



## IOHA 2021 Annual Report

With support of members, sponsors, and partners, the IOHA serves as the convener for collaborative discussions and actions that promote a collective vision of *optimal oral health for Idahoans*. Financial support and active engagement from all our champions help lead conversations and facilitate actions that move us closer to this vision.

Our mission: ***To lead collaborative efforts to bring optimal oral health to Idahoans through education, advocacy, and program development*** intentionally acknowledges IOHA leadership in statewide efforts to work collectively to address the oral health needs of all Idahoans.

### **Heartfelt Thanks to Retiring Board Members**

It is with deep gratitude that the IOHA Board of Directors thanks retiring board members, Susanne Jamison, RDH-EA; John Kriz, DDS, and Linda Swanstrom, MBS. In addition to retiring from her IOHA position, Susanne recently retired from her role as the executive director of the Idaho Dental Hygienists' Association (IDHA) in order to focus attention on her family and her full-time position with Willamette Dental Group. She has served on the IOHA board since 2017, and has been an important link to the IDHA. Dr. Kriz has been a vibrant and dedicated IOHA board member from the beginning. His wisdom, energy, and collaborative nature have served the IOHA well. It was his insistence about oral health representation on the Statewide Healthcare Improvement Plan Governor's Advisory Board that solidified the IOHA role in advocating for medical-dental collaboration and oral health integration into primary care settings. Dr. Kriz will serve in an emeritus role with the IOHA but will turn his attention to his new role as a board member for Terry Reilly Health Services. Linda Swanstrom joined the IOHA board in 2014 when she assumed her role as the executive director of the Idaho State Dental Association (ISDA). Her thoughtful guidance and collaborative nature secured a solid relationship between the IOHA and the ISDA. Linda retired in July. After a national search, Jessica Oliver was hired to replace her. We hope you will join us in thanking these volunteers for their dedicated service.

### **Oral Health Integration**

While the COVID pandemic quashed expansion of the *IOHA Referral Network Pilot Phase* during 2021, support for the long-term initiative of leading [Oral Health Integration into Primary Care Settings in Idaho](#) continued. Throughout the year, the referral network was managed by Taleah Bankos, RDH, and continued to match patients in need with dental and medical homes. We continued with data collection and process improvement, but the stresses of the pandemic caused us to suspend the network until 2022. Focus turned to developing web-based education for medical and dental providers interested in well-rounded care for their patients. During 2021, we commissioned several surveys seeking feedback from medical partners to better understand their needs, concerns, and barriers when considering including oral health within the medical setting. This information will guide creation of a webinar series targeting medical providers who are interested in oral health integration. Efforts also continue to help dental providers focus more attention on the whole health of their patients and better track referrals to medical professionals. Grants were received from the Dental Trade Alliance and the Patterson Dental Foundation.

Other integration efforts included:

- Conversations with the Idaho Health Data Exchange (IHDE) about how best to include dental information in this statewide health repository
- Support of the Idaho Syndromic Surveillance System to collect oral health coding data on patients who go to Idaho emergency departments with oral health issues
- Presentations for St. Luke's Children's Hospital about the impact of COVID on children
- Presentations to the Healthcare Transformation Council of Idaho about oral health integration and value-based care

- Participation in a statewide collaborative working to increase the number of annual fluoride varnish applications Medicaid-eligible children receive in both the medical and dental settings
- A review and refresh of the oral health module available through the Community Health Worker Certificate program offered by Idaho State University
- Connections between rural medical clinics and regional oral health professionals to address community oral health needs

This effort is part of a national Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services initiative and is led by the Idaho Oral Health Program (IOHP) within the Idaho Department of Health & Welfare.

**Healthy Me is Cavity-Free Initiative**

This ongoing initiative is tackling the issue of caries in children ages 0 to 6. The impetus was the latest Idaho Smile Survey report that showed no improvement on this issue over the last 20 years of data collection. A statewide steering committee and four sub-committees have been working to create avenues to combat the problem.

Achievements from 2021 include:

- A June live-Zoom training for daycare and childcare providers offered in partnership with IdahoSTARS and the Office of Head Start Collaboration
- An August live-Zoom webinar targeting medical and dental professionals that offered an overview of oral health integration in partnership with the SW Idaho Area Health Education Center (AHEC)
- Adoption of a formal description of a Pre-Dental Home
- Creation of guidelines and a framework for establishing a Pre-Dental Home in regional public health districts modeled after the successful Central District Health *First Teeth Matter* program
- Establishment of data parameters in partnership with the Idaho Smiles Medicaid program and Managed Care North America (MCNA) that will help assess progress on the overall goal

Much of the 2021 [Healthy Me is Cavity-Free](#) work was funded by a generous grant from Delta Dental of Idaho.

**Other work** accomplished this year included:

- Leadership in the creation of the [2021-2026 Idaho Oral Health Implementation Plan](#)
- Support of the first [Idaho Oral Health Workforce Assessment](#)
- Ongoing support of IOHP efforts regarding Silver Diamine Fluoride, Teledentistry, School-Based Sealant Programs, and Community Water Fluoridation

Even with corporate support, **your membership payments continue to make the IOHA work possible, so we look forward to your continued feedback, volunteer participation, and renewal of your dues for 2022.**

For more information about the Idaho Oral Health Alliance, contact IOHA Executive Director, Jennifer Wheeler, at [jwheeler@idahooralhealth.org](mailto:jwheeler@idahooralhealth.org) Renew your membership for 2022 by visiting <http://www.idahooralhealth.org/membership/>

Thanks to our 2021 sponsors:

