Community Dental Health Coordinator

Like the Community Health workers, the Community Dental Health Coordinators (CDHCs) are frontline dental health workers who have a close understanding of the community they serve. CDHCs are liaisons between patients, physicians, dentists, community health centers, and other social service agencies to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competency of service delivery.

CDHC Core Competencies

After a CDHC completes the training program, they will be able to:

- Develop and implement community-based oral health prevention and promotion programs, including:
  - Support water fluoridation
  - Collaborate with community leaders to develop oral health initiatives
  - Collaborate with organizations such as Women, Infants and Children Programs; Head Start; mental health organizations; healthy baby initiatives; long-term care providers; hospices; senior citizen centers; substance abuse clinics; voluntary health agencies; chambers of commerce; local businesses, school boards and others

- Prioritize population and patient groups:
  - Identify potential emergent dental care needs
  - Communicate with supervising dentists and physicians, and other primary care providers
  - Develop referral recommendations for patients needing care from dentists and physicians
  - Develop oral preventive recommendations for approval by supervising dentists

- Collect health data:
  - Medical and dental histories
  - Dental health screening and assessment (data collection) via: Visual inspection of the oral cavity for suspected carious lesions (cavities) and other hard tissue anomalies; visual soft tissue inspection; taking radiographs (x-rays) as appropriate
  - Monitor vital signs
  - Dental charting

- Provide administrative support:
  - Collaborate with community partners, including phone management and communication skills
  - Maintain supply inventory
  - Make appointments and managing recall systems
  - Operate business equipment, including computers
  - Complete and process appropriate reimbursement papers and online forms
  - Facilitate basic legal and regulatory compliance (e.g., HIPAA, informed consent)

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