Future Directions at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH)

Stewart Landers
Senior Program Director
MDPH

Promote, Monitor and Improve Oral Health Across Massachusetts

- Maintain current burden document
  - Update expected soon
- Emphasize evidence-based prevention and screening
- Support expanded treatment using community standards where needed
- Support workforce development
Population Based Prevention Activities - Fluoridation

■ Continue to work directly and collaboratively to support efforts to maintain and expand fluoridation in Massachusetts
■ Continue our funding of wellness grant to Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers to support fluoridation efforts
■ Survey of Boards of Health
■ Most recent community to move to complete fluoridation was Woburn in 2008

Screen and prevent disease among neediest populations

■ Developmentally disabled
■ Elders
■ Children
■ Low-income uninsured
Developmentally Disabled

- Continue our work with Tufts to support delivery of services for screening, prevention and treatment for developmentally disabled persons
- Work cooperatively with EOHHS, MassHealth, DMR (DDS) and organized dentistry to ensure coverage of services to this population

Elders

- Statewide assessment of elders underway in partnership with Harvard Dental School
- Random sampling of at least 42 sites including community-based and residential sites
- Assessment period March-July, 2009 and report expected in fall
- Support work of ombudspersons who monitor care of elders in nursing homes
**Children**

- Goal to ensure all children receive evidence-based screening and prevention services
- Work collaboratively through school-based programs
- Use of portable dental equipment and dental hygienists to expand access
- Example: Springfield – currently at 13 schools and expanding next year

---

**Low-income uninsured**

- Bi-annual assessment of Community Health Center (CHC) Dental Programs
- Assessment tracks
  - overall capacity at each CHC;
  - foreign language skills;
  - annual patient visits
  - patient payor mix; and
  - presence of school programs
- Directory planned in conjunction with Mass League
**BLOCK toolkit**

- Educates child health providers on the oral health needs of children with special health needs
- Supports training of doctors and nurses to provide fluoride varnish
- 280 child medical providers trained to date

**Collaborate on planning efforts**

- Better Oral Health for Massachusetts Coalition
- Massachusetts Coalition for Oral Health
- Continue partnerships within state government to promote oral health including:
  - Office of Acute and Ambulatory Care (MassHealth)
  - DMR (DDS), DCF, DESE, EEC, EOEA
Build upon new legislation:
Chapter 530 of the Acts of 2008

- New law to support dental hygienists work as public health dental hygienists (PHDH) and career ladder for dental assistants
- Working on regulations related to PHDH
- Supporting implementation of new law with respect to registration of dental assistants

Integrate efforts

- Insure oral health is part of integrated efforts and broader goals including:
  - Wellness
  - Chronic disease integration
  - Reduction/elimination of racial and ethnic health disparities
Acknowledgements

- Commissioner John Auerbach
- Andy Epstein, Senior Policy Analyst
- Lynn Bethel, Director, Office of Oral Health
- Community Partners