

## **DENTAL HYGIENE TRAINING PROGRAM INSTITUTES A NEW MODEL FOR TREATING PATIENTS WITH HIV**

**Objectives:** To increase access to dental care for an underserved and vulnerable population. To create a model for providing dental care to HIV+ patients utilizing students in a community college dental hygiene program.

**Methods:** HIV Alliance is one of 15 national sites who received funding from HRSA in 2006 under the SPNS Oral Health Initiative. A partnership between HIV Alliance and Lane Community College was created to implement a demonstration project in rural Oregon to increase access to dental care for individuals living with HIV. Dental services are provided at the community college dental clinic utilizing dental hygiene students and community dentists.

**Results:** One major innovation is the use of a dental case manager (DCM) and it is important to the success of the dental program when providing care for an underserved population. The DCM has decreased the no show rate to 11% for the SPNS patients. HIV+ patients are engaged in comprehensive dental services in a responsive atmosphere with enthusiastic dental hygiene students. Rather than only providing episodic or emergency dental treatment, the clinic provides increased access and improved oral health status through comprehensive dental treatment.

**Conclusions:** A new generation of dental professionals is trained to deliver comprehensive dental services without hesitation to a vulnerable population. Our model provides a benefit to the learning environment of the dental hygiene students and to the patients who receive quality, compassionate dental care.

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