



**Oregon Health Authority
 Dental Pilot Project Program**

Dental Pilot Project: #100

Abstract
Oregon Tribes Dental Health Aide Therapist Pilot Project
 January 2, 2021

Applicant/Sponsor:	Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board 2121 SW Broadway, Portland, Oregon 97201
Project Director:	Christina Peters, Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board
Training Supervisor:	Mary Williard, DDS

Sponsor Type:	Community Hospital or Clinic
<p>Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board is a non-profit tribal organization established under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (P.L. 93-638) and serves all forty-three federally recognized tribes of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. NPAIHB represents individual tribes which have local community health clinics serving their tribal populations. There are currently 9 tribes operating clinics and/or providing direct medical and/or dental services in the State of Oregon.</p>	

Purpose:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops new categories of dental health care personnel. • Teach new oral health care roles to previously untrained individuals
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Approved Project Period:	6/1/2016-5/31/2022
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Number of Sites:	3
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Site Locations:	
Training/Didactic Phase:	Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium Dental Health Aide Training Program Anchorage, Alaska: Year One Bethel, Alaska: Year Two
Utilization Phase:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua & Siuslaw Indians: CTCLUSI Dental Clinic • Coquille Indian Tribe: Coquille Indian Tribal Community Health Center (CITCHC) • Native American Rehabilitation Association (NARA)

Number of Trainees:	5-7
Number of Supervisors:	2
Number of Collaborating Dentists:	9
Number of Sites:	3

Application Chronology:

Application Submitted:	October 6, 2015
Application Approved for Completeness:	October 19, 2015
Application Received by Technical Review Board:	October 19, 2015
TRB Application Review Comments Due:	November 20, 2015
TRB Board Meeting:	December 10, 2015
Addendum to Application Received by Dental Pilot Project Program:	January 7, 2016
Addendum Received by Technical Review Board:	January 7, 2016
Applicants Notified of Intent to Approve Application:	January 8, 2016
Application Under 10 Day Period of Public Comment:	January 11, 2016 – January 22, 2016
MOA Received: Project Site Coquille	February 5, 2016
Project Approved by Director	February 8, 2016
Oregon Board of Dentistry Notified of Approval Status	February 8, 2016

Estimated Cost and Funding Source(s):

Estimated Cost:	\$544,600 (First Two Years)
Funding Source(s) Committed:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W.K.Kellogg Foundation • Pew Charitable Trusts • Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board • Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua & Siuslaw Indians • Coquille Indian Tribe
Total Committed:	\$2,509,460

Background and History of the Project:***Selected Passages from the DPP #100 Application*****Need for the Project:**

Native communities are struggling under the weight of devastating oral health disparities and are searching for innovative solutions to address the unique barriers that keep oral health care out of reach for many of their members. Data presented in the Oral Health of AI/AN Preschool Children 2014 IHS Survey includes:

- Prevalence of tooth decay in AI/AN children ages 2 to 5 is nearly three times that of white children in the U.S.
- By the age of 5, 75% of AI/AN children have a history of tooth decay.
- More than 40% of AI/AN children ages 3-5 have untreated tooth decay compared to 14% in the general population.

Description of patients:

Patients at the first two pilot sites will be primarily American Indian/Alaska Natives (AI/AN) but also includes spouses and employees of those tribes. Patients may include a limited number of general public patients. A large majority of patients are low-income and many have no insurance at all. For most of these patients, the tribal dental clinic is the only access they have to oral health care.

Purpose of the Project:

The purpose of the Tribal Dental Health Aide Therapist Project (TDHATP) is to develop a new category of dental personnel in Oregon and teach new oral health care roles to previously untrained individuals. NPAIHB will be utilizing the very successful Alaska Dental Health Aide Therapist (DHAT) program that has been providing services in Alaska for the last 11 years. The Alaska DHAT program is modeled off the international model of dental nurses that have been providing oral health services in nearly 100 countries around the world. This modernization of the dental team has put DHATs on the frontlines in Alaska, wiping out decay and improving overall oral health in previously underserved tribal communities. We believe that those outcomes can be replicated in Oregon with the addition of a DHAT to the dental team at our pilot sites.

Project Description:

Select tribal communities in Oregon will send trainees to the DHAT program in Alaska to train as Dental Health Aide Therapists (DHAT). While these trainees are receiving their education (2 years), the tribal health directors and tribal leaders will work closely NPAIHB to create the necessary regulatory structure, train dentists to be DHAT supervisors, and do education and outreach to the community about the new provider.

The DHAT program is an existing decade-old program in Alaska that provides an evidence based and competency based curriculum. Skills are based on those required to be certified as a Dental Health Aide Therapist under the Alaska CHAP standards and procedures 2.30.200.

One year prior to the graduation of the trainees, an experienced DHAT will come to the pilot site to begin offering services alongside the supervising dentist. When the DHAT trainee returns to his or her tribe to complete a minimum 400-hour preceptorship with the supervising dentist, the experienced DHAT will continue to serve the community and work as part of the dental team. After the trainee has completed the preceptorship, the experienced DHAT, the supervising dentist, and the newly trained DHAT will work together for at least one year. We intend in the first 3 years of the pilot project to educate a total of 5-7 DHAT trainees in up to 4 pilot sites and to have experienced DHATs working in each site during the training period of the

DHAT trainees. As part of our yearly evaluation of the program, in year 3 we will evaluate the program with our pilot sites and make decisions at that point about whether or not we will add additional sites and trainees.

Project Objectives:

Short-Term Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the efficiency of the dental clinic and dental team; • Increase the ability of tribal health programs to meet unmet need; • Increase provider job satisfaction and patient satisfaction. • Increase the number of Native providers serving Native communities; • Increase patient education at the community level;
Long-Term Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase treatment of decay and decrease decay rates in pilot populations; • Improve overall understanding of oral health in relation to overall health, and; • Improve oral care behaviors in pilot communities.

Laws and Regulations Pertinent to the Proposed Project:

Current dental practice laws in Oregon do not allow our trainees to provide the oral health services that are within the scope of the DHAT as utilized in Alaska. The category for this provider does not exist and there is no existing state licensing structure in Oregon to allow for DHATs to practice outside of the Dental Pilot Project as authorized by SB 738.

- Chapter 679
 - o 679.010 – Definitions – DHAT category doesn't exist + Definition of Dentistry
 - o 679.020 (1)- practice of dentistry
 - o 679.025 (1) – License required to practice dentistry