



Minnesota
STATE COLLEGES
& UNIVERSITIES

DISTRICT 4

PROJECT/REQUEST

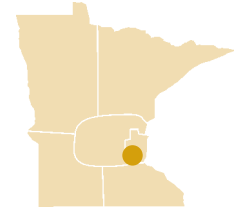
LOCATION

Metropolitan State University

Minneapolis, St. Paul

Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioner Demonstration Project

\$975,000



Project at a Glance

- Introduce the nation’s first Master of Science in dental hygiene program to prepare advanced dental hygiene practitioners
- Equip graduates to treat patients by providing diagnostic, preventive, prescriptive, therapeutic and restorative services
- Focus primarily on treating those currently unserved and underserved by health care systems

Project Description

One of the greatest unmet public health needs is oral health. The current oral health care workforce cannot meet needs of Minnesotans, especially the young and old. A new approach is needed to provide affordable, sustained access to the oral health care system.

The Master of Science in dental hygiene program will prepare licensed dental hygienists to assume an expanded role as advanced dental hygiene practitioners in order to treat patients, with a primary focus on those not being served or who are underserved by current health care providers. This program is the first approved program of its kind in the nation and will incorporate the competencies defined by the American Dental Hygienists’ Association.

To become an advanced dental hygiene practitioner, a licensed dental hygienist must complete a master’s degree in the new program, which has been approved by Minnesota State Colleges and Universities to begin during the 2008-2009 academic year. The two-year program combines the strengths of the dental hygiene faculties and instructional facilities at Century College and Normandale Community College with Metropolitan State University’s faculty in dental hygiene and public health and care management.

The advanced dental hygiene practitioner will examine and diagnose patients, provide preventive care such as fluoride and cleaning, treat abscesses with antibiotics, repair dentures, drill and fill cavities, and extract teeth when other treatment is not an option. Patients with more serious needs will be referred to dentists or physicians. The practitioner will not be able to perform root canals, prepare and place permanent crowns and bridges, construct complete or partial dentures, perform whitening or cosmetic procedures, or perform oral surgery.

Many people have no dental insurance, and even those who do often cannot afford the cost of dental care. Medicare does not include dental benefits, nor do most retirement plans, leaving many seniors



A new approach to oral health care will provide affordable and sustained access for the underrepresented.

vulnerable, since those over age 55 have much higher rates of periodontal diseases and decay. In addition, only 42 percent of people on Minnesota’s public health programs receive dental care, meaning low-income adults and children often go without needed care.

Advanced dental hygiene practitioners can be employed in nursing care facilities, schools, community clinics or dental offices to provide the first line of prevention and care for these populations.

The program will prepare community-minded health care practitioners, emphasizing geriatrics, pediatrics and populations with special health care needs.

The dental workforce as currently structured is steadily falling further behind the unmet needs, with seven dentists retiring for every five dental school graduates, and with even fewer dentists in rural areas, underscoring the need for additional practitioners to provide basic dental care.

Outcomes

- Development of a master of science in dental hygiene program with curricular components that incorporate the latest dental technological advancements to prepare advanced dental hygiene practitioners to meet the emerging oral health care needs of Minnesotans and the nation
- Provision of a unique partnership between a state university and two community colleges by combining interdisciplinary health care faculty members, laboratory and clinic space, and learning resources, resulting in a more efficient career pathway for students
- Creation of an innovative educational model that will become a benchmark oral health care program for other states to replicate

Participating Institutions:

Metropolitan State University
www.metrostate.edu
Interim President William Lowe
Phone: (651) 793-1900

Normandale Community College
www.normandale.edu
President Joe Opatz
Phone: (952) 487-8149

Century College
www.century.edu
President Larry Litecky
Phone: (651) 779-3200

Project Contact:

Marilyn Loen
Dean, College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Metropolitan State University
Phone: (651) 793-1376
Fax: (651) 793-1382
marilyn.loen@metrostate.edu

Examples of Need:

- Dental decay is the nation's most common chronic disease and five times more common than asthma. (Surgeon General, 2000)
- Every \$1 spent on preventive care saves about \$4 in dental costs. (National Institute of Dental Research)
- Across Minnesota, only 42 percent of public program enrollees from all plans receive dental care. (Minnesota Department of Human Services, March 2006)
- The number of Minnesota children living in poverty has increased far beyond the national average rate, multiplying the number without dental care. (Children's Defense Fund, 2007)
- In older people, untreated gum disease and cavities can lead to cardiovascular and respiratory disease and strokes.



Minnesota
STATE COLLEGES
& UNIVERSITIES

WELLS FARGO PLACE
30 7th St. E., Suite 350
ST. PAUL, MN 55101-7804

ph 651.296.8012
fx 651.297.5550
www.mnscu.edu

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system is an Equal Opportunity employer and educator.