

PIHOA RESOLUTION #43-14

***“Recognizing the Need to Establish a
Regional Dental Para-professional
Training Program and On-site
Workforce Trainings”***

Dental Workforce Advisory Board

Peter Milgrom, DDS, Chair

U Washington Dental School, Seattle

Purpose

To make recommendations to address an impending critical shortage of oral health care professionals

Members

- Dr. Ohnmar Tut, PBDA & RMI (Secretary of Board)
- Dr. Greg Dever, HRH Committee, PIHOA
- Dr. Greg Seymour, U Otago Dental School
- Dr. Newell Johnson, Griffith U Dental School

Findings

- Disparities related to tooth decay (linked to diet), periodontal disease (linked to diabetes & smoking), and oral pharyngeal cancer (linked to tobacco & betel)
- Community focused oral health professional needed distinct from currently available personnel. Not just a matter of replacing dental therapists (nurses). Capable of working under indirect supervision.
- No training available in the jurisdictions
- Legality different in American Samoa, CMNI & Guam

Terminology Confusing

- Dental assistant (OJT in clinics & private practice)
- Dental nurses (OJT, private practice assistants in Australia, NZ, UK)
- Dental therapists (primary care for children in schools--2 yr degree, Aus, NZ, UK)
- Dental Health Aide Therapists (child & adult primary care in clinics--2 yr. certificate, Alaska)
- Dental hygienists (private practice-- 2 yr degree, Aus, NZ, UK, US)
- Combined Hyg/Ther (private practice--3-yr degree Aus, NZ--just started)

Recommendations

- 2-year Community College Associate Degree Regional Program for “Community Oral Health Professionals” (COHP).
- Designed with the capacity to be adapted to non-US affiliated Pacific jurisdictions
- Vocational education approach, protocol driven regional training
- Up to 10 students/yr

Staffing & Facilities

- 2000 sq ft instructional facility including preclinical lab & faculty offices
- 10 chair equipped dental clinic & support facilities to facilitate intensive clinical training
- Up to 3 full time instructors plus itinerant support in some areas

Budget

- Physical facilities \$650,000 US over 2 years
 - Classroom plus preclinical lab and equipment \$150,000
 - 10 chair dental clinic \$500,000
- Ongoing expense of Instructional faculty \$200,000 to 400,000/yr salary & fringe benefits
- Clinic fees to cover supplies, facility, maintenance and dental assistants
- Student scholarships for living expenses and tuition (up to 20/y when program fully activated)

Next Steps

- Site visits to CCs to assess staffing, existing instructional facilities, potential for student hostel & clinic
- Draft guidelines on student and faculty selection
- Define scope of work for graduates
- Greater detail on instructional program
- Development of facilities detail
- Refined cost estimates