

**Oral Health Coalition of Alabama (OHCA)
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
United Way of Central Alabama
Birmingham, AL
May 11, 2017**

Members Present:

Dr. Ric Simpson - Private Pediatric Dentist/OHCA Chair, Lynn Beshear - Envision 2020, Sherry Goode - ADPH/Oral Health, Summer Gagnon - ADPH/Oral Health, Edwina Taylor - Cahaba Valley Health Care, Dr. Conan Davis-UAB School of Dentistry, Kaye Melnick - ADPH/ALL Kids.

Minutes/Approvals:

Dr. Simpson welcomed everyone and asked that the minutes be accepted as presented. The minutes were approved and accepted.

Old Business:

Dr. Simpson reminded members of the State of Decay Report, which ranked Alabama lowest in the nation with a "0" score. There were 5 key factors used for the rankings - access to care for senior adults, CDC's BRFSS report, % of population on fluoridated water, lack of data collected on senior adults (BSS), and lack of a State Oral Health Plan that included objectives for seniors. He reported that of these 5, there are two that can be addressed and possibly provide a positive impact on our score - conducting a BSS for seniors and developing a State Oral Health Plan with objectives for seniors included. He further reported that two things had happened since the report was published. These include: ADPH provided a response to Kaiser Health regarding Alabama's reaction to the report and its plans to address the areas of need, and the UAB School of Dentistry dental students began conducting a BSS for seniors.

Sherry reported what was included in ADPH's response to Kaiser which included many initiatives that Alabama has been doing for seniors such as the UAB Dental School BSS screenings through Dr. Lillian Mitchell's Geriatric Dentistry Program, the River Region ER Referral Program, the River Region Pay It Forward Program, and other free screening/referral programs that serve uninsured senior adults in Alabama. Sherry also provided a handout that further described the BRFSS report that included oral health data for Alabama and how that report had been used in the State of Decay Report.

Dr. Simpson asked if Dr. Lillian Mitchell's BSS survey tool was the same one developed and recommended by the Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors (ASTDD) BSS for seniors manual. Dr. Davis reported that Dr. Mitchell took that tool and merged it with what they

were collecting. The manual seems rather flexible, so what they are collecting in Birmingham and other counties can be added to additional screenings for this population to qualify as a statewide survey. They are screening in rural and urban communities and are expanding periodically. Dr. Davis reported that this is provided through a contract with the Alabama Department of Senior Services. The ADPH will also offer resources to expand the screenings as needed. Dr. Simpson asked if the data would be sent to ADPH so they could report that statewide BSS had been completed. Dr. Davis indicated what is being collected would serve as a statewide BSS, and it would need to be repeated every 4 - 5 years. The biggest issue for repeating and reevaluating will be based on manpower. They are currently using dental students, which works well and keeps the cost reasonable. Sherry asked if UABSOD was analyzing the data, and Conan stated they are. They had hired someone to analyze the data, but it's not analyzed yet. She reminded him that Kathy Phelps, ASTDD's national data consultant, could possibly assist with the analysis.

Dr. Simpson reported that Dr. Davis had sent him a copy of Michigan's survey that was used to update their State Oral Health Plan. He felt this was an excellent way to receive input from OHCA members and other key players regarding the development of Alabama's SOHP. The report included goals, ranking these goals by importance or need, and also by feasibility. He wants to begin developing our SOHP by pulling together a small work group who can create a survey to send out to members similar to Michigan's. He hopes to have a good draft survey available at the next OHC meeting that can be shared and approved by members.

Sherry also reported on the Fluoridation Bill that ADPH developed and plans to introduce in the next Legislative Session. It will require 90 days notice to the State Health Officer before a water system can discontinue fluoridating. She discussed the lengthy process involved in identifying proponents/opponents, how the drafts changed numerous times, and which committee would eventually be used to introduce/support the bill. ALDA has provided strong support and will continue to partner with ADPH to move the bill forward.

Lynn asked if there is a target date for hiring a new State Dental Director. Sherry reported that ADPH is beginning to interview candidates and will hopefully have someone selected this summer.

Dr. Simpson asked how aware is Dr. Miller of the State of Decay Report? Sherry advised that he has seen the report, did approve the response to Kaiser Health, and is very strong advocate for oral health.

Members discussed ways to move the needle to get Alabama out of the #50 ranking nationally for senior adult oral health. Most agreed that expanding Medicaid to provide adult dental benefits and convincing the Board of Dental Examiners and Alabama Legislature that dental hygienists should be allowed to provide screenings, referrals, and preventive procedures with general supervision were not options at this point in time. Edwina reported that she had a creative way to address this huge issue. She stated that there are 15 Free Clinics located throughout the state. Why not approach these Free Clinics and encourage them to added dental care to their available services? They could get local dental volunteers from their communities to provide dental screenings and

emergency dental care, similar to the 31 free dental screening clinics that Cahaba Valley Health Care provides each year. Once screened, they refer their patients to the FQHCs for any additional dental care that is needed. The FQHCs are strategically located throughout the state, and they use sliding fee schedules that are based on patient income. She feels these 15 Free Clinics could add dental with minimal cost if retiring dentists would donate their dental equipment and provide the screenings/emergency care free of charge. Edwina planned to evaluate this further and agreed to email a list of the Free Clinics to Sherry and all OHCA members. She felt it could be successful, and it's a project that she would like to pursue further once she retires. She felt that we should get Mary Finch, Director of the Alabama Primary Health Care Association, Senator Orr from Decatur, Senator Busman from Cullman, and others involved to make this work and possibly even identify funding to support it. She feels that Cahaba Valley Health Care has the model, and it can be replicated statewide.

Dr. Davis reported that Dentistry Cares Day is scheduled for November 15, 2017 at the Dental School. They will have several new groups involved this year besides ALDA and the AL Chapter of the Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. He stated that Dr. Bruce Cunningham is publicizing it for ALDA and that further information will be shared as it becomes available. Dr. Simpson suggested that they share the information with all groups as soon as possible and that OHCA would certainly do its part to promote the project.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Submitted by:

Dr. Ric Simpson, Chair

Sherry Goode, Recorder

