Step 1: Identified the need for oral health care of nursing home residents.

- The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene’s (DHMH) Office of Oral Health (OOH) surveyed residents of long-term care facilities utilizing the Basic Screening Survey (BSS) for Older Adults and identified high levels of oral neglect.
- The Maryland State Dental Association (MSDA) received reports from dentists and family members of residents about poor or no dental care in long-term care facilities.
- The Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners enacted dental hygiene regulations enabling dental hygienists to provide care in long-term care facilities without the direct supervision of a dentist.
- State and local dental and dental hygiene associations wanted to address the poor oral health status of nursing home residents.

Step 2: Developed a dental long-term care initiative.

Representatives of the MSDA, DHMH-OOH, Maryland Dental Hygiene Association (MDHA), the University of Maryland Dental School (UMSD), and long-term care facilities met to strategize ways to manage oral health needs in nursing homes.

Key issues:

- Oral health professionals lack training in providing care to nursing home residents.
• Nursing home medical and nursing staff are unfamiliar with:
  — Oral health conditions
  — Association of oral health to general health
  — Daily oral care strategies
  — Reimbursement strategies to pay for dental services
  — Portable delivery of care options

**Step 3:** Wrote grant to establish a “Long-term Care Dental Mini-Residency.”
• Written by representatives of the MSDA Foundation, UMSD, and MSDA.
• Aim: Provide didactic training and discussion opportunities for dentist-led teams interested in including residents of long-term care facilities in a dental practice.

**Step 4:** Obtained funding from DHMH–Office of Oral Health.

**Step 5:** MSDA recruited dental teams through their journal and newsletters.
• Teams were recruited on a first-come, first-served basis.
• Each dental team was to include a dentist, dental hygienist and dental assistant.
• Sought practitioners not currently involved in long-term care.
• Required committed participation during a six-month period to:
  — Work as a team
  — Complete ADA’s online eight-module continuing education course, *Dentistry in Long-term Care: Creating Pathways to Success*.
  — Attend and participate in three half-day didactic programs held at MSDA headquarters.
Create and present two team Microsoft PowerPoint presentations.

Initiate an oral health program in one or more long-term care facilities during the course.

Complete post-course follow-up questionnaire.

- Offered free of charge, beyond commitment of time and effort.
- The number of applicants exceeded the number of spaces, so a waiting list was established.

**Step 6: MSDA recruited dental teams through their journal and newsletters.**

- MSDA dentists with expertise in geriatric dental care delivery served as faculty/course directors, providing didactic training on key oral health issues in long-term care facilities.
- Interprofessional team members from long-term care facilities were invited to present on aspects of their practice that impacted oral health care. Invitees included a medical director, director of nursing, social worker, speech/language therapist, nutritionist, and hospice care provider.
- Participants received additional resource materials including: *Mouth Care Without a Battle* (a DVD set), *Oral Health in the Long Term Care Setting* (an information toolkit), a Specialized Care product brochure and samples.
- Hands-on demonstrations employing mobile/portable dental equipment, mouth props, and head rests for wheelchairs were provided.
- MSDA provided staff support in promotion, registration, budgeting, and program implementation.
- Course directors monitored progress of participants through online, face-to-face and team participation exercises.

Interprofessional team members from long-term care facilities were invited to present on aspects of their practice that impacted oral health care.
Step 7: Evaluation of mini-residency.

At the end of the six-month program, six of the 15 teams had established an initial oral health program, with the remaining nine still in the development stage.

- ADA’s continuing education series, *Dentistry in Long-term Care: Creating Pathways to Success*, received overwhelmingly positive comments from participants.
- Course faculty provided didactic sessions. Invited long-term care professionals received positive evaluations.
- Individual presentations were appreciated for providing opportunities to compare similarities and differences of various approaches to accessing a long-term care facility, and exchanging strategies among the teams.
- Participants appreciated the additional resource materials, in particular *Mouth Care Without a Battle*, which was planned for use in in-service training programs.

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