Where We Are Today and Why Policy Change is So Critical

Scott L. Tomar, DMD, DrPH
University of Florida College of Dentistry
stomar@dental.ufl.edu
Topics to be Covered

- Status of oral health and access to care
- Why policy change is essential to change the situation
- Where I’m coming from – various hats
- Some examples
- Lessons learned
Caries experience among 3rd graders
NOHSS, 28 States, 1998-2008

http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/nohss/IndicatorV.asp?Indicator=2&OrderBy=2
Percentage of 3rd Grade students with untreated tooth decay. NOHSS, 28 States, 1998-2009

http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/nohss/IndicatorV.asp?Indicator=3&OrderBy=2
Percentage of 3rd Grade students with Sealants. NOHSS, 28 States, 1998-2009

http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/nohss/IndicatorV.asp?Indicator=1&OrderBy=2
# The State of Florida’s Surveillance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
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<tr>
<td>% Kindergarteners with Untreated Caries</td>
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<td>% Kindergarteners with Caries Experience</td>
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<td>% Head Start Children w/ Untreated Caries</td>
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<td>% Head Start Children with ECC</td>
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<td>% Head Start Children w/ caries experience</td>
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<td>% 3rd Graders with Untreated Caries</td>
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<td>% 3rd Graders with Caries Experience</td>
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<td>% 9th Graders with Untreated Caries</td>
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<td>% 9th Graders with Caries Experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>% 3rd Graders w/ sealant on ≥1 Perm. 1st molar</td>
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<td>% 9th Graders w/ sealant on ≥1 Perm. 1st molar</td>
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Proportion of Florida adults with unmet dental needs due to cost, by household income

2007 Florida BRFSS
Fluoridation Status, 2006

Percent of Population on Public Water Systems Receiving Fluoridated Water - 2006

Healthy People 2010 Target: 75%
Consumer Price Index
United States, 1960-2008

Current Reality in America

- Lots of limited access and unmet dental needs
- Underutilized prevention technology
- Dental care costs rising faster than nearly all other goods and services
- Workforce issues
- Systemic problems cannot be solved only at clinic level
Policy Development: An Essential Public Health Service

Includes:

- Development of policy to protect oral health of the public and to guide public health practice
- Community-level planning for oral health improvement
- Alignment of resources and strategies with community oral health improvement plan
- Development of legislation, codes, rules, regulations, and other policies to enable essential public health services, supporting individual, community, and state health efforts
Influencing Policy: Some Personal Experiences in Various Roles

- Public health dentist
- AAPHD past president
- Educator
- Researcher
- Community member
- Not a policy wonk!
Major push by AAPHD during health care reform to reduce barriers to dental public health training

Promoted expanded DPH workforce as essential component of oral health care

Worked with ADA and Children’s Dental Health Project

Culminated in recent HRSA grants that fund MPH tuition for pre- and postdoctoral dental trainees
AAPHD’s Principles on Health Care Reform included: “Regulation and licensure of oral health care personnel should allow the most cost-effective use of the oral health workforce.”

Kellogg and Josiah Macy Foundations approached AAPHD to spearhead effort to develop model curriculum for DTs.

- Focus on education
- Project on time and budget
Gainesville 1st city in FL to fluoridate (1949)
Anti-fluoridationists sought to use 50th anniversary to stop fluoridation in Gainesville, use that success to kill it statewide
Formed coalition of UF College of Dentistry, Alachua Co. Health Dept., Alachua Co. Dental Assoc., FL Dental Assoc., GRU
Testimony before City Council by dental faculty, students, & dean; local dentists, RDHs, nurses
Local editorials, radio interviews
Unanimous vote to maintain fluoridation
Alachua County Community Health Offering Innovative Care and Educational Services (CHOICES) Program

- Designed to increase health care access for low-income workers without health insurance
- UF College of Dentistry worked with other community partners to advocate for .25% sales tax to fund it; passed by voters 2005
- UFCD Dean Teresa Dolan sits on Advisory Board
- Raised $48 million through FY 2009
- $700K spent on dental through FY 2009
Alachua County School-Based Sealant Program

- No dental services provided by County Health Dept
- Made the case to School Board that prevention services is the best way to get started
- Made case to Oral Health America that parts of county have little access to dental care, would benefit from sealant program; received $20K
- Partnership among United Way, UF College of Dentistry, Alachua County Health Dept, School Board of Alachua County
- Launching program at 1st school next week!
- Initiative has led to oral health becoming policy priority for health department and school board
Serve on Tobacco-Free Alachua Coalition and Health Gators Coalition Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Taskforce

Collected and analyzed data on tobacco use, policies, and attitudes on UF campus

Developed report and recommendations, submitted to UF President Machen

UF went tobacco-free on July 1, 2010!
Some Lessons Learned

- Strength in coalitions
- There’s nothing like science and data to help build a case for policy development
- Can also use the absence of data to advocate for investment in data collection
- Dentists and dental hygienists have very high credibility when advocating policy changes that benefit the public’s health