

DENTAL HEALTH AIDE THERAPIST (DHAT)



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Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
NIHB 5th annual National Tribal Health Public Health
Summit
Holiday Inn Grand, Billings, MT. March 31-April 2, 2014



History of Dental Caries in Alaska Native People

Archeological records
show caries rate of ~1%



1928 – 1930's

Improved air transportation and dietary changes



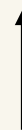
1984

1999

1925



Studies show lowest
caries rate in the world



Prevalence of
dental caries in
children 2x same
aged U.S. children

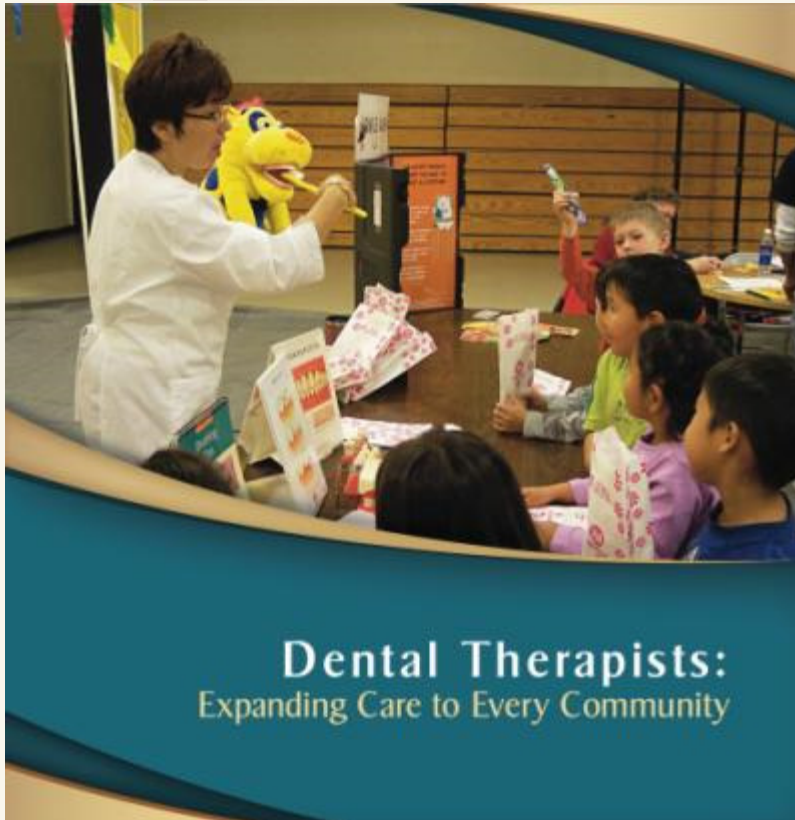


Vast majority
of children
have dental
caries

Price, WA. 1939. *Nutrition and Physical Degeneration*. 8th ed. Lemon Grove, CA.



Dental Therapists: A Definition



- Primary oral health care professionals
 - Basic clinical dental treatment and preventive services
 - Multidisciplinary team members
 - Advocate for the needs of clients
 - Refer for services beyond the scope of the dental therapist's practice.*

*SASKATCHEWAN DENTAL THERAPISTS ASSOCIATION

WK Kellogg Foundation,
<http://www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resource/oral-health-resources/dental-therapists-expanding-care-to-every-community>



DHAT Scope of Practice

Diagnosis and Treatment Planning, Prevention,
Basic Hygiene,
Radiographs,
Infection Control,
Restorative,
Pediatric,
Urgent Care,
Extractions,
Community Projects,
Clinic Management,
Equipment Repair and
Maintenance,
Referral Process

- **All ages**
- **General Supervision**
- Part of a **team** of dental and medical providers



DHAT, Ben Steward, examining patient

DHAT 2-year Education No Prerequisites



Conan Murat, DHAT, standing his ground



DHAT Curriculum and Education



Dr. Anthony Brusca, DHAT Melanie Harris and classmates
in DHAT Educational Program clinic

- NEED TO KNOW
- Limited scopes
- Dental School texts
- Dentist led team
- Prevention oriented
- Accessible to students
- Cultural Competence
- Patient-centered



DHA Certification

- ***After coursework-***
 - preceptorship
 - Direct supervision
- ***Standing orders-***
 - Limits for general supervision
- ***Recertification-***
 - Every two years
 - CDE- 24 hours
 - Direct observation of all technical skills in scope.



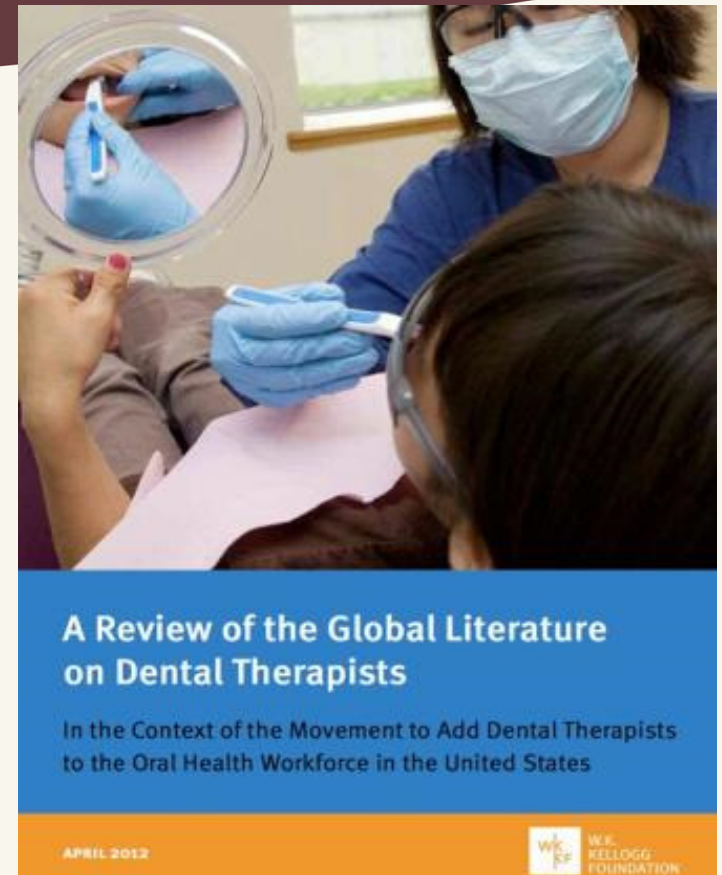
DHAT students Bernadette Charles and Tambre Guido with supervising dentist Edwin Allgair, 2010



“A Review of the Global Literature on Dental Therapists”*

Dental Therapists:

- Decrease cost of care
- Improve access to care
- Provide care safely
- Public values the role of dental therapists
- Traditionally 2 years education



*Prepared by: David A. Nash, Jay W. Friedman, Kavita R. Mathu-Muju, Peter G. Robinson, Julie Satur, Susan Moffat, Rosemary Kardos, Edward C.M. Lo, Anthony H.H. Wong, Nasruddin Jaafar, Jos van den Heuvel, Prathip Phantumvanit, Eu Oy Chu, Rahul Naidu, Lesley Naidoo, Irving McKenzie and Eshani Fernando

Supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation

<http://www.wkkf.org/news-and-media/article/2012/04/nash-report-is-evidence-that-dental-therapists-expand-access>



Research Triangle Institute Clinical Evaluation*



- ***Summary of findings***
 - Technically competent
 - Providing care safely and appropriately
 - Successfully treating cavities and helping relieve pain for patients without previous access to regular care
 - High patient satisfaction
 - Well accepted in AK tribal villages

*"Evaluation of the Dental Health Aide Therapist Workforce Model in Alaska Final Report" Prepared for: W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Rasmuson Foundation, Bethel Community Services Foundation. Prepared by: Scott Wetterhall, MD, MPH, James D. Bader, DDS, MPH, Barri B. Burrus, PhD, Jessica Y. Lee, DDS, PhD, Daniel A. Shugars, DDS, PhD, MPH. RTI International 3040 Cornwallis Road Research Triangle Park, NC 27709. RTI Project Number 0211727.000.001



Curriculum



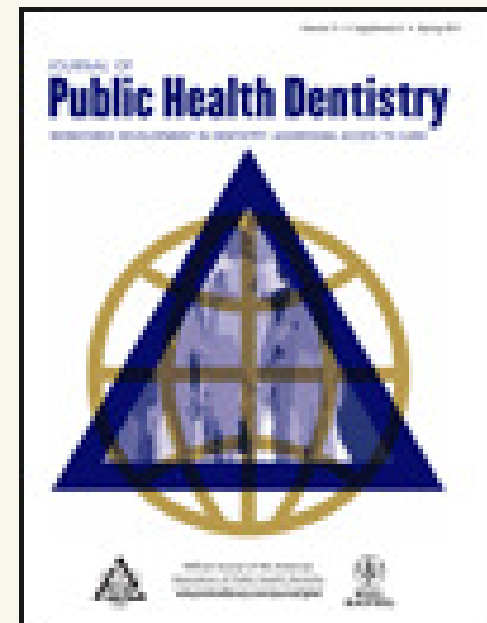
W.K.
KELLOGG
FOUNDATION™

A Partner With Communities Where Children Come First

American Association of Public Health Dentistry

- 11-person academic panel
- Model curriculum
- two-year, post-secondary
- Open access online:
 - <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jphd.2011.71.issue-s2/issuetoc>

**The Journal of Public Health Dentistry, Special Issue:
Workforce Development in Dentistry: Addressing
Access to Care
Spring 2011 Volume 71, Issue Supplement S2**



Dental Therapy Education Standards

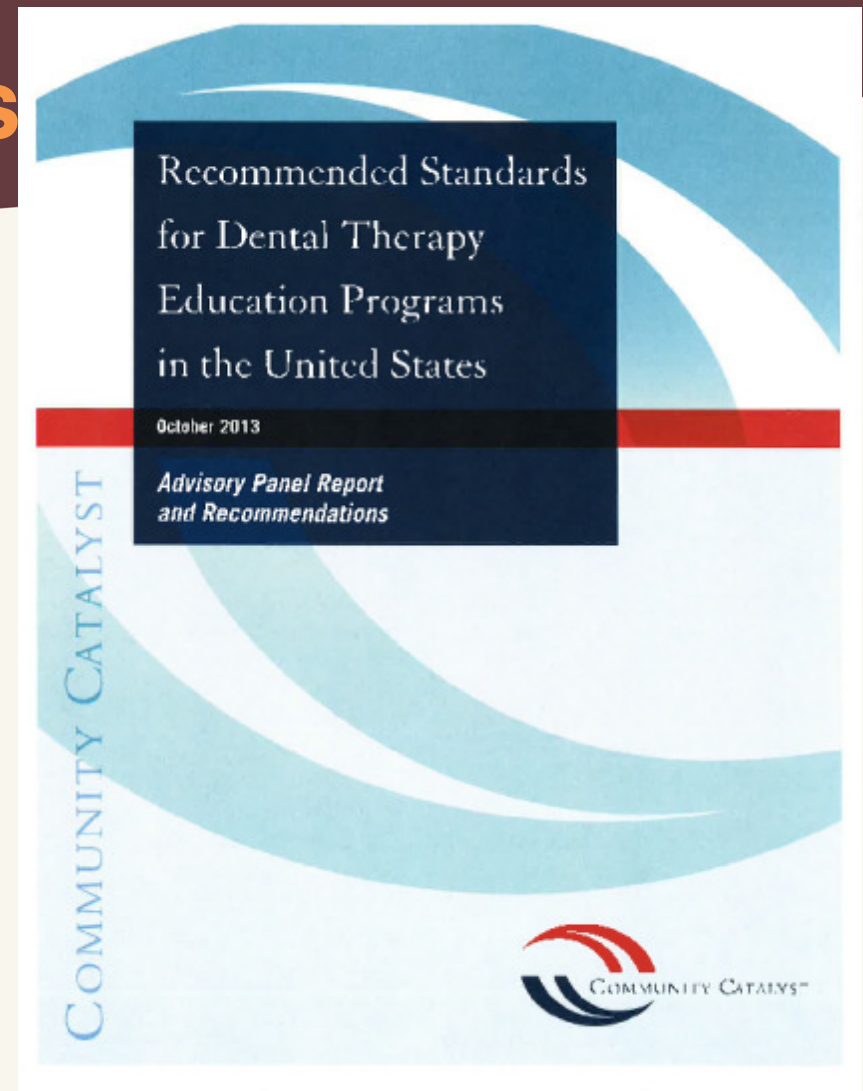
- Community Catalyst Panel of experts
 - DT Educators
 - Dental Therapists
 - Dentist Supervisors

<http://www.communitycatalyst.org/doc-store/publications/dental-therapy-education-standards.pdf>

- Commission on Dental Accreditation
 - Draft
 - Requires 3 years
 - Out for comment

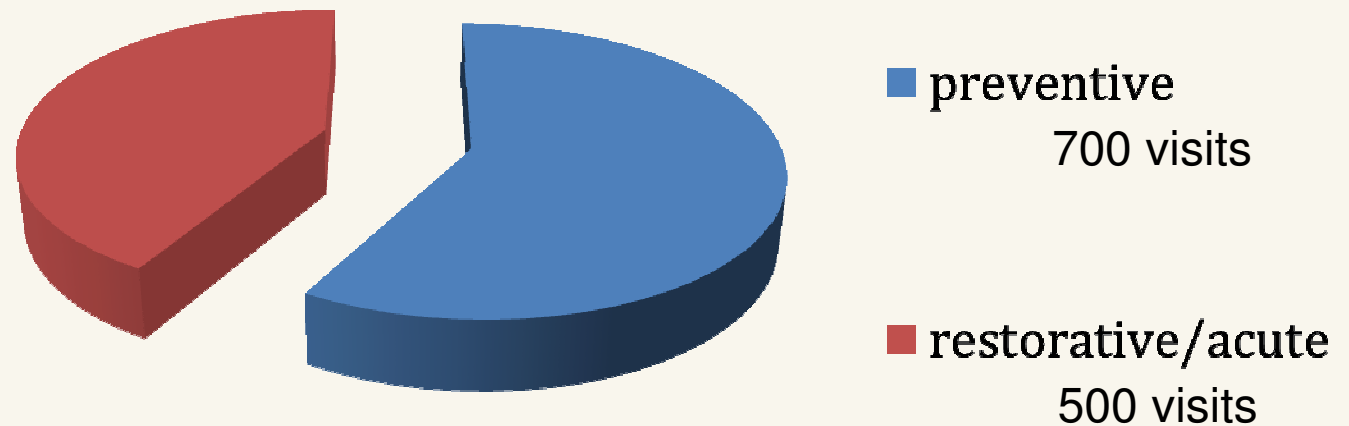


http://www.ada.org/sections/educationAndCareers/pdfs/proposed_dentaltherapy_apx5.pdf



From ANTHC Consultant Survey of AK Tribal Dental Directors

Patient visits



Each DHAT team on average, provides care to 830 patients during approximately 1200 patient encounters (or visits) each year.

Scott and Co. Consulting



Tribal revenue as reported by dental directors with DHAT

The net annual revenue stream generated by the employer is \$125,000-\$245,000 after costs (DHAT and dental assistant salary, benefits, travel, supplies, and other costs) with savings of ~\$40,000 in avoided travel costs to receive dental care

19 DHATs generate 76 jobs (dental assistants, training program faculty, management, staff) with half of these jobs and the related \$9m economic activity in rural Alaska



Improved Access and Quality

- 27 certified DHAT
- 81 communities in rural AK
 - Over 40,000 people have access
- Continuity of care
 - Higher level of care possible
 - Dentist working up to their licensure

DHAT Aurora Johnson,
NZ Educated



Dentist Supervisor Quotes About Working With DHAT

Scott and Co.
Consulting, 2011

“A more complete dental team”

“A full time dental presence keeps oral health at the forefront year round”

“Patients feel comfortable around her”

“Community pride. Pride among the THO Board of Directors. Improved access to routine and preventive dental care”

“Fewer emergencies for dental pain, and less time to treatment”



Demographics of the existing US dental workforce

Dentists: 86% White
6.9% Asian/Pacific Islander
3.4 African American
3.4 Hispanic
0.2 American Indian ^{*1}

Dental hygienists: >90% non-Hispanic white ^{*2}

DHAT: 88% American Indian/ Alaska Native

*

1. Current Demographics and Future Trends of the Dentist Workforce, Institute of Medicine, The U.S. Oral Health Workforce in the Coming Decade: A Workshop
February 9, 2009, Richard W. Valachovic, D.M.D., M.P.H., Executive Director, American Dental Education Association

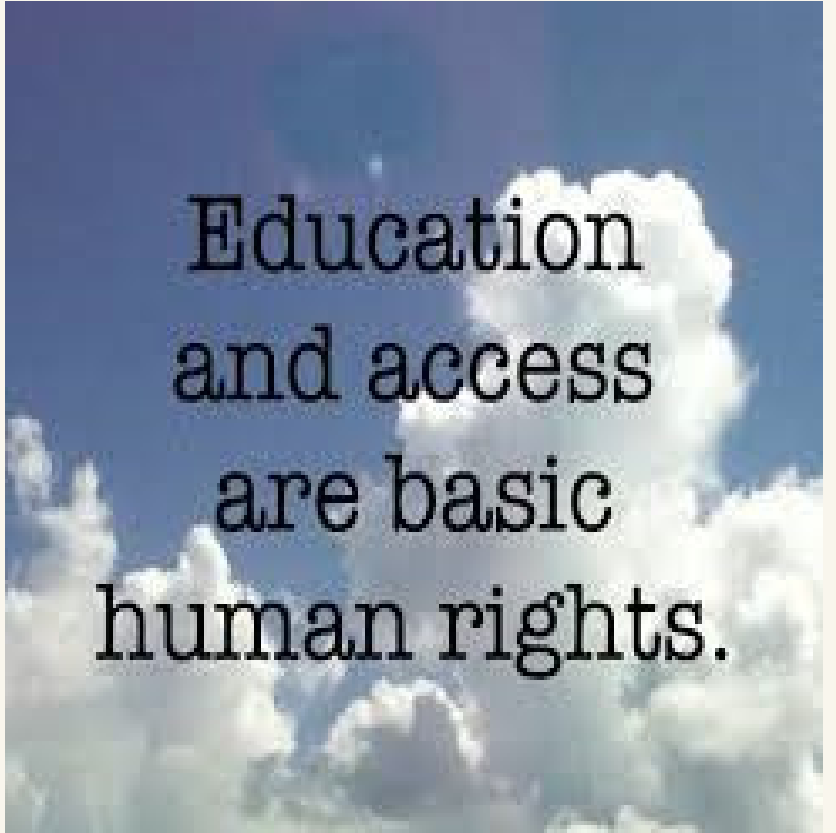
2. Dental Hygiene at the Crossroads of Change, Environmental Scan 2011-2021, Marsha Rhea and Craig Bettles.



Access to Education

“For some students, the only way to get into a health career is to take it a chunk at a time. **Requiring a bachelor’s degree would make health careers inaccessible to many people,**” said [Carolyn] O'Daniel, who is dean of allied health and nursing at Jefferson Community and Technical College in Kentucky.

“Colleges worry about ‘degree creep’ in health care,” By Ellie Ashford, Published August 10, 2011. Community College Times, American Association of Community Colleges.

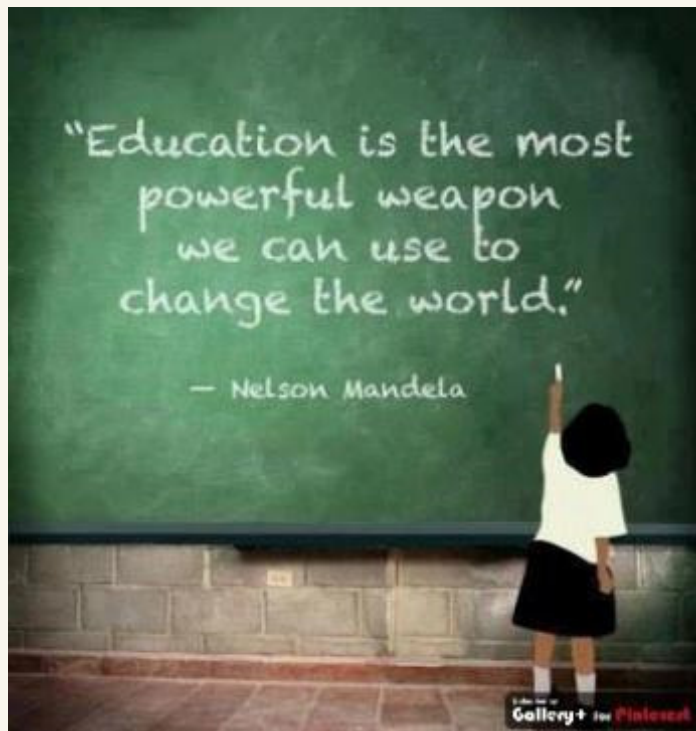


Education
and access
are basic
human rights.



Degree Creep

Barbara Jones, president of [South Arkansas Community College](#) (SouthArk)



“Jones cited **additional problems with degree creep** in nursing: *a lack of qualified faculty* to teach baccalaureate programs, *a decline in workforce diversity, decreased access to health care in rural areas*, and *a decline in job satisfaction* and morale if health care workers feel their skills and knowledge are not fully used.”*

**“Colleges worry about ‘degree creep’ in health care,”
By Ellie Ashford, Published August 10, 2011. Community College Times,
American Association of Community Colleges.



DHAT Student and Practitioner Retention Rates

- 64% completion rate AK DHAT Educational Program
- 35 total graduates (NZ +AK)
- 28 DHAT
 - 10 year retention rate 80%



Happy customer



In Summary- Keys to Success

- ***Not Mini Dentists***
- ***2 Year Education***
- ***Cultural Competence***
- ***General Supervision***
- ***Appropriate Scope:***
 - Diagnosis and Treatment Planning
 - Extractions
- ***Certification/ Recertification***
- ***Community-based***



Trisha Patton, DHAT student, taking x-rays



DHAT Educational Program

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DHAT training is **ANTHCsmile**
on **Facebook** and **twitter**

website: <http://anthc.org/chs/chap/dhs/>

