

## Abstract: National Oral Health Conference 2009

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Abstract  
Title (All LINKING HIV+ PATIENTS TO DENTAL CARE USING PATIENT NAVIGATORS  
Caps):

Objective: Project TEETH, a 5-year HRSA-SPNS funded grant, was designed to increase the number of HIV+ patients referred to and utilizing dental services at ten Montefiore Medical Group sites. One objective is to design and implement an integrative model of oral health (OH) care by integrating a Patient Navigator (PN) into three primary care sites with co-located dental facilities.

Methods: PNs were trained by the dental director on OH care practices, HIV+ associated lesions, and the appointment making process. Scripted dialogues were practiced to develop a rapport between the PN, patients and medical providers. Project Director integrated PN with medical providers at three clinics. As patients came for medical appointments, providers referred patients to the PN for OH education and dental appointments. To familiarize patients with the dental clinic and reduce dental anxiety, PN accompanied patients to the dental clinic and followed up on scheduled appointments.

Results: To date, 321 patients were referred to the PN. Of the 302 patients that met with the PN, 153 made dental appointments, 121 stated they had a dentist, 19 refused an appointment and 9 needed follow up. 13 patients refused to meet with the PN.

Conclusions: PNs have been well accepted by patients. By integrating PNs into the existing medical and dental services we can provide additional support towards expanding HIV+ patients' comprehensive care and raise awareness of OH issues among the HIV population.

**\*\*\*Niko Verdecias from Project TEETH at Montefiore Medical Center is presenting this poster.**