

Alaska's Dental Health Aide Therapists



The
American
Academy of
Dental
Therapy,
2011

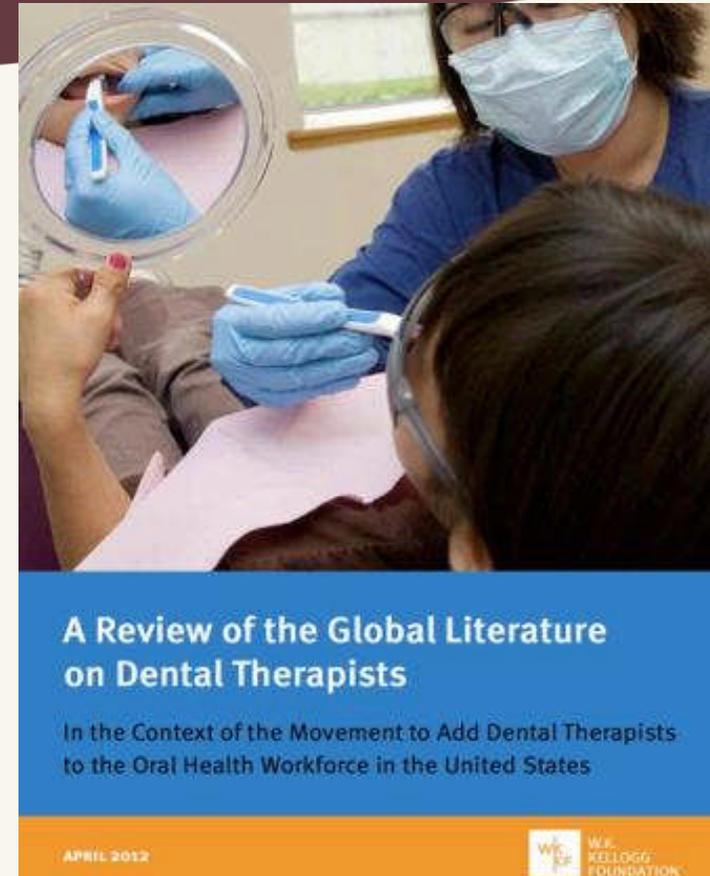
Mary E. Williard, DDS
Wednesday, March 11, 2015
Vermont State Senate Committee on Government Operations



" 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



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



Different Providers

Different Education

DHAT

NEED TO KNOW

Limited scope, 46 procedures

Supervised

Prevention oriented team approach

Accessible to students in target populations

Culturally competent

Patient centered

DENTIST

NEED to know+ nice to know

Large scope, 500+

Team leader

Surgically oriented

Education is difficult to access, especially for minorities

Struggling to address cultural competency

Practice centered

How Supervision of a DHAT Works

Education

- The “routine” of supervision
- Solidified in preceptorship

Communication

- Telehealth
- Formats for reports and consultation
- HIPPA compliant communication systems

Teamwork

- Everyone working for what’s best for the patient



DHAT Ben Steward in pre-clinical lab with mock Telehealth case on monitor



Checks and Balances

Regulations require a supervisor to:

- Know the regulations
- Work within system
- Be in contact/ accessible
- Regularly observe skills
- Create an agreement (Standing orders/collaborative agreement)

Regulations require a DHAT to:

- Know the regulations
- Work within system
- Work only under supervision of a licensed dentist according to agreement

Each program develops a process by which supervision takes place and is recorded

Best practices are shared

Supervisor Training is offered



Telehealth case photo



Improved Access and Quality

- 26 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



Tribal revenue as reported by dental directors with DHAT

net annual revenue stream

- \$125,000-\$245,000 after costs
- Additional savings of ~\$40,000 in avoided travel

19 DHATs generate 76 jobs

- \$9m economic activity in rural Alaska



Keys to DHAT Success

- **Not Mini Dentists**
- **2 Year Education**
 - Competency based
- **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**

website: <http://anthcoralhealth.org>

