



Oral Health Matters!

Oral Health Care Access for Pregnant Women

Katrina Holt, M.P.H., M.S., R.D., FAND
National Maternal and Child Oral Health
Resource Center

Pregnancy and Oral Health in the ACA Era:
How Are Pregnant Women Faring?

September 27, 2016



National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center

Purpose: Respond to the needs of professionals with the goal of improving oral health services for pregnant women, children, and adolescents and their families.

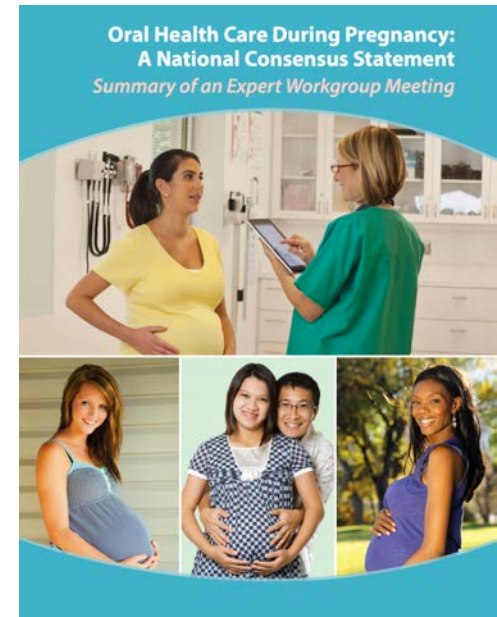
Services: Gather, develop, and share information and materials to promote sustainable oral health services for the MCH population.



The resource center is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) under grant #H47MC00048. This information or content and conclusions are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position or policy of HRSA, DHHS, or the U.S. government, nor should any endorsements be inferred.

Oral Health for Pregnant Women Overview

- Pregnancy is characterized by physiological changes, which may adversely affect oral health.
- Oral health is key to overall health and well-being.
- Oral health care is an integral part of health for pregnant women.
- Treatment is safe and effective throughout pregnancy.
- *Oral Health Caring During Pregnancy: A National Consensus Statement* provides guidance for health professionals.



Barriers to Accessing Oral Health Care for Pregnant Women



- Are not aware that oral health care is an important component of a healthy pregnancy.
- Assume that oral health is secondary to general health.
- Believe that poor oral health during pregnancy is normal.
- Have concerns about the safety of oral health care during pregnancy.

Barriers to Accessing Oral Health Care for Pregnant Women (cont'd)

- Lack of dentists willing to treat pregnant women.
- Lack of dentists accepting public insurance.
- Lack of dental insurance coverage.
- Lack of awareness of dental benefits.
- Financial barriers (income level).
- Child care and work leave time issues.
- Lack of access to transportation.
- Late prenatal care entry.



Oral Health Care During Pregnancy

- There is limited national information on use of oral health care during pregnancy.
- From 2011 data collected as part of the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System:
 - In 17 states, 38% to 57% of pregnant women reported going to a dentists or dental clinic.
 - In 12 states, 31% to 49% of pregnant women reported having their teeth cleaned during a recent pregnancy.
 - In 16 states, 15% to 31% of pregnant women reported going to a dentist for a problem.

Public Insurance Coverage of Care



- In 2010, Medicaid covered nearly half of all births in the United States, ranging from a low of 24% of all births in Hawaii to a high of 69% of all births in Louisiana.
- Medicaid is the largest payer for maternity care in the United States.

Public Insurance Coverage of Adults

- Dental benefits for adults in Medicaid vary across the country.
- States have flexibility to determine what dental benefits are provided to adult Medicaid enrollees.
- Nearly all states offer some dental benefits to adults enrolled in Medicaid, but less than half provide comprehensive oral health care.



Public Insurance Coverage of Oral Health Care for Pregnant Women

- Nine states cover more dental services for pregnant women (over 21) than for non-pregnant adults.
- In FY14, Medicaid/CHIP served more than 43 million children and adolescents (up to age 21).
- All children and adolescents, including pregnant adolescents, enrolled in Medicaid/CHIP have coverage for dental services.

Strategies for Increasing Access to Oral Health Care for Pregnant Women

- Educate the public about the importance and safety of oral health care.
- Integrate oral health into prenatal care classes.
- Share educational materials that are written at appropriate reading levels.
- Help pregnant women complete applications for insurance coverage or social services.
- Help pregnant women access oral health care.



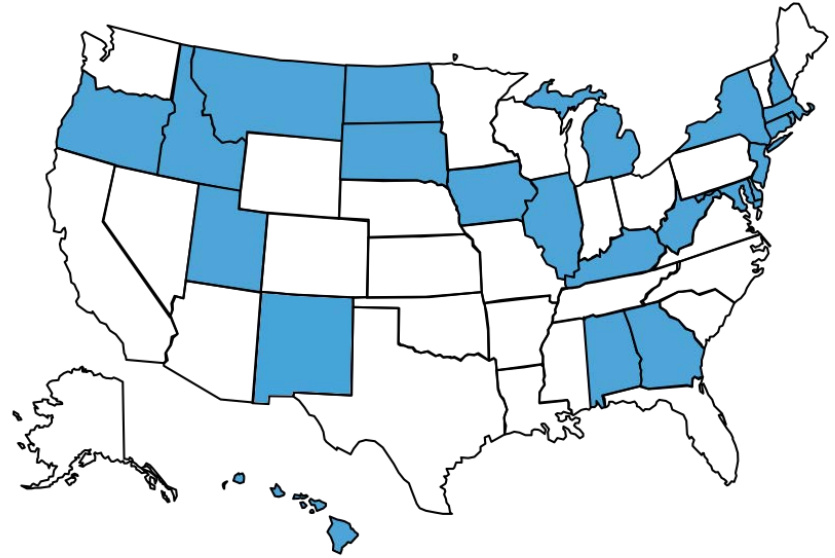
Strategies for Increasing Access to Oral Health Care for Pregnant Women (cont'd)



- Support development of state perinatal oral health guidelines.
- Ensure Medicaid coverage of oral health services.
- Support safety net dental clinics.
- Use health workers, case managers, and other community program staff to conduct outreach efforts.
- Encourage health professionals to promote oral health among pregnant women.

Title V National Performance Measure

- In 2015, the Maternal and Child Health Bureau revised the process for the Title V MCH Block Grant application.
- Thirty states and jurisdictions selected national performance measure 13A, “The percentage of women who had a dental visit during pregnancy.”
- To learn more visit <http://mchoralhealth.org/titlevbg>.



Resources

- Center for Health Care Strategies (www.chcs.org)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) (www.cdc.gov/prams)
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (www.cms.gov)
- Children's Dental Health Project (www.cdhp.org)
- Maternal and Child Health Bureau (mchb.hrsa.gov)
- Medicaid | Medicare | CHIP Services Dental Association (www.medicaidental.org)

Contact Us

National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center

E-mail: OHRInfo@georgetown.edu

Phone: (202) 784-9771

Website: <http://www.mchoralhealth.org>

