

# PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

MCH Training Program

## PROGRAM HISTORY AND STRATEGY

Major advances in the treatment of oral disease in children have significantly improved children's oral health in the United States. Fluoridation of water supplies, regular tooth brushing and dental visits, and application of dental sealants have reduced the incidence of caries in children. However, children in low-income families and other children who are at high risk for developing health problems continue to suffer disproportionately from oral disease. Access to dental treatment and preventive care is limited for these high-risk populations for many reasons. One reason is the lack of dental health professionals who have been specially trained to serve a pediatric population in general, and children with special health care needs (CSHCN) and other high-risk populations in particular. In 1965, the Children's Bureau (now the Maternal and Child Health Bureau [MCHB]) initiated the pediatric dentistry program to address these gaps in training and to serve as a regional and national resource for other pediatric dentistry programs.

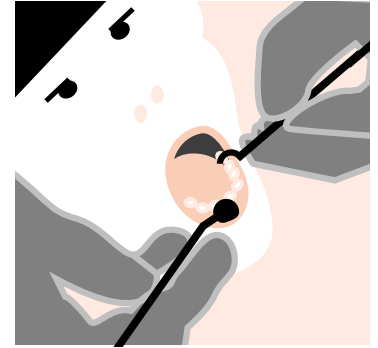
## PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS

Through the pediatric dentistry leadership grant, dentists receive specialized training in prevention and treatment services for the pediatric population and in dental public health and leadership. The purpose of the pediatric dentistry program is to facilitate a national focus on leadership in the field through the following activities: (1) postdoctoral training of dentists in the primary care specialty of pediatric dentistry for leadership roles in education, service, research, administration, and advocacy related to oral health programs for the maternal and child

health (MCH) population; (2) development and dissemination of curricula, teaching models, and other educational resources to enhance the MCH content of dentistry training programs; and (3) continuing education, consultation, and technical assistance in pediatric oral health.

Trainees and faculty provide services to the general pediatric population as well as to children with special health care needs, including children with behavioral problems.

Clinical services include comprehensive dental treatment and are provided in a variety of settings, including university-based dental clinics, group homes, local community health clinics, and school-based centers. High-risk populations are targeted for the provision of clinical services; these populations include developmentally disabled children, children of migrant farm workers, Native American children, and children from low-income families.



## HIGHLIGHTS

*Faculty/Trainees.* Participating faculty have demonstrated leadership, expertise, and skills in pediatric dentistry. Faculty have experience in community-based services that provide population-based care as well as in integrating pediatric dentistry services with local and state health care systems. The trainees enrolled in the program are working toward a graduate degree in public health or pediatric dentistry.

*Curriculum.* The program curriculum includes graduate education at the master's level or above with an emphasis on preventive, diagnostic, treat-

ment/management, and follow-up care for the MCH community, with a particular emphasis on CSHCN. Course content and philosophy is focused on preparing graduates to assume leadership roles in the development, improvement, and integration of pediatric dentistry in community-care systems. The training program also aims to be responsive to the cultural, social, and ethnic diversity of the community in the development and integration of services. Training sites function as regional or national resources for the health professional community to improve services and enhance trainee education.

### PROGRAM PROFILE

- In FY 1999, MCHB funded two pediatric dentistry training projects, with annual grant awards totaling \$463,000.

### Present Grant Recipients

STATE	GRANTEE
IA	University of Iowa
NC	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau. 1997. *Maternal and Child Health Center for Leadership in Pediatric Dentistry Education: Application Guidance*. Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

