spouse. This person should be likeable and open, with the goal of developing a trusting relationship with the candidate’s spouse.

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