

Leading Change for  
Oral Health in  
Pennsylvania

## **2023-2024 Mini Grant Program Summary Report June 2024**

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In September 2023, the Pennsylvania Coalition for Oral Health announced recipients of the 2022-23 PA Oral Health Plan Mini-Grant Program. The goal of the program is to facilitate the implementation of the goals and recommendations of the 2020-2030 PA Oral Health Plan. Following is a summary of the initiatives that were funded by the grants.

*Funding for this project is through the Pennsylvania Department of Health through Centers for Disease and Prevention (CDC) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant. This information or content and conclusions are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by CDC, HHS or the U.S. Government.*

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### **Northampton County Area Community College**

*Smile Saturday*

Northampton County

Plan Priority Addressed: Access, Prevention, and Education

Northampton County Area Community College (NCC) planned to work with up to ten partner groups to promote and implement “Smiles Saturday,” and oral health care event hosted by the college.

NCC ended up working with 22 organizations to promote the event, including many area school districts, charter schools, private academies, early childhood learning centers, and community organizations such as the Boy’s and Girl’s Club and other youth groups.

The original goal of the project was to enlist up to 25 students, two dentists, eight dental hygienists, and five volunteers to execute the event. NCC surpassed this goal with 45 dental hygiene students, 13 dental professionals, and three volunteers involved in the event.

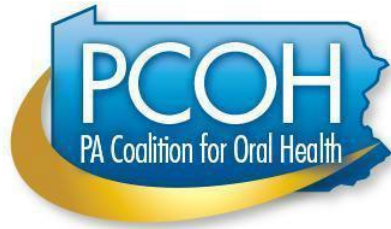
NCC aimed to serve up to 75 children between the ages of 2-17 years old with preventive care and oral health literacy. A total of 46 children between the ages of 3-16 years old were seen. Of the total number of children, 31 qualified for sealants and had them applied.

*“It was heartwarming to be able to improve his oral health and make a difference in his life.”*

*– Felicia*

*“The little girl getting a good first trip to the dentist experience is worth dental hygiene school.. We change lives with each event.”*

*- Megan*



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Overall, 90 children were registered for the event and 76 were scheduled for care. There was a high number of children registered that did not show up on the day of the event. It is assumed that part of the issue with patients not showing up was due to the weather on the day of the event. The area experienced heavy rain, strong winds, and localized flooding.

The children and parents that attended the event participated in games and activities to increase their dental IQ and learned concepts essential to maintaining good oral health. Each child also received dental hygiene materials, educational literature, and instructions on how to make appointments at the college for follow-up care.

While the turnout was less than expected, NCC was still able to provide an estimated \$10,000+ in preventive dentistry services to children within the community. In addition, they were able to assist families in overcoming their transportation barriers by providing bus passes for them to get home from the event and for future dental appointments at the NCC clinic.

For NCC, Smile Saturday was an important community health initiative to reach low-income, underserved children in the community who lack access to affordable preventive dental care. The program provided leadership and team-building skill development opportunities for the dental hygiene faculty and students who organized and implemented the event.

For the community, Smile Saturday offered free access to preventive treatments like dental screenings, cleanings, X-rays, fluorides, and sealants from trained professionals as well as offer dental-themed educational activities to increase oral health literacy and form positive associations with receiving dental care.

As a result of participating in Smile Saturday, children and their families gained the understanding that good oral health is essential to overall health, learned that affordable care is available in their community, and were encouraged to seek future preventive oral services.

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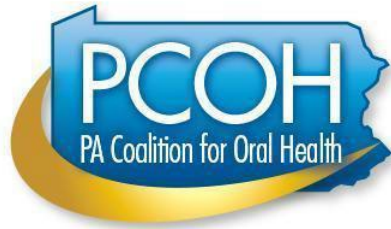
### ***HealthLink Dental Clinic, Inc.***

*Accessible Oral Care for Low-Income Adults & U.S. Military Veterans*

Bucks & Montgomery Counties

Plan Priority Addressed: Access, Prevention, and Education

With this project, HealthLink Dental Clinic aimed to improve and maintain the oral health of their existing patients while growing their patient base to provide dental care to a larger portion of the community. HealthLink serves low-income, working adults and military veterans in Bucks County and Montgomery County.



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This grant had a significant impact on low-income earning adults and veterans in Bucks County and Montgomery County with increased access to dental care. During the reporting period, HealthLink saw a rise in the number of unique patients by 3.7% and appointments held by 9.2%.

HealthLink did note a small decline in the number of new patients due to a six-week absence from the staff dentist during October and November. During this timeframe, HealthLink partnered with the Ann Silverman Community Health Clinic and finetuned a streamlined application process for patients at that clinic to become patients at HealthLink and the Veterans Club at Bucks County Community College. This provided a great outreach opportunity for U.S. military veterans living in the area.

The original objective was to see 10% more unique patients, provide 10% more appointments, and welcome 10% more new patients during the grant period. While those goals were not all met to the extent, there was an increase in the number of unique patients and an increase in the number of appointments.

This project helped support the 2020-2030 PA Oral Health Plan in increasing access to dental care. Specifically, the project increased preventive oral health care visits for adults.



### FREE DENTAL CARE FOR VETERANS

**FREE DENTAL SERVICES PROVIDED**

- oral exams
- radiographs (x-rays)
- restorations (fillings)
- dental hygiene
- simple extractions
- root canals
- patient education



**2020 Household Income Limits**

People in Household	Maximum Annual Household Income
1	\$31,900
2	\$43,000
3	\$54,300
4	\$65,500
5	\$76,700
6	\$87,900
7	\$99,100
8	\$110,300

**PATIENT REQUIREMENTS**

- You must have qualifying military service (and show proof of honorable or medical discharge)
- You must live in Bucks or Montgomery Counties
- You must not have any form of dental insurance
- You must have a household income at or below 250% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines

**MAKE AN APPOINTMENT TODAY**

**Bucks County Veterans**  
Call (215) 364-4247 to schedule an eligibility appointment with the clinic. Be sure to let us know that you are a veteran living in Bucks County.

**Montgomery County Veterans**  
Call the Montgomery County Veterans Affairs Office at (610) 278-3285. FREE TRANSPORTATION is available through the Montgomery County Veterans Shuttle Service.

**HealthLink Dental Clinic**  
1775 Street Road  
Southampton, PA 18966

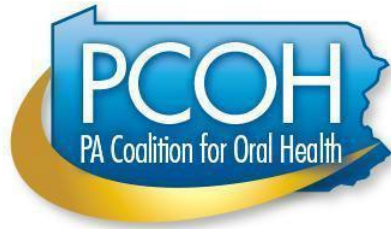
(215) 364-4247  
[www.healthlinkdental.org](http://www.healthlinkdental.org)



FREE dental care for qualified adults

**North Penn Comprehensive Health Services**  
**Laurel Mobile Dental Program**  
 Bradford & Tioga Counties  
 Plan Priority Addressed: Access, Prevention, and Education

With this project, North Penn Comprehensive Health Services (NPCHS) sought to implement a mobile dental program in schools and community organizations to serve children in need of dental services. Originally, NPCHS planned to work directly with school districts.



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Additional time would have been needed to work with the school districts due to district and state procedures and clearances. Instead, NPCHS formed a relationship with the local Head Start program. By the end of March, the mobile dental program had served 150 Head Start students through the Bradford-Tioga Head Start Program. These children would not have likely seen a dentist or received dental services otherwise.

Grant funds allowed for immediate program implementation and supported startup costs. Based on the success of this project, NPCHS plans to continue this work and expand their program.

The goal of increasing preventive oral health care services for children was met with this project.