

April 10, 2012

The Honorable Peter Courtney, Co-Chair
The Honorable Bruce Hanna, Co-Chair
The Honorable Arnie Roblan, Co-Chair
State Emergency Board
900 Court Street NE
H-178 State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301-4048

Re: Retroactive Request to Apply – Competitive Grant – HRSA Grants to States
to Support Oral Health Workforce Activities (OHA-PH-12-02)

Dear Co-Chairpersons:

Nature of the Request

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA), Public Health Division (PHD) requests retroactive permission to apply for the Grants to States to Support Oral Health Workforce Activities grant for federal funds from \$225,000 to \$500,000 a year for 3 years, beginning September 1, 2012 and ending August 31, 2015, for a total of up to \$1,500,000.

The intent of the grant is to increase children's access to preventive dental health services by utilizing Expanded Practice Dental Hygienists in the statewide school-based dental sealant program. The funding is available through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services health Resources and Services Administration. The request for the proposal was received on January 3, 2012 and the application was submitted April 4, 2012. This grant requires a state match of 40% which may be provided in-kind. The match will be met through in-kind staff time and resources from the Oregon Dental Hygienists' Association (ODHA), the Oregon Oral Health Coalition (OrOHC), and the Office of Rural Health, and will include:

- Developing resources to support Expanded Practice Dental Hygienists in providing comprehensive oral health preventive services in a school-based setting;
- Instructors and materials to train Expanded Practice Dental Hygienists on the administrative aspects of providing preventive services in a school-based setting;
- Guidance and oversight of the development of a certification process for dental hygienists to provide dental sealants in a school-based setting; and
- Ongoing support and technical assistance to Expanded Practice Dental Hygienists providing services in rural and frontier schools and linkages to existing collaborations with rural residency programs for dentists.

The Public Health Division, Oral Health Program will enter into a memorandum of agreement for this project with each of the identified partners. Letters of support from two of the partners are attached: the Oregon Oral Health Coalition and the Oregon Dental Hygienists Association. It is worth noting that if there were to be an unusual situation and the in-kind match were to end, which is not expected and would be highly unlikely, the state would not be at risk to continue the program or repay the grant funds. The grant funding is not provided in a lump sum, instead funding is drawn down as services are provided, and if the in-kind match were to end, the program would end without financial impact to the state.

There is not a federal requirement for maintenance of effort.

Agency Action

The statewide school-based dental sealant program provides an oral health screening dental sealants to first and second graders in elementary schools with at least 50% of the students on the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program. These services are provided by registered dental hygienists (RDH). At this time, due to funding limitations, only about 50% (140) of eligible schools are served. For many of these children, this is the only access to dental care. The current Oregon Dental Practice Act allows for an RDH to providing screening for and placement of dental sealants. However, the state Medicaid plan does not recognize the RDH as a reimbursable provider unless the services are provided under the supervision of a dentist. The Expanded Practice Dental Hygienist (EPDH) is allowed to provide a variety of preventive services without the supervision of a dentist and is recognized

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by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services as a reimbursable provider for those services.

Initially, this grant would establish a pilot for utilizing and exploring the potential process for reimbursement of Expanded Practice Dental Hygienists. A key objective of the grant is to coordinate with the Division of Medical Assistance Programs (DMAP) to establish a streamlined system for reimbursement for services provided by Expanded Practice Dental Hygienists through the Oral Health Program's statewide school-based dental sealant program. An intended outcome is to identify a model for reimbursement which potentially could be utilized by Coordinated Care Organizations.

For clarity, the project does not change the scope of practice. The project simply allows professionals who are recognized by Medicaid as a reimbursable provider to provide these services.

The project will collaborate with the Oregon Dental Hygienists' Association, the Oregon Oral Health Coalition, the Office of Rural Health, as well as with Dental Care Organizations and the Division of Medicaid Assistance Programs in providing preventive oral health care services in school, which is an evidence-based best practice supported by DMAP and dental care organizations. In addition, the OHSU School of Dentistry Community Dentistry will be providing in-kind services and helping with data collection and analysis.

The grant will fund the continuation of an existing health educator position to coordinate the activities of the grant and part of an existing administrative specialist position to work on establishing the reimbursement. These are existing positions in the Oral Health Program. The program will initially roll out as a pilot program and will fund services (sealants and other preventive services) and related medical supplies provided by the EPDH during the pilot period until a reliable reimbursement process is established.

No new positions will be requested for this grant.

The OHA mission is to help people and communities achieve optimum physical, mental and social well-being through partnerships, prevention and access to quality, affordable health care. Tooth decay is the most common chronic condition among children, is strongly associated with poor school performance and

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absenteeism, and affects a child's development and overall health and well-being. The school-based dental sealant program currently provides preventive dental sealants to almost 20,000 children each year, ensuring that they are healthy and ready to learn and that expensive and painful dental restoration and treatment is avoided.

Action Requested

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA), Public Health Division requests authority to accept a Grant to States to Support Oral Health Workforce Activities from HRSA if the state's application is successful.

Legislation Affected

None

For additional information, please call Shanie Mason, Oral Health Program Manager, at 971-673-0338.

Sincerely,



Kelly Ballas
Chief Financial Officer

CC: Linda Ames, Legislative Fiscal Office
Sheila Baker, Legislative Fiscal Office
Kate Nass, Department of Administrative Services
Blake Johnson, Department of Administrative Services