

Leading Change for
Oral Health in
Pennsylvania

2025-2026 Mini Grant Program Summary Report July 2026

In September 2025, the Pennsylvania Coalition for Oral Health announced recipients of the 2025-2026 PA Oral Health Plan Funding Opportunities. The purpose of these awards 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 awards.

Funding for this project is through the Pennsylvania Department of Health through the 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.

Centre Volunteers in Medicine

Increasing Access to Oral Health Care for the Uninsured

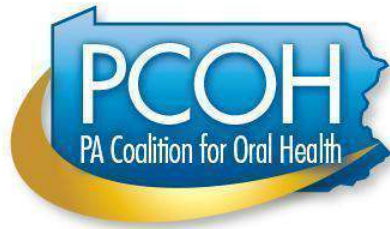
Centre County

Plan Priority Addressed: Access, Prevention, and Education

Centre Volunteers in Medicine (CVIM) is the only health clinic in Centre County that provides free dental care to uninsured and underinsured residents. CVIM operates through a volunteer-driven model sustained with funding from donations, fundraising events, and grants/awards such as this program. The patients served by CVIM are primarily uninsured and underinsured adults and children living at or below 250% of the federal poverty level.

This program aligns with the oral health plan measurable outcome of increasing access to preventive oral health services for adults and children, supporting early intervention and restorative treatment, helping reduce the risk of tooth loss, expanding access to care for residents living in dental health professional shortage areas, and addressing oral health disparities.





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CVIM used funding from this award to purchase essential dental supplies to expand access to preventive and restorative dental care. Supplies purchased included dental filling materials, hygiene instruments, and personal protective equipment.

To evaluate success, CVIM staff tracked dental visits through CVIM's electronic health records, which document each patient encounter, procedure, and type of service. From September 1, 2025 to April 30, 2026, CVIM provided dental care to 646 patients through 2,408 dental appointments. Services included preventive cleanings, restorative procedures, extractions, urgent dental evaluations, and follow-up care. In addition, CVIM patients receive oral health education that include hygiene instruction and nutrition counseling.

The funded supplies helped sustain and expand appointment capacity, serving an additional 150-200 patients.

Health Ministries of Christ Lutheran Church

Christ Lutheran Church Dental Clinic

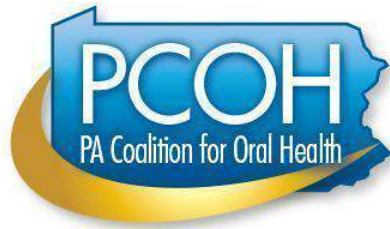
Dauphin County

Plan Priority Addressed: Access, Prevention, and Education

Christ Lutheran Church (CLC) operates a dental clinic that offers free dental care to low-income, uninsured individuals experiencing acute dental problems. Dental services are provided by volunteer dentists. CLC employs two dental assistants and an interpreter. The clinic is open three days a month. Funding from this award was used to support the operating budget of the clinic, which includes purchasing supplies, staffing, and administrative costs such as interpretative services. In the last year, CLC was able to serve 261 patients. Of those patients, 146 required service from the staff interpreter.

This program aligns with the oral health plan measurable outcome of expanding access to care for residents living in dental health professional shortage areas.





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Volunteers in Medicine Wilkes-Barres

VIM Dental Clinic and Healthy Smile Program

Luzerne County

Plan Priority Addressed: Access, Prevention, and Education

The purpose of the funding request was to increase access to oral health services and education through supporting funding of Volunteers in Medicine's (VIM) dental clinic, which delivers comprehensive cost-free oral health care to the working uninsured of Luzerne County. The funds aided the purchase of essential supplies to serve the growing patient population at VIM in northeastern Pennsylvania. Supplies also assisted with conducting the educational Healthy Smile Program.

The Healthy Smile Program is an educational program established for the VIM dental staff to visit agencies, daycares, schools, libraries, and parks to educate children on oral hygiene. From December 2025 to April 2026, 1,896 children were educated on oral hygiene through the Healthy Smile Program. A bag was given to each child with toothbrushes, toothpaste, dental coloring book, crayons, and educational materials.

VIM provides a survey to the managers and directors of the agencies. The staff also provides dental evaluations on children in daycare. VIM recently expanded the program to show children and parents how much sugar is in food and beverages including popular sports drinks, soda, juices, and ketchup.

From December 2025 to April 2026, VIM had 884 visits in the dental clinic. In addition to care, the adults seen in the dental clinic are provided with face-to-face education, educational materials, toothbrushes, toothpaste, and dental floss. Providing free dental care directly advances many of the measurable outcomes in the oral health plan, particularly in the priority area of access, prevention, and education. The measurable outcomes emphasize removing barriers to care, increasing preventive services, and reducing oral health disparities.

