

Guidelines and Structure for Implementing the Pennsylvania Oral Health Plan 2020-2030

Purpose: The purpose of this document is to identify how the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) Oral Health Program (OHP) will engage and enlist the collective resources of stakeholders in Pennsylvania to improve oral health outcomes through the implementation of the Pennsylvania Oral Health Plan 2020-2030 (Plan).

In order to promote, track, and evaluate all aspects of the Plan implementation, the OHP will regularly convene oral health stakeholders to ensure that individuals and organizations collectively contribute to the Plan implementation and provide recommendations to the OHP annually.

The remainder of this document describes the roles and responsibilities of the groups associated with implementing the Plan. These groups include the OHP, Oral Health Stakeholders (OHS), and the Oral Health Plan Advisory Group (OHPAG). The purpose of the OHS and OHPAG is to aid the OHP in coordinating implementation efforts and ensuring key interests are heard. The document also discusses the nomination and selection of OHPAG members.

I. Roles and Responsibilities

A. Oral Health Program (OHP)

The OHP is charged with leading oral health improvement efforts for the DOH and is the lead for implementing the Plan. In this capacity, the OHP:

1. Leads discussion and plans agendas for OHS and OHPAG meetings
2. Receives nominations and selects OHPAG members based on the nomination process (see below)
3. Leads evaluation, tracking, and administrative efforts of the Plan through an administrative contractor

B. Administrative Contractor

Provides administrative support to the OHP for the OHS and OHPAG by:

1. Facilitating the expansion of individual and organizational participation
2. Maintaining accurate membership listings, with contact information
3. Coordinating meetings of OHS
4. Coordinating OHPAG meetings
5. Coordinating efforts to conduct an annual evaluation of the OHS activities
6. Assisting OHS in their efforts on the local and regional level to implement recommendations of the Plan by:
 - a. Coordinating efforts to document and systematically track oral health interventions and recommendations of the Plan being implemented by OHS and others conducting oral health interventions in Pennsylvania
 - b. Identifying and assisting OHS in securing funding for implementation of recommendations for the Plan
 - c. Encouraging the use of Pennsylvania-specific surveillance data whenever a partner is implementing the Plan

C. Oral Health Stakeholders (OHS)

All individuals reviewing this document are considered oral health stakeholders. OHS is made up of diverse individuals and organizations interested in collectively achieving positive oral health outcomes in Pennsylvania by:

1. Providing OHP-related feedback to the OHP during OHS meetings, through surveys, and other requests for input
2. Providing recommendations to the OHPAG on annual priorities for Plan implementation
3. Supporting the Plan by providing resources in the form of personnel time, funding, and other assets
4. Adopting priorities of the Plan to implement activities and report results of interventions and programs
5. Attending OHS meetings to share best practices, providing Plan implementation feedback, and keeping informed of Plan implementation efforts

D. Oral Health Plan Advisory Group (OHPAG)

The OHPAG is the group that the OHS nominates to represent its interests by:

1. Representing OHS by acting on behalf of at least one of the nine stakeholder sectors listed in the Plan (See OHPAG Nomination and Selection Process)
2. Providing recommendations to the OHP on annual priorities for Plan implementation
 - a. Recommendations of the OHPAG will be made to the OHP for on-going discussion with the OHP
 - b. Simple-Majority will be used to decide which recommendations to give the OHP for consideration
3. Attending and participating in all OHPAG meetings and activities (otherwise the member must relinquish their representation to someone who can commit). Only members of the OHPAG are permitted to attend the meetings. Members cannot send a proxy in their place.
4. Signing an informal expectations/agreement document as of 2026 outlining attendance, communication, and engagement responsibilities.

II. OHPAG Nomination and Selection Process

A. Nomination

The OHPAG is nominated by OHS. The OHP will choose the OHPAG based on nominations in each of the 9 sectors. The OHP will use a matrix to ensure statewide representation in terms of geography, race, ethnicity, age, and gender with a variety of professions and individuals interested in oral health.

1. OHS can nominate themselves or others to serve on the OHPAG every two years.
2. Beginning of each calendar year, the OHP will assess whether OHPAG members are representative of the population served by the Plan. If the OHP determines new leadership is needed, it will administer a nomination process to fill the gaps.
3. The OHP Administrators shall oversee the process.
4. Nominations will be accepted for at least two weeks during OHP-designated time.
5. Nominations shall occur on-line in a process determined by the OHP.

B. Selection

The OHP will use a selection tool that rates specific criteria to ensure the OHPAG is a representation of the population that the Plan was created to benefit. For this reason, priority will be given to individuals whose experience and interests represent multiple stakeholders' characteristics:

1. Education
2. Profession, work or home location
3. Race
4. Ethnicity
5. Age
6. Gender
7. Other factors the OHP will identify as imperative to represent all oral health interests in Pennsylvania

OHPAG Member Terms and Reappointment:

- OHPAG members will serve a term of 2 years to begin July 1 of the determined year.
- Members may be reappointed for a maximum of two (2) consecutive terms.
- If a member is unable to fulfill their term, the OHP will appoint another individual to fill the vacancy. If the departing member represents an organization, their successor within that organization may be appointed to the OHPAG and continue the remainder of the term.

Disclaimer

The OHS and the OHPAG are valuable structures created to provide the OHP recommendations on how best to implement the Plan, discuss topics that affect oral health in Pennsylvania, and provide a diverse voice of individuals and organizations that the OHP can share with the DOH leadership with the goal of ensuring positive oral health outcomes in Pennsylvania. Neither the OHS or OHPAG are legally recognized or official organizations or programs within the DOH and will be comprised of and convened at the sole discretion of the OHP for the purpose of improving oral health in Pennsylvania by implementing the Plan.