

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

UPDATE ON ORAL HEALTH SERVICES

**Presented to
Governor Bill Haslam
and
Tennessee Dental Association**

February 3, 2016

**John J. Dreyzehner, MD, MPH, FACOEM
Commissioner**



STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

JOHN J. DREYZEHNER, MD, MPH
COMMISSIONER

BILL HASLAM
GOVERNOR

April 15, 2016

The Honorable Bill Haslam, Governor
Tennessee State Capitol
Nashville, TN 37243-0001

Dear Governor Haslam:

The Department of Health is pleased to provide you a copy of the *Tennessee Department of Health's 2015 Annual Report on Oral Health Services*. In accordance with Tennessee Code Annotated 68-1-303(b), the Department shall submit an annual report to the Governor and the Tennessee State Dental Association regarding the oral health services provided to Tennesseans.

The Department's commitment to protecting, promoting, and improving the oral health of people in Tennessee was actualized by the provision of more than 298,300 preventive sealants to more than 49,100 at risk children in school settings; over 17,000 fluoride varnish applications to at risk children in health department settings; more than 199,600 clinical dental services to over 27,600 individuals. Almost 19,000 adult extractions and over 1,100 dental cleanings were provided by grant recipients of funding for emergency dental services at a cost for Fiscal Year 2015 of \$15,370,659 of which \$6,550,622 were state dollars. During Fiscal Year 2015, a total of 102,531 unique individuals received 535,109 dental services through Tennessee Department of Health programs and grants.

If I can be of any additional assistance, please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John J. Dreyzehner".

John J. Dreyzehner, MD, MPH, FACOEM
Commissioner

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I

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The mission of the Tennessee Department of Health is to protect, promote, and improve the health and prosperity of people in Tennessee. Operating within this mission the Tennessee Department of Health's Oral Health Services (OHS) strives to prevent and control oral diseases through organized community efforts. The following information is an outline of those efforts during Fiscal Year 2015. The Tennessee Department of Health dental program expenditures for Fiscal Year 2015 were \$15,370,659 and are broken down by each program below.

Key Service Deliveries Fiscal Year 15

Oral Disease Prevention—Nurse's Fluoride Varnish Program

- An expenditure of \$83,563 (calculations based on an average of \$4.91 per application) provided 17,019 at risk children with oral health screenings, referrals, and fluoride varnish applications by Public Health Nurses in Tennessee Department of Health medical clinics.

School-Based Dental Prevention Project (SBDPP)

- An expenditure of \$6,651,589 provided more than 17,899 at risk children with dental screenings, 58,930 sealant screenings, 4,899 dental exams, 186,168 with oral health education, and 49,125 received 298,345 sealants in 386 schools at an average cost of \$22.29 per sealant.

Public Health Dental Clinical Facilities

- An expenditure of \$8,182,189 provided 20,879 children with 33,930 dental visits and 6,799 adults with 12,563 visits to the 45 staffed Department of Health rural dental clinics. A total of 27,678 individuals made 46,493 patient visits receiving 199,618 dental services (154,820 to children) at an average cost of \$40.99 per service.

Adult Dental Funding Program

- An expenditure of \$536,880 provided 8,709 individuals with 18,938 dental extractions and 1,189 dental cleaning, at a cost of \$30 each. The grants were awarded by the Department for emergency dental services for adults.¹

¹ Statement of compliance with 2012 Tenn. Pub. Acts, ch. 1061 (the "Eligibility Verification for Entitlements Act" as required by Tenn. Code Ann. § 4-57-106(b). The Tennessee Department of Health, including local health departments, boards and commissions, has implemented protocols and policies to verify that every adult applicant for "public benefits" is an United States citizen or a "qualified alien," within the meaning of Chapter 1061.

Distribution of Information

- The Department of Health distributed traditional paper literature covering a broad range of oral health information to other agencies and the general public. The Department has an Oral Health Services website to provide information to public health professionals, parents, community leaders, and the general public.

II

INTRODUCTION

This report is provided in response to Tennessee Code Annotated 68-1-303(b), which requires the Commissioner of Health to provide an annual report to the Governor and the Tennessee State Dental Association (TDA) on the work done by and under the Commissioner in regards to distribution of literature throughout the state to inform the population of the “proper way to care for teeth”.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states tooth decay (cavities) is one of the most common chronic conditions of childhood in the United States and nearly one-third of all adults in the United States have untreated tooth decay. Tooth decay is a threat to oral health across the lifespan. The mission of the Department of Health is to protect, promote, and improve the health and prosperity of people in Tennessee. In advancement of this goal, the Department’s Oral Health Services Section (OHS) operates on the fundamental principles of preventing and controlling oral diseases through organized community efforts. Statewide school-based dental programs continue to offer high-risk populations preventive services to include sealants, oral health education, and screenings to identify children with unmet dental needs, referrals for these children, and follow-up on those children with urgent needs. Comprehensive dental services for children and emergency dental care to adults, unable to access care in the private system, are provided in fixed facilities located in rural health departments statewide. In an effort to improve access to dental services for high risk children in underserved areas, the Tennessee Department of Health partners with local school systems to offer a School Transport Program. The local school system transports target population children to local health department dental clinics, which provide comprehensive dental services. Currently the Department operates one mobile dental clinic which provides comprehensive care at local health departments without a dental clinic. Three clinical sites have partnered with area dental colleges, Meharry Medical College and the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, where fourth year dental students rotate through the clinic and help provide comprehensive dental services to a targeted adult population.

Summary of Dental Services

Program	Number Served	Number of Services
Nurse’s Fluoride Varnish Program	17,019	17,019
School Based Dental Prevention Program (Sealants)	49,125 (children)	298,345 (teeth sealed)
Public Health Rural Dental Clinical Program	27,678 (20,879 to children)	199,618 (154,820 to children)
Adult Dental Funding Program	8,709	20,127

Total	102,531	535,109
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III

ORAL HEALTH

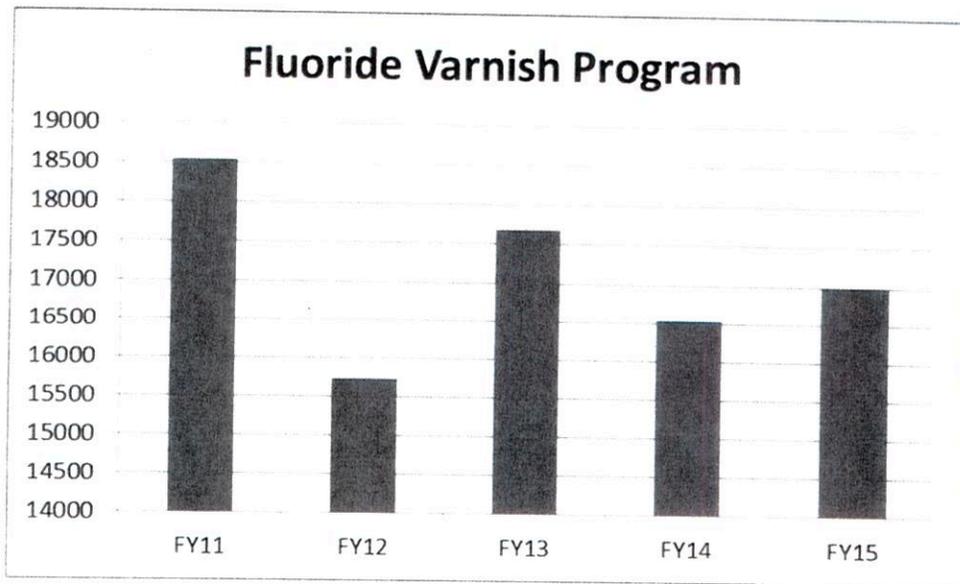
A. Oral Disease Prevention

1. *Nurse's Fluoride Varnish Program*

Tennessee Code Annotated 63-5-109(14) allows Public Health Nurses to apply fluoride varnish to at risk underserved persons in public health clinics.

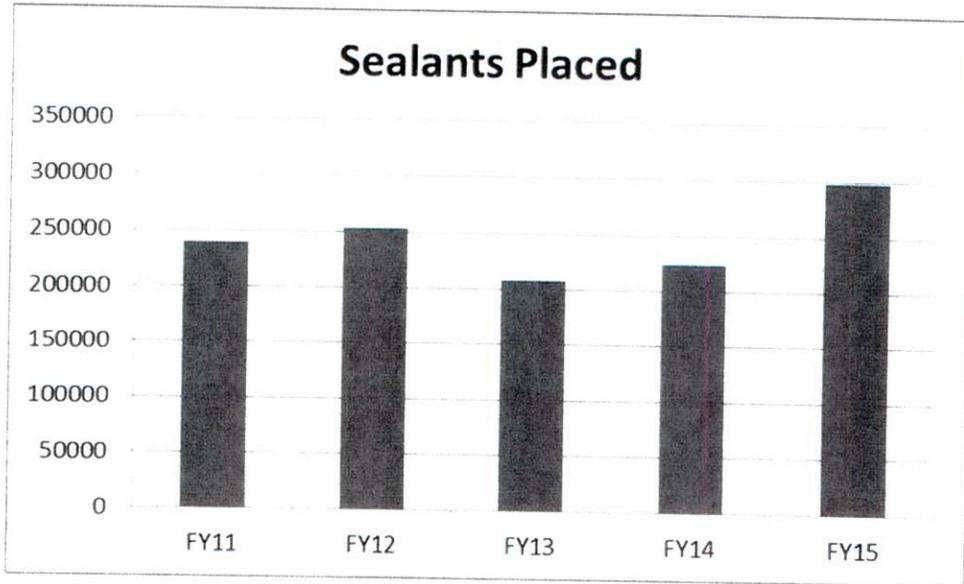
The Nurse's Fluoride Varnish Program targets children 0-5 years of age being seen in health department medical clinics. Nursing staff screen these children and refer them to dental providers in addition to applying fluoride varnish.

During Fiscal Year 2015, 17,019 (12,773 were children 0-5 years of age) at risk children were screened, referred, and had fluoride varnish applied by nursing staff in Tennessee Department of Health medical clinics.



2. *School-Based Dental Prevention Program (SBDPP)*

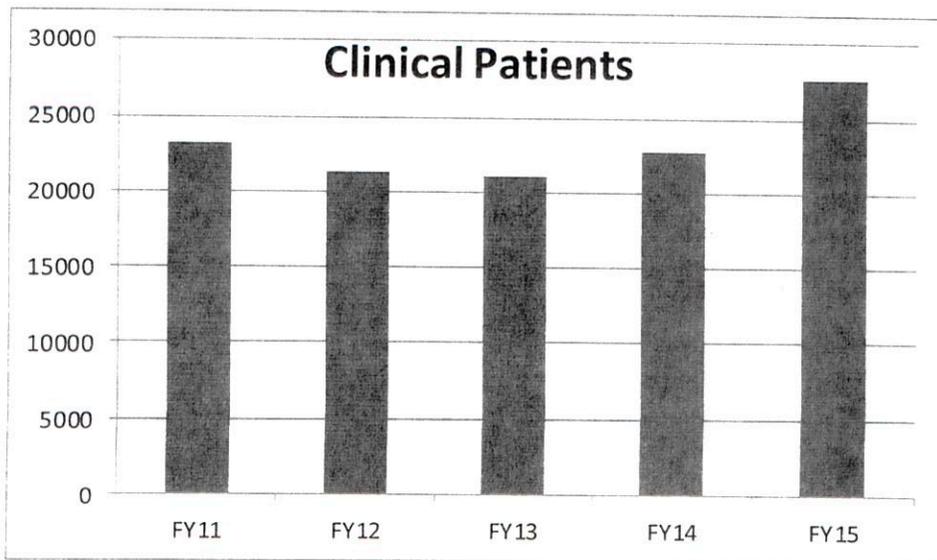
This program is a statewide comprehensive preventive program involving dental screenings, referrals and follow-up for dental care, oral hygiene education, and sealants. SBDPP targets children in grades K-8 in schools with 50% or more free and reduced lunch programs. During Fiscal Year 2015, 17,899 children received general dental screenings, 4,899 had dental evaluations, 58,930 received a sealant screening, 186,168 received oral health education, and 298,345 sealants were placed on 49,125 children in 386 schools. During Fiscal Year 2015 the School Based Dental staff referred 1,328 high priority children with unmet dental needs for follow-up, of which 611 direct contacts were made by Primary Prevention Impact Services.



B. Dental Services

1. *Public Health Dental Clinical Facilities*

The Department of Health offers comprehensive dental services to children and emergency care to adults on a sliding fee scale according to income. Dental services are available at the 44 staffed local health department clinics located in rural counties and one regional office across the state. Dental services are typically offered from 1 to 5 days per week. During the Fiscal Year 2015, 20,879 children made 33,930 visits to Department of Health rural dental clinics and 6,799 adults made 12,563 visits. In total during Fiscal Year 2015, 27,678 individuals made 46,493 patient visits receiving 199,618 dental services in the Department of Health rural dental clinics.



2. *Dental Transport Programs*

In an effort to improve access to dental services for high risk children in underserved areas, the Tennessee Department of Health partners with local school systems to offer a School Transport Program. The local school system transports target population children to local health department dental clinics, which provide comprehensive dental services. Currently the Department operates one Mobile Dental Clinic which provides comprehensive care at local health departments without a dental clinic. During Fiscal Year 2015 the School Transport Program and the Mobile Dental Clinic provided dental services to 2,383 patients.

3. *Adult Dental Funding Program*

In Fiscal Year 2015, the Department provided funding for 8,709 individuals to receive 18,938 dental extractions and 1,189 dental cleaning. The grants were awarded by the Department for emergency dental services for adults²

4. *Distribution of Information*

The Department of Health's website includes an Oral Health Services site that provides a broad range of information to public health professionals, parents, community leaders, and the general public. The web site address for Oral Health Services is <http://health.state.tn.us/oralhealth/index.html>.

Staff in all of the Department's dental programs distributes literature and educational information to individuals served. This information addresses a wide variety of preventive dental topics such as the importance of oral health and proper oral hygiene techniques. Requests for oral health information from agencies and the public are addressed by staff at the local, regional and the central office level.

² Statement of compliance with 2012 Tenn. Pub. Acts, ch. 1061 (the "Eligibility Verification for Entitlements Act" as required by Tenn. Code Ann. § 4-57-106(b)). The Tennessee Department of Health, including local health departments, boards and commissions, has implemented protocols and policies to verify that every adult applicant for "public benefits" is an United States citizen or a "qualified alien," within the meaning of Chapter 1061.