

# Washington State Collaborative Oral Health Improvement Plan 2009–2014



Washington State  
Oral Health Coalition

November 2009

For more information or additional copies of this plan,  
contact the Washington State Oral Health Coalition at:  
**[info@ws-ohc.org](mailto:info@ws-ohc.org)**

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Washington State Oral Health Coalition  
32 Local Oral Health Coalitions  
Children's Health Alliance

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American Indian Health Commission – Washington  
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Local Health Jurisdictions Oral Health Programs  
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Portland Area Indian Health Board  
Seattle Indian Health Board  
State Board of Health  
Washington Education Association

## **Professional Associations/ Licensing Boards**

Washington State Dental Association  
Washington State Dental Hygienists' Association  
Washington Alliance of Dental Hygiene Practitioners  
Washington State Medical Association  
Washington State Nursing Association  
Washington Denturists Association  
Dental Quality Assurance Commission  
Dental Hygiene Examining Committee  
Board of Denturists  
Medical Quality Assurance Commission  
Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission  
Board of Pharmacy

## **Community Health Clinics**

Washington Association of Community and Migrant  
Health Centers  
Washington Free Clinic Association  
Charitable Dental Clinics  
Mobile Dental Clinics

## **Dental Insurers**

Group Health Cooperative  
Washington Association of Health Plans  
Washington Dental Service – Delta Dental  
Willamette Dental Washington

## **Oral Health Education Consortium**

University of Washington School of Dentistry Programs,  
Departments, and Residencies

Dental Residencies at: NW Dental Residency, Yakima;  
Swedish Medical Center General Practice Residency

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College, Clark College, Columbia Basin College,  
Eastern Washington University, Lake Washington  
Technical College, Pierce College, Seattle Central  
Community College, Shoreline Community College,  
University of Washington School of Dentistry, Yakima  
Valley Community College

Expanded-Function Dental Auxiliary Programs at:  
Seattle Central Community College, South Puget  
Sound Community College, and Spokane Community  
College

Dental Assisting Programs at: Apollo College, Bates  
Technical College, Bellingham Technical College,  
Clover Park Technical College, Lake Washington  
Technical College, Renton Technical College, Seattle  
Vocational Institute, and South Puget Sound  
Community College

Denturist Program at Bates Technical College

Northwest AIDS Education and Training Center

Washington Area Health Education Centers

Washington State Medical Home

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**Kelli Bohanon**, M.Ed., Head Start Office, Department of Early Learning

**Woody Crow**, DDS, MPH, Dental Consultant, Portland Area Indian Health Board

**Donna Dorris**, Senior Health Policy Analyst, Office of the Insurance Commissioner

**John Davis**, DDS, Department of Social and Health Services/HRSA (Medicaid)

**David Hemion**, Assistant Executive Director, Washington State Dental Association

**Ron Inge**, DDS, Vice-President, Washington Dental Service – Delta Dental

**Mary Looker**, CEO, Washington Association of Community and Migrant Health Centers

**Blake Maresh**, Executive Director, Washington State Department of Health, Office of Health Professions & Facilities

**Connie Mix-Clark**, RDH, Health Care Authority Community Health Services

**Diane Oakes**, Manager, Washington Dental Service Foundation

**Gene Patterson**, Executive Director, Washington State Dental Hygienists' Association

**Bill Riley**, Tribal Health Director, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, American Indian Health Commission – Washington

**Anita Rodriguez**, RDH, President, Washington Alliance of Dental Hygiene Practitioners

**Pat Shaw**, RN, Clark County, Community Health Leadership Forum for the Local Health Jurisdictions

**Laura Smith**, CEO, Washington Dental Service Foundation

**Martha Somerman**, DDS, Dean, University Washington School of Dentistry

**Kris Sparks**, Manager, Department of Health Rural Health Programs

**Kathy TeKolste**, MD, Washington State Medical Home

**Gayle Thronson**, RN, M.Ed., Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

**Wendy Mouradian**, MD, University Washington Schools of Dentistry and Medicine

**Christie Waddington**, Chair, Washington State Oral Health Coalition

**Tara Wolff**, Policy Advisor, Washington State Board of Health

**Divesh Byrappagari**, DDS, MSD, Washington State Department of Health Oral Health Program

**Joseli Alves-Dunkerson**, DDS, MPH, MBA, Manager, Washington State Department of Health Oral Health Program

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## Disclaimer

This plan was produced under the direction of the Oral Health Partnership Committee and the collaboration and input of hundreds of dental and medical professionals and other key stakeholders from the private and public sectors. The goals and objectives in this report are those of the stakeholders and do not necessarily represent the views of any state agency. Thanks are extended to the many individuals who gave so much of their time and expertise to the development of this plan. The Implementation Committee and State Oral Health Coalition will house and follow up with the strategies developed in this Plan.



# Introduction

Oral health is a critical component of general health and wellbeing. In 2000, the Surgeon General called attention to the silent epidemic of oral diseases in our country. Nevertheless, oral health continued to be taken for granted not only by individuals but also by providers, insurers, and policy makers. The resulting lack of funding and system capacity has led to critical gaps in access to preventive and restorative oral health services. In the most tragic cases, these gaps led to needless deaths due to untreated dental infections.

This document represents the first Oral Health State Plan designed to address the oral health needs of Washington residents. As one of the most innovative states in the nation, Washington has worked hard to identify the oral health needs of its population and to leverage existing resources to promote prevention and access to care. Nevertheless, oral health disparities persist and call for a systems approach.

The State Oral Health Plan development process was highly collaborative; it included extensive input and involvement of more than 100 key partners and stakeholders and hundreds of individuals from the public and all health professions. Initially, a Partnership Steering Committee was established to direct the planning process. Then, electronic surveys were distributed to health professionals and to the public (English and Spanish versions) with more than 600 respondents overall. More than 60 web-based or in-person sessions were conducted with different stakeholder groups from the public, private, academic, and community-based sectors. Local oral health programs provided regular input and added a local perspective to the Plan.

Finally, an Oral Health Education Consortium was convened representing more than two dozen institutions with dental and allied dental education programs; this group provided detailed input from the academic and research sector. This extensive breadth and depth of input contributed to the comprehensiveness of this plan, demonstrating the strong commitment of so many key stakeholders.

As a result of this joint leadership and collaboration, a vision and guiding principles were established and six strategic areas were defined:

- I. System Infrastructure
- II. Oral Health Data
- III. Oral Health Promotion
- IV. Oral Disease Prevention
- V. Access to Care
- VI. Implementation and Sustainability

Goals and objectives were collaboratively developed for each of these strategic areas. The result is a State Plan that can be used as a tool to identify the best use of current and future resources as we all strive to improve the oral health of our state's population.

You are invited to read this document and learn more about the oral health resources, challenges, and solutions related to our state. Your active participation in the implementation of this plan is welcome. To learn more about how to participate, please contact the Washington State Oral Health Coalition at [info@ws-ohc.org](mailto:info@ws-ohc.org).



## Our Vision

**Oral health is a critical component of overall health and well-being throughout the life span. We envision a Washington where we ensure that:**

- Every person is free from oral disease and enjoys optimal oral health;
- Every lay person and health professional understands the importance of oral health and its relationship to overall health and wellness;
- Prevention and health promotion are essential; and
- Oral health care is funded so that it is available, accessible, affordable, effective, and efficient.

## Our Guiding Principles

**The Oral Health Plan goals and objectives build on the success of our existing activities to:**

- Prevent oral disease, sustain good oral health, and ensure access to needed oral health services;
- Advocate for health policy to provide funding to sustain access and availability of oral health services for all Washington residents;
- Promote research-based and culturally-appropriate activities related to oral health promotion and treatment;
- Support and engage individuals and families in making healthy decisions that result in sustaining their own good oral health; and
- Engage community groups, health care professionals and educators, and private and public sectors to share responsibility for the oral health needs of all Washington residents.



# STRATEGIC AREA I: System Infrastructure

**RATIONALE:** Adequate infrastructure is needed to enhance the effectiveness of a system of care. Important components of infrastructure include: partnerships, funding, and technology.



## Goal 1: Partnerships within Communities.

**Mobilize and empower the public and community-based organizations to collectively identify and implement solutions for their oral health needs.**

### Objective 1.1:

Increase the number of community groups that work to identify oral health needs and define solutions through advocacy and leveraging of resources by June 2010.

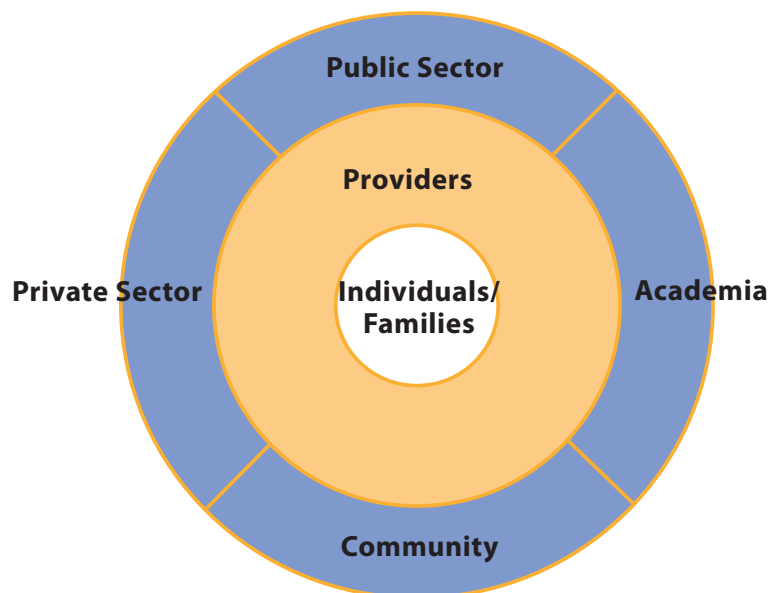
## Goal 2: Partnerships across Professions.

**Strengthen collaboration across health professions and related services in the public and private sectors.**

### Objective 2.1:

Increase interaction among health professionals, educators, and social service organizations in order to optimize utilization of resources and follow best and promising practices by June 2011.

## A simplified view of the Oral Health System



SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE



# STRATEGIC AREA I:

## System Infrastructure (continued)

### Goal 3: Funding.

**Maintain and/or increase funding to provide Washington residents needed preventive and restorative oral health services.**

#### Objective 3.1:

Work with policy makers and state agencies to maintain and/or increase funding for Medicaid and Public Health (State and Local Oral Health Programs), including the development of a financial case for investing in oral health by December 2013.

#### Objective 3.2:

Work with policy makers and state agencies to maintain and/or increase funding to expand the state's community health clinics that care for the underserved by December 2013.

#### Objective 3.3:

Work with policy makers and state agencies to maintain and/or increase funding to train and expand the oral health workforce—including dental students, dental residents and providers—that provide oral health services in underserved areas by December 2013.



### Goal 4: Technology.

**Expand the use of proven technology to facilitate oral health promotion, dental education, and delivery of oral health services statewide.**

#### Objective 4.1:

Increase the use of e-health communication for oral health promotion, and the use of tele-health for dental education and delivery of clinical services by June 2013.

#### Objective 4.2:

Invest in the integration of electronic dental and medical records to improve communication among medical and dental providers by July 2012.

# SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE

## STRATEGIC AREA II: Oral Health Data

**RATIONALE:** To be effective, policies and programs need to be based on sound information, such as that obtained through surveillance, research, and program evaluation.

### Goal 5: Surveillance.

**Expand the existing oral health surveillance system to provide comprehensive and timely reporting of oral health needs, outcomes, and disparities.**

#### Objective 5.1:

Identify data gaps and develop appropriate surveillance data indicators by December 2010.

#### Objective 5.2:

Share summarized surveillance information through the health care system to local public health, educational institutions, insurers, social services, policy makers, community-based organizations, community-health clinics and other partners as appropriate by June 2011.

### Goal 6: Research.

**Develop and promote a research agenda that addresses the need for basic, translational, and clinical research to advance oral health and eliminate oral health disparities.**

#### Objective 6.1:

Develop and share a relevant research agenda to improve the oral health of the state's population by December 2010.

### Goal 7: Program Evaluation.

**Develop and implement a systematic methodology to evaluate oral health programs across the state.**

#### Objective 7.1:

Determine and implement outcome measures as quality improvement tools to evaluate oral health programs by December 2011.



#### Oral Health Data Sources:

*Smile Survey*

*Healthy People 2010*

*Washington Behavioral Risk  
Factor Surveillance System*

*Community Health Centers*

*National Survey on Children  
with Special Needs*

*Washington Cancer Registry*

*Washington Birth Defects  
Surveillance System*

*NHANES*

*WSDA Dental Workforce  
Survey*

*Washington State Medicaid*

*National Children's Health  
Survey*

*Health Care Authority*

*American Dental Education  
Association*

*University of Washington  
School of Dentistry*

*Office of Drinking Water*

*PRAMS*

*Healthy Youth Survey*

*among other sources*

# ORAL HEALTH DATA

## STRATEGIC AREA III: Oral Health Promotion

**RATIONALE:** Raising oral health awareness of communities, policy-makers and professionals is an important step toward promoting healthy lifestyles and appropriate programs and policies.

### Goal 8: Awareness.

Raise oral health awareness in order to build support for policies and resources to address the state's oral health needs.



#### Objective 8.1:

Develop and share evidence-based and consistent oral health messages (as related to general health, chronic diseases, and achievements at school and work) to help the people and community-based organizations make healthy choices by December 2012.

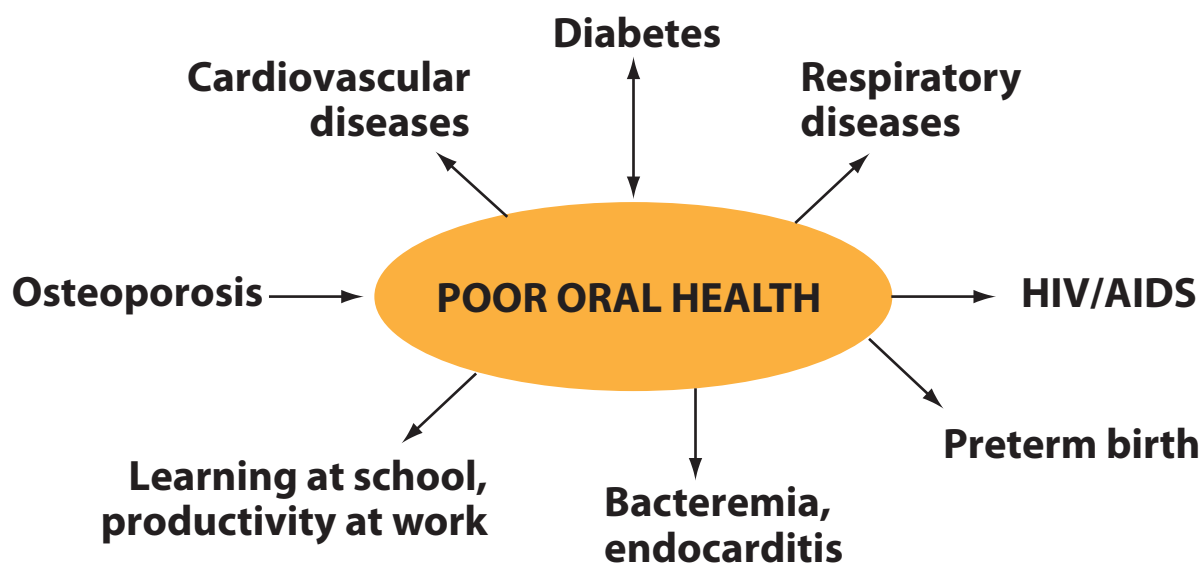
#### Objective 8.2:

Develop and share relevant oral health information with policy makers to help build state and local health policy agendas aimed at decreasing oral health disparities in Washington by June 2013.

#### Objective 8.3:

Develop and/or share evidence-based guidelines and best practices with health professionals and educators related to clinical and community-based oral health interventions by June 2011.

### Poor oral health affects the whole body



## STRATEGIC AREA IV: Oral Disease Prevention

**RATIONALE:** Population-based disease prevention is the most effective approach to decrease health disparities and reduce costs for the health care system. The U.S. Preventive Services Taskforce recommends community water fluoridation and school-based dental sealant programs as effective population-based interventions to reduce dental decay. Other preventive measures include risk assessment, topical fluorides, tobacco cessation advice, and oral cancer screening.



### Goal 9: Prevention.

**Promote evidence-based preventive activities that sustain oral health and prevent oral disease.**

#### Objective 9.1:

Increase the proportion of our state's population served by public systems with community water fluoridation by December 2013.

#### Objective 9.2:

Increase the use of dental sealants in public and private settings by December 2012.

#### Objective 9.3:

Increase the use of caries risk assessment by health professionals by December 2012.

#### Objective 9.4:

Increase the use of professionally applied fluorides in public and private settings by December 2012.

#### Objective 9.5:

Increase the use of oral cancer screenings by health care providers by December 2012.

#### Objective 9.6:

Increase the use of tobacco cessation advice in dental offices by December 2012.



# ORAL DISEASE PREVENTION

## STRATEGIC AREA V: Access to Care

**RATIONALE:** Access to oral health care is a critical component in decreasing health disparities. Access is a complex issue influenced by several factors, such as availability of services, workforce, and insurance coverage.

### Goal 10: Service Availability.

**Expand access to early intervention and high quality oral health services by addressing unmet needs and known barriers in urban and rural areas.**

#### Objective 10.1:

Increase availability of public and private oral health services to all Washington residents by December 2013.

#### Objective 10.2:

Improve access to oral health care services for individuals from special populations (including pregnant women, children with special needs, people with disabilities, people with mental illness, people with HIV/AIDS, tribes, communities of color, the under/uninsured, the incarcerated, the undocumented, among others) by December 2013.

### Goal 11: Workforce.

**Increase the effectiveness of the oral health workforce by increasing its diversity, enhancing its education, and strengthening its flexibility.**

#### Objective 11.1:

Increase funding and recruitment efforts for diversity-based scholarships, internships, outreach activities, and pipeline programs in dental and allied dental education by December 2013.

#### Objective 11.2:

Evaluate dental and allied dental educational programs in their ability to address the state population's oral health needs and disparities by June 2011.

#### Objective 11.3:

Increase access to high quality oral health care by expanding the roles of oral health and medical providers and settings through accredited education and competency development by June 2012.





## STRATEGIC AREA V: Access to Care (continued)

### Goal 12: Insurance.

Make dental insurance available and affordable to all Washington residents, including those with special needs.

#### Objective 12.1:

Increase the proportion of Washington residents who have dental insurance coverage by December 2012.



“

*I was hoping you could assist me in finding affordable dental care.*

*I am 43 years old and disabled. I have Medicare and receive a disability check from Social Security for \$1,074.00 a month.*

*My dental work was done when I was a child. Now all my fillings are falling out, resulting in infection, tooth breakage, and loss. I have already lost two teeth and have two more that are very painful. As stated above, I have very little income.*

*This is such a problem, I am willing to eat rice every day to have some funds to get my teeth fixed. I do not want to get them pulled, as offered by most low cost dentists. I want to keep the teeth I have, as you can imagine.*

*Thank you in advance for your time and help.*

C.B.

”

# ACCESS TO CARE

# STRATEGIC AREA VI: Implementation and Sustainability

## IMPLEMENTATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

**RATIONALE:** A dedicated group of individuals and organizations is necessary to successfully implement any collaborative strategic plan and sustain its accomplishments. Such implementation process needs to be evaluated periodically. Challenges, successes, and lessons learned need to be shared and used for the revision of the plan.

### Goal 13: Implementation.

Successfully implement the State Oral Health Plan through participation of committed statewide oral health leadership in the State Oral Health Coalition.

#### Objective 13.1:

A group of committed statewide oral health leadership will start to work collaboratively by February 2010 on the oversight, direction, and monitoring of the next phases of the State Plan, including:

- Development of a work plan with detailed information on how to accomplish each goal and objective;
- Creation of task forces to focus on specific goals and/or objectives;
- Seeking and sustaining the engagement and commitment of communities, policy makers, providers and businesses to the implementation and sustainability of the State Plan's goals and objectives.

#### Objective 13.2:

Conduct a mid-point evaluation and progress report of the State Oral Health Plan by December 2012.



# Partnership Alignment Wheel

## GOAL 13: Implementation.

Successfully implement the State Oral Health Plan through participation of committed statewide oral health leadership in the State Oral Health Coalition.

## GOAL 12: Insurance.

Make dental insurance available and affordable to all Washington residents, including those with special needs.

## GOAL 11: Workforce.

Increase the effectiveness of the oral health workforce by increasing its diversity, enhancing its education, and strengthening its flexibility.

## GOAL 10: Service Availability.

Expand access to early intervention and high quality oral health services by addressing unmet needs and known barriers in urban and rural areas.

## GOAL 9: Prevention.

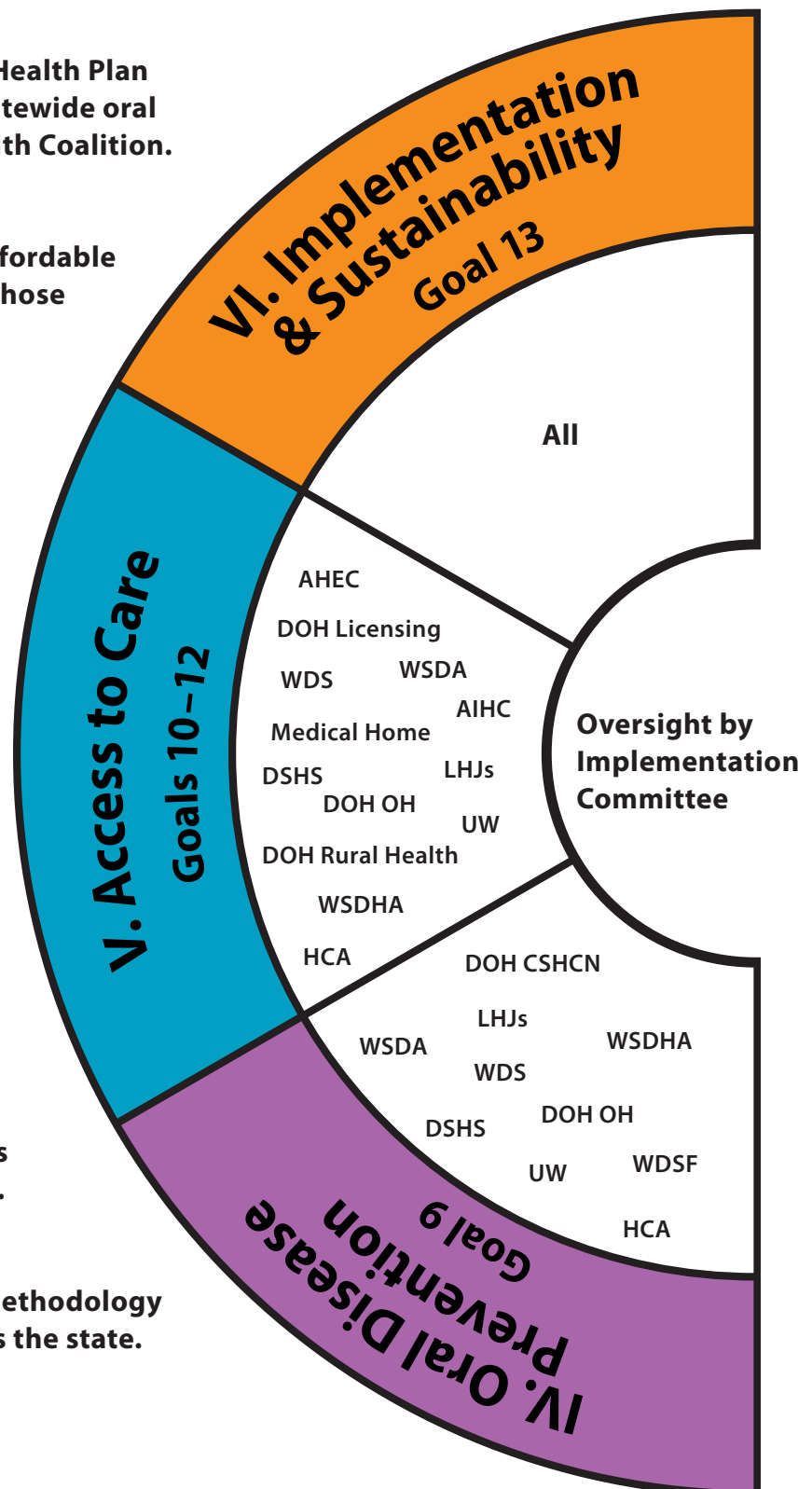
Promote evidence-based preventive activities that sustain oral health and prevent oral disease.

## GOAL 8: Awareness.

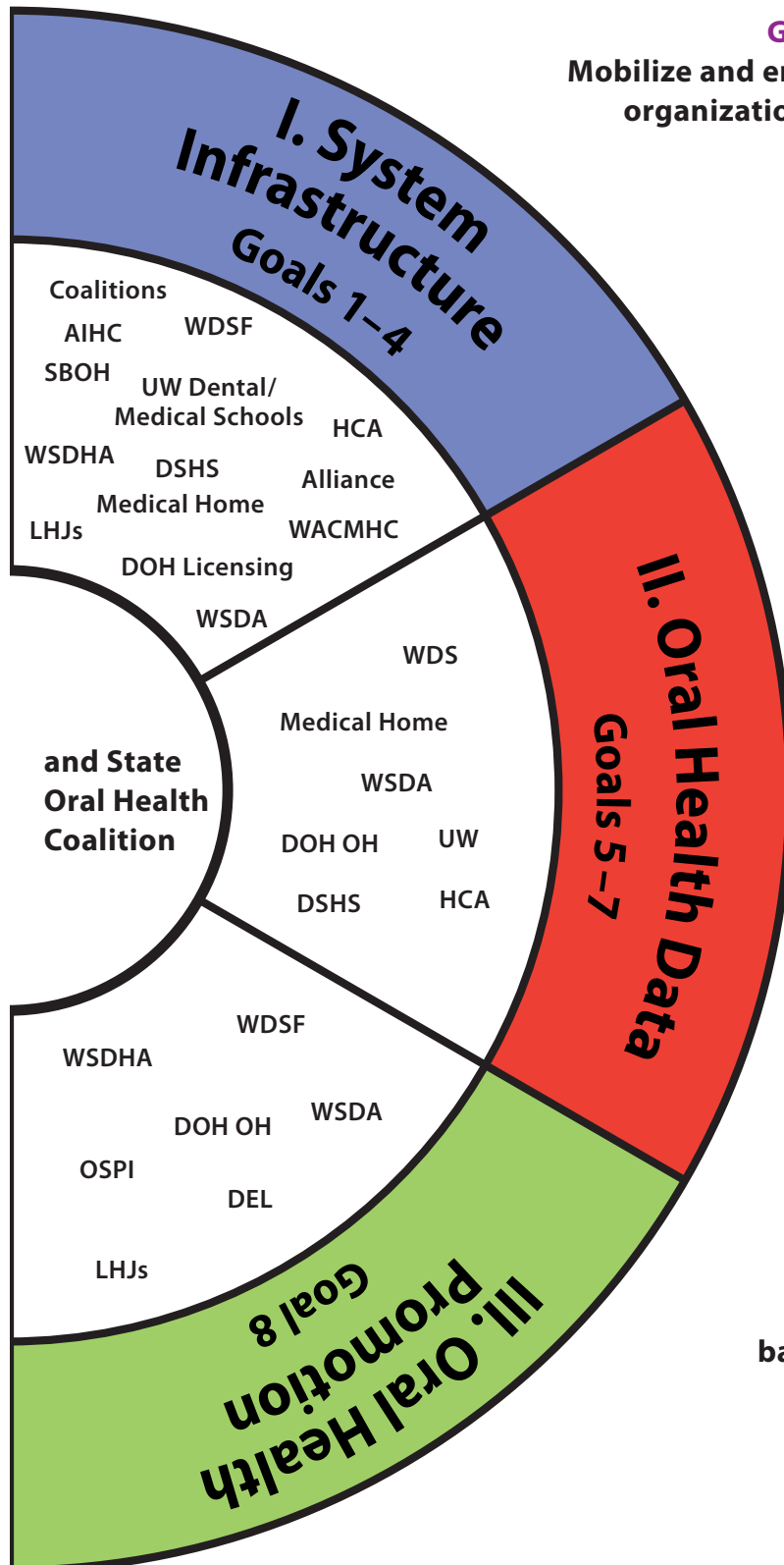
Raise oral health awareness in order to build support for policies and resources to address the state's oral health needs.

## GOAL 7: Program Evaluation.

Develop and implement a systematic methodology to evaluate oral health programs across the state.



**The organizations below volunteered their participation in the implementation of the following goals of this plan.**



**GOAL 1: Partnerships within Communities.**

Mobilize and empower the public and community-based organizations to collectively identify and implement solutions for their oral health needs.

**GOAL 2: Partnerships across Professions.**

Strengthen collaboration across health professions and related services in the public and private sectors.

**GOAL 3: Funding.**

Maintain and/or increase funding to provide Washington residents needed preventive and restorative oral health services.

**GOAL 4: Technology.**

Expand the use of proven technology to facilitate oral health promotion, dental education, and delivery of oral health services statewide.

**GOAL 5: Surveillance.**

Expand the existing oral health surveillance system to provide comprehensive and timely reporting of oral health needs, outcomes, and disparities.

**GOAL 6: Research.**

Develop and promote a research agenda that addresses the need for basic, translational, and clinical research to advance oral health and eliminate oral health disparities.

# Glossary

## Acronyms

AAA	Area Agencies on Aging
ADHP	Alliance of Dental Hygiene Practitioners
AHEC	Area Health Education Centers
AIHC	American Indian Health Commission, Washington
BOD	Board of Denturists
BOP	Board of Pharmacy
CHA	Children's Health Alliance
CHLF	Community Health Leadership Forum
RDA	Registered Dental Assistants
DEL	Department of Early Learning
DHEC	Dental Hygiene Examining Committee
DOH OH	Department of Health – Oral Health Program
DOH Licensing	Department of Health – Health Professions and Facilities
DQAC	Dental Quality Assurance Commission
DSHS	Department of Social and Health Services (Medicaid)
EFDA	Expanded-Function Dental Auxiliaries
HCA	Health Care Authority
LHJs	Local Health Jurisdictions
Local OHC	Local Oral Health Coalitions
MQAC	Medical Quality Assurance Commission
NCQAC	Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission
OHF	WA Oral Health Foundation
OHI	Oral Health Institute
OIC	Office of the Insurance Commissioner
OSPI	Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction
PAIHB	Portland Area Indian Health Board
RDH	Dental Hygiene
SBOH	State Board of Health
SIHB	Seattle Indian Health Board
UW-SOD	University of Washington School of Dentistry
WACMHC	Washington Association of Community and Migrant Health Centers
WAFC	Washington Association of Free Clinics
WAHP	Washington Association of Health Plans
WAMH	Washington State Medical Home
WDS	Washington Dental Service – Delta Dental

WDSF	Washington Dental Service Foundation
WHF	Washington Health Foundation
WSDA	Washington State Dental Association
WSDHA	Washington State Dental Hygienists' Association
WSMA	Washington State Medical Association
WSNA	Washington State Nursing Association
WS-OHC	Washington State Oral Health Coalition

## Groups

**Allied Dental Professionals:**  
includes Dental Hygienists, Expanded-Function Dental Auxiliaries, Dental Assistants, and Denturists.

**Community Health Clinics:**  
includes Community Health Centers, Free Clinics, Rural Health Clinics, Public Health Clinics, Mobile Dental Clinics, and Tribal Clinics.

**Mobile Dental Clinics:**  
includes all mobile dental services provided in schools, nursing homes, senior centers, homes, and communities around the state.

**Oral Health Education Consortium:**  
group of oral health educational institutions that help prepare the future workforce, including: dental school, dental hygiene programs, EFDA programs, dental assisting programs, denturist programs, Area Health Education Centers, and other related organizations.

**Special Populations:**  
includes those individuals with special health care needs, such as pregnant women, children with special needs, people with disabilities, people with mental illness, people with HIV/AIDS, tribes, communities of color, the under/uninsured, the incarcerated, the homeless, the undocumented, among others.



# Link to Appendices

## **Appendix A: The Impact of Oral Diseases on the Lives of Washingtonians**

This 2007 online document contains statewide information on oral diseases, preventive measures, workforce, and access to care.

## **Appendix B: Washington State Oral Health Workforce Report**

This 2009 document provides information on the training and services related to the oral health workforce in Washington.

## **Appendix C: Prioritization Matrix**

The matrix describes the prioritization score given by stakeholders to the State Plan objectives and action steps.

## **Appendix D: Measurement Indicators**

These indicators will be used to track the accomplishment of each of the objectives in this State Plan.

## **Appendix E: Healthy People 2020 Oral Health Goals and Objectives**

This is a set of 10-year national objectives for promoting oral health and preventing oral disease.

**Washington State Oral Health Coalition Web Site:**  
**<http://www.ws-ohc.org/plan.htm>**





Washington State  
Oral Health Coalition  
P. O. Box 47880  
Olympia, WA 98504