



**Testimony for Senate Health Policy Committee
September 6, 2016**

Good afternoon, Chairman Shirkey and distinguished committee members. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the challenges of achieving comprehensive oral health care in Michigan. My name is Karlene Ketola, Executive Director of the Michigan Oral Health Coalition. As a 501c3 non-profit, the Michigan Oral Health Coalition serves as the collective voice of oral health. We achieve our mission through public education, consensus building and awareness. Michigan Oral Health Coalition has over 140 members which include dental professionals as well as universities, safety net clinics, insurers, professional associations and local health departments who together work to improve the oral health of Michigan's nearly 10 million residents.

In May of this year, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and the Michigan Oral Health Coalition released the 2020 Michigan State Oral Health Plan. The Plan was created with generous contributions of time and thought by advocates across the state. The Plan's vision is clear, "By 2020, all Michiganders will have the knowledge, support, and care they need to achieve optimal oral health."

Within the Plan, stakeholders identified three critical goals to dramatically improve oral health in Michigan by 2020:

- Goal 1: Increase integration among oral health, medical, & social service providers;
- Goal 2: Increase awareness of the importance of oral health to overall health; and
- Goal 3: Increase access to oral health care among underserved populations.

As of today, 2.2 million Michigan children and adults have oral health care benefits through Medicaid, MiChild and the Healthy Michigan Plan. Even with the success of programs such as Healthy Kids Dental and SEAL! Michigan and community-based programs, significant gaps in dental care access remain.

Disparities persist among individuals with a lower socioeconomic status, among minority racial and ethnic groups, and within special populations. Due to the growing evidence highlighting the link between oral health and chronic diseases as well as poor birth outcomes, it is even more imperative that all Michiganders are aware of the importance of oral health and know how to access care.

According to numbers released in the 2020 Michigan State Oral Health Plan, 25 percent of pregnant women did not see a dentist at all during their pregnancy, while 41.6 percent did not even have their teeth cleaned in the 12 months prior to pregnancy.

While poor oral health can occur across all age, ethnic, and income groups, some Michigan populations are at particular risk. According to the most recent available numbers, 55% of Michiganders with a household income of less than \$20,000 annually had no preventative dental care.



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Serious gaps exist in dental care access in ethnic minority communities. Thirty-seven percent of Hispanic adults and forty-five percent of African-American adults received no preventative dental care in the last year, compared to only twenty-nine percent of white residents.

As of November 2015, U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) designated Michigan with 242 Dental Health Professional Shortage Areas. HRSA estimates that 862,159 people live within Michigan's dental shortage areas and that only 42% of need is met. In order to remove the dental shortage designations, 121 additional dental professionals would be needed.

On behalf of the Michigan Oral Health Coalition, thank you for the opportunity to discuss the new 2020 Michigan State Oral Health Plan as well as serve as an ongoing resource as it relates to oral health access and improvement.

Respectfully Submitted,
Karlene Ketola, MHSA, CAE
Executive Director



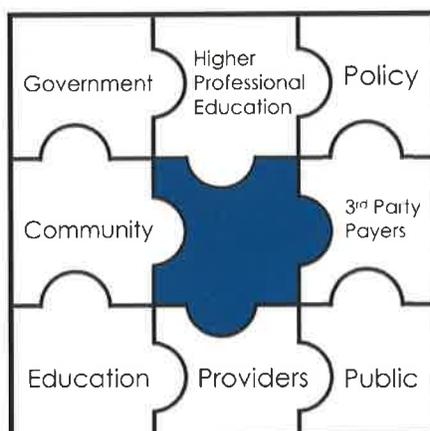
2020

MICHIGAN STATE ORAL HEALTH PLAN

By 2020, all Michiganders will have the knowledge, support, and care they need to achieve optimal oral health.

The graphic features a large photograph of a young girl and a woman smiling. To the right is a collage of smaller photos showing diverse people. A dark blue banner at the bottom contains the title and mission statement, with a small legend box on the left.

WHAT IS THE MICHIGAN ORAL HEALTH COALITION?



Mission: improve oral health in Michigan by focusing on prevention, health promotion, oral health data, access and the link between oral health and overall health.



The overall **vision** for Michigan is that by 2020, all Michiganders will have the **knowledge, support, and care** they need to achieve **optimal oral health.**



THE MICHIGAN STATE 2020 ORAL HEALTH PLAN

This plan will benefit Michiganders across **all age groups and demographics.**



3 GOALS OF THE PLAN:

1. Enhance **professional integration** between providers
2. Increase **knowledge and awareness** of the importance of oral health to overall health
3. Increase **access** to oral health care among underserved and/or hard to reach populations in Michigan



PREGNANT WOMEN

- Poor oral health has been associated with pre-term birth and low birth weight
- 25% of pregnant women do not see a dentist at all during pregnancy
- 42% of pregnant women in Michigan did not even have their teeth cleaned during the 12 months prior to pregnancy



INFANTS, CHILDREN & YOUNG ADULTS

- In 2012, over half (52%) of Michigan children age 1-5 years old did not have a preventative dental visit during the past year
- 12% of children 6-11 years old and 11% of adolescents 12-17 years old did not have a preventative dental visit in 2012
- Of these children, the greater percentage of them were poor and of a racial/ethnic minority



ADULTS & SENIORS

- 31.4% of adults did not have a preventative dental care visit during 2014
- Over 90% of adults in the U.S. have dental caries in their permanent teeth
- Estimated that nearly half (47%) of adults suffer from some form of periodontal disease



LOW-INCOME MICHIGANDERS

- 55% of Michiganders with a household income of less than \$20,000 annually had no preventative dental care in 2014
- Comparatively, only 14% of Michiganders with a household income of \$75,000 or more did not visit a dentist during the same one year time span



RACIAL & ETHNIC MINORITIES

- In 2014, 37% of Hispanic adults and 45% of African-American adults reported receiving no preventative dental care in the past year
- Comparatively, only 29% of white residents received no preventative dental care during the same period



THE COST OF ORAL HEALTH DEFICIENCIES

- Over 2 million annual dental emergency room visits cost the U.S. health care system up to \$2.1 billion
- 164 million work hours are lost each year due to dental issues
- 50 million school hours are lost annually among children



THE NEED FOR ORAL HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

- Demand for dentists in Michigan currently exceeds supply, and the shortfall is expected to widen in the next decade
- Of Michigan's 83 counties, there are a combined 21 (25%) with a combined population of over 1 million residents, with limited availability of dentists
- 18 Michigan counties, including Wayne, have limited availability of dental hygienists





2020

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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