

Dental Therapy Toolkit

REVIEW OF EXISTING TOOLKITS

March, 2016

Acknowledgements

This report was developed through a partnership between the University of Minnesota, School of Dentistry, Metropolitan State University and Normandale Community College, and MS Strategies for the Minnesota Department of Health.

This project is part of a \$45 million State Innovation Model (SIM) cooperative agreement, awarded to the Minnesota Departments of Health and Human Services in 2013 by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) to help implement the Minnesota Accountable Health Model.



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NORMANDALE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



Minnesota Department of Health

Office of Rural Health and Primary Care, Emerging Professions Program

PO Box 64882

St. Paul, MN 55164-0882

Phone: 651-201-3838

Web: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/workforce/emerging/index.html>

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Review Existing Toolkits

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As the practice of dental therapy expands throughout Minnesota and gains traction naturally some organizations have developed toolkits to explore different aspects of the dental therapy profession. Below is a brief description of the available existing toolkits and additional dental therapy supporting materials and testimony.

Current Dental Therapy Toolkits

- Hiring a Dental Therapist or Advanced Dental Therapist: Enhancing Your Oral Health Care Team. Developed jointly by Minnesota State Colleges and Universities & University of Minnesota (Otto Bremer Foundation, 2014) <http://mchoralhealth.org/mn/dental-therapy/index.html>
- Training New Dental Health Providers in the U.S. Written by Burton L. Edelstein DDS, MPH (W.K. Kellogg Foundation; December 2009) <https://www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resource/2010/training-new-dental-health-providers-in-the-u-s-full-report>

Dental Therapy Supporting Materials and Testimonials

- 1 The PEW Charitable Trusts series of videos: *Working with Midlevel Providers: **Dentists' Perspectives & Testimonials.*** <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/analysis/2014/10/02/working-with-midlevel-providers-dentists-perspectives>
 - Dr. Leon Assael, Dean of the University of Minnesota School of Dentistry, details how using dental therapists can help “reduce the unit cost of care to increase access.” He also notes the University’s goal to have “one educational standard and one practice standard,” training dental therapists alongside dentists, and discusses a dentist in a low-income community who has changed his mind about midlevel practitioners.
 - Dr. Frank Catalanotto, a pediatric dentist and professor at the University of Florida, explains what dental therapists are and how they can help dentists in traditional office settings serve Medicaid patients. He also explains how two rural Kansas dentists are leading the effort to authorize dental therapists in that state.
 - Dr. Mary Williard, who directs the dental therapist training program for the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium, provides an overview of their education, how they can be utilized in a dental office, and how using remote supervision by a dentist allows these practitioners to reach more people in rural areas—including the elderly in their homes.
 - Dr. David Gesko, dental director for a nonprofit integrated health care system in Minnesota, refers to dental therapists as “dentist extenders” that help lower costs and increase access to care for low-income populations. He urges dentists to be early adopters.

REVIEW OF EXISTING TOOLKITS

- Dr. Mark Kelso, dental director at Norton Sound Health Corporation in Nome, AK, describes how he supervises dental therapists -- including using telehealth technology. Kelso notes that it's helpful to have someone with an ethnic background similar to patients when educating them about oral health and that he's much busier with referrals for advanced care since dental therapists started.
 - Dr. Michael Helgeson, CEO of a nonprofit dental organization in Minnesota, describes two advanced dental therapists that work in rural and urban settings and addresses concerns he's heard about midlevel practitioners. He notes that dentists have a better work scenario by using dental therapists and says more states are likely to adopt these practitioners. He urges the dental community to take the lead in shaping these efforts to ensure an integrated team.
- 2 Info on *Minnesota Public Radio* website related to *Dental Therapy* (currently over 60 recordings related to the topic of dental therapy are available to listen to): http://find.publicradio.org/search?site=mpr&proxystylesheet=mpr&client=mpr&output=xml_n_o_dtd&filter=p&numgm=5&q=dental+therapist&submitbox=Go
 - 3 *The Minnesota Story: How Advocates Secured the First State Law of Its Kind Expanding Children's Access to Dental Care*. This is a report, published in September 2010, that explains how children and public health advocates in Minnesota campaigned successfully for a law to increase children's access to dental care. The new law is likely to ensure that dental care will reach many kids who are underserved. http://www.pewtrusts.org/~media/legacy/uploadedfiles/pcs_assets/2011/minnesota_storybrief1pdf.pdf
 - 4 The PEW Charitable Trust has over 300 articles related to Dental Therapy on their website: <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/search?q=Dental%20Therapists> They also have numerous video testimonials: <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/multimedia/video/2014/working-with-dental-therapists>
 - 5 YouTube has numerous video testimonials related to dental therapy: https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Dental+therapists examples include:
 - Dr. John Powers, who owns a private dental practice in the rural town of Montevideo, MN, describes how a dental therapist is working -- and helping families "get turned around in terms of their oral health." Dental therapists in Minnesota are required to spend at least 50 percent of their time treating patients whose income or insurance status creates difficulty finding dental care.
 - Dr. Shiraz Asif describes the positive impact a dental therapist has made at Family Dental Care, a community clinic in Minneapolis that primarily serves disadvantaged people. According to Dr. Asif, having a dental therapist on his team allows him to focus on more sophisticated procedures that only a dentist is trained to perform.
 - Dr. Shiraz Asif, clinic dental officer at a community health clinic in Minneapolis, MN, describes integrating a dental therapist into his team of dental professionals. He continues to express that patients have been very receptive to receive care from a dental therapist and are very comfortable with the dental therapists. He can delegate simple restorative procedures to DT and save time for more complex procedures.