

## 1 Meeting Logistics

Item	Oral Health Plan Advisory Group (OHPAG) Meeting
Date	Friday, January 13, 2023
Time	1 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. ET
Location	Online via Zoom: New <a href="#">Link Here</a>
Purpose/Focus	The purpose of the meeting is to convene the members of the Oral Health Plan Advisory Group (OHPAG) to discuss the group's mission and strategies to implement the Pennsylvania Oral Health Plan 2020-2030 (Plan).
Notetaker	Amy Tice, PA Coalition for Oral Health (PCOH)

### Desired Meeting Outcomes challenges

By the end of the meeting, attendees will have:

- an increased knowledge of the current population-based dental oral health issues impacting the Commonwealth;
- a shared understanding of the vision of the Plan;
- a deeper connection to one another as members of OHPAG; and
- an opportunity to expand and strengthen the work of implementing the Plan.

### Agenda

ID	Description	Owner	Time
1	Welcome and Logistics	Dr. Jonise McDaniel, Public Health Dental Director, Jan Miller and Sarah Welch, Oral Health Program Administrators, Oral Health Program, Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH)	1:00-1:05
2	OHPAG Transition	Jan Miller, DOH OHP	1:05-1:20
3	Review of Identified Priorities and Update on Progress	Helen Hawkey, PA Coalition for Oral Health	1:20-1:50
4	OHPAG Evaluation Survey	Helen Hawkey, PA Coalition for Oral Health	1:50-2:10
5	Member Discussion and Q&A	All	2:10-2:45
6	Meeting Summary and Next Steps	PA Coalition for Oral Health	2:45-3:00

## 2 Notes

*Attendees: PCOH Staff, Sarah Welch, Jan Miller,*

*Dr. Malini Moni, Deb Barr, Susan Washinger, Mindy Diggan, Dr. Joseph Greenberg, Kelly Braun, Dr. Eve Kimball, Dr. Jeremy Horst-Keeper, Jess Rhodes, Jennifer Villasenor, Dr. Harry Goodman, Dr. Sandra Thompson, Dr. Craig Pate, Dr. Paul Westerberg, Veronica Kell, Judelissa Rosario, Dr. Kelly Curtin, , Dr. Anthony Skiadas, Kelly Dupler, Dr. Gary Davis, Jessica Brennan*

- Welcome and Logistics
  - Jan welcomed everyone to the call and shared updates.
    - The new secretary of health has been selected, but still must go through the approval process. Dr. Debra Bogen is the Executive Director of the Allegheny County Health Department.
    - Dr. McDaniel was not able to join the call today due to an unexpected absence. She will be at the next meeting.

- Jan introduced Sarah Welch, the new program administrator with the Oral Health Program (OHP).
  - Sarah started in mid-October. She has spent 10 years in public health working on tobacco control. She has a masters in public health from Albany University’s School of Public Health.
- Jan introduced Jennifer Villasenor as the new evaluator for the Oral Health Plan (Plan).
  - Jennifer is a former PA Department of Health employee and the current Director of Grants for a federally-qualified health center (FQHC) in Atlanta. She has over 20 years of program evaluation experience in various settings from government to a children’s health system to an academic research university.
- Sarah reviewed the logistics for the meeting.
- Jan acknowledged Kelly Dupler, the Bureau Director.
- Helen introduced Susan Washinger, the newest OHPAG member from the PA Health Access Network (PHAN). She is a community organizer who will be replacing Patrick Keenan in this group.
- Jan reviewed the meeting agenda.
- OHPAG Transition
  - Jan shared that this group is coming up on two years since its creation. OHPAG was created to narrow down the number of stakeholders that the Department of Health (DOH) works with regularly with a focus on two main tasks: representing interested oral health stakeholders, and to recommend action steps for priorities already listed in the Plan to DOH through the OHP.
  - When the structure for OHPAG was determined, the OHP started with a cohort of members, some of whom would serve one term and some whom would serve two terms. The idea was that not all seasoned members would have terms expiring at once.
  - The Facilitation Team is asking members with terms expiring to recommend a successor and to also consider how you will be able to stay involved as a leader in this work without serving on OHPAG.
  - Half of the current OHPAG members will have terms ending after July 1<sup>st</sup>, however, it is important to continue to provide input and stay involved.
  - The Facilitation Team will be sending out requests for feedback via a survey.
  - OHPAG members should reach out to PCOH if you don’t remember when your term ends.
  - Jan shared the importance of having an OHPAG that represents geographic, organizational sector such as clinicians, policy folks, insurance, etc., and gender/race diversity. The greatest deficits right now are lack of representations from the community, for instance a single parent whose children are on Medicaid. Representation from all regions of the state is also important. There is currently no representation from the northwest region of the state.
    - Dr. Greenberg asked if there is a representative from the dental public health community in the group.
      - There is no one on the OHPAG with a dental public health specialization. This perspective could be helpful in recruitment.
        - Kelly B. shared that there are four dentists that are actively working that are board-certified in PA.
  - Jan shared a few examples of how OHPAG members and stakeholders have supported the OHP’s role in oral health improvement in PA.
    - The OHP was able to compete for and be awarded \$100,000 in block grant funds to focus on school-based dental sealant programs, but also to continue to convene OHPAG and regional stakeholders’ meetings each year to collectively focus on implementing the Plan. Time spent in meetings, on conference calls, etc. demonstrated that the OHP has engaged and empowered stakeholders who are able to advise the OHP, but also roll up their sleeves and work.
    - Jan apologized for the OHP not yet giving feedback on the success stories shared. The information shared at these meetings, e-mails sent, and the time spent outside of OHPAG with other partners has made a difference in how oral health is seen within state government. PCOH will share specific oral health plan accomplishments, but it is

important to emphasize that every story, ideas, and concern shared has contributed to the work of the OHP.

- The OHP is requesting assistance with community water fluoridation (CWF) advocacy. PA is under attack. Since 2017, there have been 13 threats of rollbacks with 4 or 5 in the last year that have been successful. The OHP is working with national partners and know that Pennsylvania has become a national target by the anti-fluoridation movement. The OHP has been successful in some areas of the state by PCOH reaching out to partners throughout the state whenever they hear the rumblings of rollbacks, and the OHP and PCOH really need more advocates. Dr. McDaniel is the lead on this initiative in the OHP, but this is a great example of how the voices of all our stakeholders are so important.
- Review of Identified Priorities and Update on Progress
  - Helen reviewed the seven identified priorities under access, prevention, and education, workforce, and infrastructure.
  - Access, Prevention, and Education
    - Support and promote oral health literacy campaigns and programs that educate the public about oral health care and prevention of tooth decay.
      - Community water fluoridation has been the focus of oral health literacy campaigns this year.
      - In the last four-six months, DOH has been incredibly helpful in supporting CWF as a health measure. Acting Secretary of Health and Physician General Dr. Denise Johnson spoke about CWF at a press conference in Shippensburg. She also sent letters to water systems facing rollbacks.
      - PCOH was able to help pause a threatened rollback that just came up in Berks County. The letter sent from Dr. Johnson made a difference.
      - Dr. Johnson's office sent letters to all water systems asking those that do not fluoridate to strongly consider initiating and thanking the systems that already fluoridate.
      - In September, two mini grants were awarded to Sadler Health Center in Carlisle and Kids Smiles in Philadelphia. These projects aim to move the objectives of the Plan forward.
    - Expand the provision of oral health services at FQHCs and RHCs
      - FQHCs and rural health clinics (RHCs) are feeling the brunt of the oral health workforce and access crises.
      - The PA Office of Rural Health (PORH) and PA Association of Community Health Centers (PACHC) are working together to try to streamline processes as much as possible to help support the centers.
        - Kelly B. shared that some new documents around community health workers and public health dental hygiene practitioners (PHDHPs) have just been finalized. They should be on the PORH site soon.
      - There is a new Executive Director at the Free Clinic Association of Pennsylvania, the membership organization for the free clinics in the state. PCOH has met with the association and hopes to move forward with further engagement.
    - Develop a database of medical and dental providers who offer oral health services to underserved populations.
      - Utilizing new PCOH staff, the group will be able to curate a list of resources and a central place for organizations to find information.
        - Dr. Moni suggested including the services offered at the FQHCs and clinics because they can offer different services at different sites.
          - Helen shared clinics and centers are being surveyed to determine the services they are offering.
          - Jess R. would like it broken down by what services they are currently offering versus what they typically offer since many

don't have the capacity to offer their full typical services at this time.

- Workforce
  - Support programs that increase the number of dental providers in designated health professional shortage areas.
    - The new HRSA grant will focus on teledentistry, public health promotion to dental and dental hygiene students with a focus on the older population, working with community health workers, and the development of a community of practice group focused on workforce issues.
      - Over 550 students will be reached by May 2023. The focus on the presentation is oral health care disparities for the older population.
        - Deb B. asked about Medicare coverage for dental.
          - At this time there is no dental coverage for dental, but there is an optional supplement that is paid out of pocket.
          - Senator Bob Casey has been advocating for adding dental to Medicare. It continues to be discussed, but it is still expensive and not everyone agrees on the issue. This is an issue for federal partners.
          - Jan shared that the Biden administration pushed for dental coverage as well as hearing aids. Hearing aids are now covered under Medicare.
          - Dr. Kimball shared that those on TRICARE for Life have access to a good dental program as well as vision and hearing through Medicare Part C.
        - When Medicare was introduced in 1965, the dental community did not want to be involved.
        - Jess. R. asked about the possibility of a Basic Screening Survey for older adults.
          - Helen shared that DOH and PCOH are in conversation about conducting a Basic Screening Survey for older adults in the next few years.
        - Nicole P. (PCOH) shared that there has been expanded Medicare coverage of medically necessary dental services starting in 2023. Coverage is reliant on services “integrally tied to medical conditions.”
      - Marisa S. asked if there have been any conversations about how much the state would have to invest in initiatives to improve the oral health workforce.
        - Helen shared that this is a good question for the workforce webinar next week.
      - Jan shared that compared to other states, the rural parts of PA are heavily populated compared to the rural parts of other states.
      - PCOH is hoping to become certified to provide continuing education for community health workers.
      - The community of practice group will dive into workforce issues and ideas to improve oral health workforce in PA.
    - Identify gaps in the oral health workforce and develop strategies to address them.

- The first part of a workforce analysis report was released in July. The second part of the report will be released next Thursday. There will be a one-hour webinar next Friday to discuss the results of the report including a secret shopper survey.
        - The secret shopper survey had four scenarios. Over 1,200 offices were reached with the survey.
      - PCOH continues to meet with legislators to discuss workforce issues in PA.
      - PCOH has gotten interest from organizations and providers wanting to discuss oral health issues and offer any help.
    - Infrastructure
      - Maintain funding and support to the state oral health coalition to adequately accomplish its mission and vision to improve the oral health of all Pennsylvanians through its many partners and collaborations
        - The three OHP staff and five PCOH staff sit on various committees and participate in various groups across the state to ensure oral health is included.
      - Utilize the State Oral Health Surveillance System (SOHSS) to monitor oral health related trends and to evaluate and develop new programs, priorities, and policies
        - Dr. Goodman has helped to keep the data updated in the SOHSS.
        - The number of children with decay is needed as a missing piece to the SOHSS.
          - The Basic Screening Survey was completed in May 2022. The epidemiologist at the DOH has been cleaning and analyzing the data. A report is expected soon. This information will also be shared with legislators.
          - Helen also shared that the OHP should be elevated or uplifted in the organizational chart at DOH. This has also been discussed with legislators.
        - PCOH hopes to work with Dr. Greenberg to pilot his surveillance model.
  - OHPAG Member Updates
    - Stories from member agencies/organizations
      - Dr. Gill shared that the Wright Center opened a new Luzerne County office in Wilkes-Barre. Only the medical portion is open right now. But, when construction is completed, they will have co-located 10-chair dental health clinic with behavioral health as well. They have a sliding scale and do not turn any patients away. The clinics in Scranton and German already have dental services offered.
      - Jess R. shared that UPMC has been working on getting members in for care. There will be new challenges with the workforce as MCOs push their members to get care and members seek care. Individuals and organizations will seek out solutions to address this 2023 and 2024. UPMC is also making sure medical offices are trained with topical fluoride varnish through Healthy Teeth Healthy Children.
        - Healthy Teeth Healthy Children has seen a large uptick in pediatric offices seeking fluoride varnish training.
        - PA AAP continues to push to expand the fluoride varnish age recommendation.
  - Discussion
    - Loan Forgiveness for Dental Occupations
      - Dr. Ross asked about the political climate to forgive dental school debt in return for serving in areas needing dental care.
        - There are several counties in PA without a dentist, so dental workforce should be a priority. He has been to many presentations in other states about increasing access to care. Dr. Ross suggested approaching Governor Shapiro with a budget proposal regarding loan forgiveness for dental providers.
          - Deb B. shared that her daughter-in-law is an educator and just had over \$100,000 of student loans forgiven. How is it that educators can get their educational debt forgiven but not dental providers?

- Jan also had student loans forgiven. It was a grueling process at the time.
- Dr. Gill shared that her application is still in limbo, the process is still a mess.
- Dr. Wolff believes that the workforce issue for attracting dentists is more complex than loan repayment and recruiting rural candidates.
- Dr. Wolff shared that they have been surveying their students at Penn.
  - Pennsylvania has fewer dental school applicants than many other states. PA is already starting at a deficit.
  - Focus should be on bringing people into the state and having them stay in the state.
  - Dental students don't seem to fear school debt because dentistry as a career allows them to pay it off.
  - Students are choosing to locate to areas that pay better.
  - Tax abatements would be an option to persuade dentists to set up shop in rural or under resourced communities.
  - In discussion, loan repayment does not appease the students. It's a small percentage of their debt.
  - PA has 30% fewer dental school applications than NY.
  - Dr. Kimball wondered if the medical data is similar.
    - In the last decade, there have been more extreme limitations with shadowing. COVID-19 restrictions made this even worse.
  - Dr. Wolff stated that job satisfaction is not as good as it used to be in dentistry.
- Foreign-Trained Dental Providers
  - Jan asked if there is anything to do about foreign-trained providers. Is there any way to support these dentists in becoming licensed in Pennsylvania.
    - Dr. Wolff: There is concern about FQHCs having substandard dentistry at the board level.
    - Dr. Pate shared that dental residency programs do not receive funding from the ADA unless the dentist came from the US, Canada, or Puerto Rico. Taking foreign-trained dentists comes at a disadvantage for dental residency programs.
    - Helen shared that the LBFC is finishing a study on oral health that is set to be released January 25<sup>th</sup>. If the report states that the SBOD needs to change the regs to allow foreign-trained dentists to practice, legislators are more likely to listen.
- Medicare
  - Dr. Kimball: The ADA opposed adding dental to Medicare based on the proposed formula. Could someone from PDA explain?
  - Dr. Ross: If it becomes a budget item for the Governor, that's a good first step. Governor Shapiro's father is a pediatrician.
- Policy Changes
  - Jess R. asked how the new administration will impact the teledentistry legislation.
  - Helen shared that the new administration will probably be supportive. PCOH has word from the previous teledentistry bill sponsor that he will re-introduce. They are waiting for the House to shake itself out.
- Silver Diamine Fluoride (SDF)
  - There is now a CPT code for physicians to start applying SDF in medical offices.
    - Dr. Kimball and Dr. Gill shared that Smiles for Life is developing an SDF module training.
    - The pickup on the medical side for SDF could drive it on the dental side.
    - Dr. Pate believes SDF gives physicians a temporary solution when they see issues.



- Dr. Ross shared that concerns are with developing a dental home. SDF is great, but what happens when there is an emergency? They have nowhere to go.
- Dr. Gill shared that several family physicians in the United States have been using SDF very successfully. They are the ones developing the module with SFL.
- Dr. Gill shared that OHPAG member Dr. Jeremy Horst and Rebecca Bernstein have asked for photos of dental abscesses, abscesses with fistulas, and pulpitis with grossly visible pulp as they are developing the Smiles for Life SDF module. If you have any photos you can share, please let them know. Or you can email Dr. Gill at [stephanie.ann.gill@gmail.com](mailto:stephanie.ann.gill@gmail.com).
- Other
  - Dr. Kimball asked how many dentists across the state are including tobacco cessation in their visits and being reimbursed for it? How many are discussing/referring HPV vaccine?
    - Dr. Moni answered that she is planning on getting all our dentists to complete the certification via PCOH and then roll out tobacco counseling along with dental exams for smokers. They are also referring dental patients to pediatrics for HPV vaccine.
    - Helen shared that FQHCs get a set rate regardless of the number of services being offered.
    - Jess B. shared that at the clinic, they have screened patients ages 11-26 to refer for HPV vaccination. So far, four patients that got their HPV vaccines because of a dental referral.
      - Helen asked that the program consider expanding the age range to start at age 9.
      - Jess B. reached out to her medical director about why the medical residents are screening their dental patient's ages 11 and up for the HPV vaccine. He was following the CDC "routine schedule." Moving forward they will screen 9 and up.
    - At Dr. Moni's facility, children are flagged if they are of a certain age and do not have dental sealants.
      - Dr. Greenberg: Sealants and tooth decay do not fully encompass oral health wellbeing.
  - Kelly B shared that there are now two resources available as pdf files on the PORH website (under rural health and oral health.)
- Meeting Summary and Next Steps
  - Jan gave a meeting summary.
  - PCOH will send calendar invites for the next two meetings:
    - April 11<sup>th</sup> at 12pm (Zoom)
    - August 4<sup>th</sup> from 10am-3pm (Harrisburg)
  - PCOH will send out the meeting notes and evaluation survey.
  - Please reach out to Facilitation Team members with any issues.