

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Project Title: State Planning and Fluoridation Systems Development Initiative

Project Number: H43 MC 00002-03

Project Director: Donalda K. Dodson, RN, MPH

**Grantee Organization: Department of Human Services, Office of Family Health
(formerly the Center for Child and Family Health, Oregon
Health Division)**

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Project Period: 10/01/97 – 09/03/01

Total Amount of Grant Awarded: \$60,000

Narrative:

I. PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT AND RELATIONSHIP TO SSA TITLE V MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH (MCH) PROGRAMS:

The purpose of this project was to develop the infrastructure necessary to assist in the creation and facilitation of community-based coalitions who will then address the prevention of dental caries through the implementation of fluoridation at the local (community) level. Although community water fluoridation is a proven method for decreasing both the prevalence and severity of dental caries, Oregon does not have the infrastructure necessary to assist communities with the planning or implementation of fluoridation project. This infrastructure is necessary in order to address Oregon's high dental disease (cavity) prevalence.

Dental disease continues to be a significant health problem for a segment of Oregon's population with minority and low-income children at highest risk. Based on data from Oregon's 1991-93 Oral Health Needs Assessment survey, 47 percent of Head Start enrollees, 55 percent of 6-8 year olds, and 46 percent of 10-12 year olds had a history of dental caries. In addition, lack of access to preventive oral health services, especially community water fluoridation, for the low income and at risk Maternal and Child Health population in Oregon is at crisis levels. According to the CDC 1992 Fluoridation Census and the Oregon County Public Health Profiles of 1999-2000, only 54 water systems in Oregon are fluoridated. Most of these water systems are in rural communities, therefore, only a modest percentage (approximately 25%) of Oregon's total population is served by an optimally fluoridated water system.

II. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

The long-term goal of this project is to improve the oral health status of Oregon's residents by increasing access to fluoridation as a method for preventing dental caries (cavities). The short-term goals of this project were to: (1) begin development of community-based planning initiatives in five pilot communities that would address the prevention of dental caries through proven preventive methods including, but not limited to, the implementation of community water fluoridation, (2) develop educational materials focusing on the prevention of dental caries through community water fluoridation and provide such to the coalitions and communities, and (3) promote the opportunities for advocacy for mandated statewide water fluoridation.

III. METHODOLOGY:

Funds from this grant were used, in part, to hire a 0.5 FTE Community Organizer who would augment and support local coalitions and develop the infrastructure needed to increase the number of Oregonians who receive the benefits of community water fluoridation. This individual will also be instrumental in educating key individuals regarding the benefits of community water fluoridation.

This grant was a collaborative effort between the Oregon Health Division, Multnomah County Health Department, Oregon Health Sciences University, Healthy Communities, local communities, and health profession associations. The Oregon Health Division was the grantee and had ultimate responsibility for accomplishing the goals and objectives outlined in the grant. The Oregon Health Division managed the grant and the Multnomah County Health Department supervised staff and provided technical expertise. Oregon

Health Sciences University provided technical expertise in the development of educational materials and Healthy Communities provided the community-based coalition model that was used in this project. With assistance from the Community Organizer, local communities and health profession associations in Oregon took the lead in developing coalitions that would promote the prevention of dental caries through the implementation of community water fluoridation at the local level. Plans on working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in developing and providing educational opportunities to water engineers and key decision makers was also considered.

IV. EVALUATION:

Progress toward meeting the short-term goals of this project was measured by the specific milestones outlined in the project's objectives. We evaluated the development of community-based coalitions by tracking the number of coalitions developed, the number and variety of coalition members, and the success of the coalitions in developing preventive dental health programs at the community level. The educational component of this project would be evaluated by tracking the number of individuals who received this education. In addition, each individual who attended a planned education program would be asked to complete a structured evaluation form.

V. RESULTS/OUTCOMES (POSITIVE & NEGATIVE):

The major results of this grant were the hiring of a Community Organizer. Karla Girts, RDH, BS, was hired upon award notification. After initial training and grant orientation, Ms Girts set about the formation of statewide-water fluoridation coalitions, promotional materials were produced to advance the understanding and acceptance of water

fluoridation, and a Meeting Facilitator was contracted to guide the Portland Coalition, the largest of the pilot coalitions, in their deliberations. A portion of the grant was also used to support the extended efforts of the State Dental Health Educator in Southern Oregon in promoting water fluoridation within that particular coalition. Community-based planning initiatives for the prevention of dental caries through community water fluoridation was established in five pilot communities: Portland, Hood River, Klamath Falls, Medford, and Roseburg. Currently, all five communities have established coalitions since 1999, with the exception of Klamath Falls, which began organization in 2001.

Second, community appropriate materials were developed and provided to by individuals within the coalition and to those in professional organizations. The informative and colorful materials were produced in both English and Spanish. These materials were designed for comprehension at the sixth grade reading level and were additionally distributed at health fairs, libraries, county health departments, schools, senior citizen centers, etc. The Hispanic community was especially targeted.

During the Oregon 2001 legislative session, SB 99, mandating statewide Community water fluoridation for communities of 10,000 citizens or greater, was introduced. The developed materials were given to majority and minority leaders of both the House and Senate as well as the administrative aid of the specific Senate Committee reviewing the bill. Although the bill failed to pass the Senate floor vote, the Governor, a strong and vocal advocate for public health issues, included \$500,000 for fluoridation in his budget for 2001-2003. This gubernatorial inclusion is seen as the single most successful

outcome of the community-based activity in promoting community water fluoridation and continuing community efforts.

Third, assisting the community coalitions in the community water fluoridation effort was undertaken. The assistance was realized through data base building of potential participants, organizing of “Leadership Forums” to strategize for the public education of community water fluoridation, prepare single page fact sheets and talking points in preparation for the inevitable educational campaigns, and provided additional material support or stimulus to the educational campaign itself.

The key factors that determined positive or negative outcomes was the consistency of community organization leadership and the motivation of the community coalitions. Ms Girts, the Community Organizer, suffered an injury mid-way through the grant cycle, which forced her to drop out of the strategic process. The leadership was then passed to the State Dental Director, who accepted the assignment, but could not devote full-time attention to its objectives due to other demands of his position. Second, coalition sustainability was highly dependent on the motivation of members to promote community water fluoridation. In light of public apathy and vocal opposition in most cases, promoting community water fluoridation became an issue of personal commitment as well as professional propriety.

VI. PUBLICATIONS/PRODUCTS:

The contractual products resulting from this Grant is the design and production of pamphlets, stickers, and bookmarks, in both English and Spanish, promoting and

education the benefits community water fluoridation. The contact person for these products is as followings: Mike Mittelstead, Metro Print, 14105 NE Airport Way, Portland, OR 97230. 503-252-4009. A listing of all products is attached (see Appendix A).

VII. DISSEMINATION/UTILIZATION OF RESULTS:

The dissemination of information of the public education campaigns was accomplished via electronic mail with the various coalitions. In addition, meeting minutes and attendance rosters were also shared via electronic mail. To distribute the fluoridation products, a central request for was utilized (see Appendix B).

VIII. FUTURE PLANS/FOLLOWUP:

Since the implementation of community water fluoridation is a balloted event in almost all situations, strategic planning by the community coalitions must involve election dates as targets. As such, funding is required to maintain coalition and public education efforts far in advance of election dates and continue these efforts up to this date. It is anticipated the funding provided by state appropriation for 2001-2003 will provide not only material assistance, but some technical assistance, as well. The result would be increasing incentive to optimally fluoridate a given community. The long- term objective is, of course, a decreased prevalence of dental caries. However, these funds may be lost due to a state budget shortfall.

To follow-up, it is hoped that a new grant proposal will be announced in 2003 to provide continuity in the Community water fluoridation education and implementation efforts, to include development of new coalitions and technical assistance.

IX. TYPE/AMOUNT OF SUPPORT AND RESOURCES NEEDED TO REPLICATE:

To successfully replicate this project, new sources of funds are required to accomplish three goals: 1) build additional coalitions; 2) expand Community water fluoridation education products and distribution channels; and 3) provide coordinating and technical assistance through a Organizer/Resource person. This requires a higher level of organization than has previously been done with this grant. This new level requires at least a part-time person of some technical ability in community water fluoridation. Thus, a centralized coordinator (a technical “expert”), with funding to support and sustain new coalitions statewide, would provide the momentum to carry community water fluoridation to potentially every community in Oregon. In addition to coalitions, a centralized coordinator could support the communities with needed equipment installation in the form of “mini” grants.

ANNOTATION: The purpose of this project was to develop infrastructure necessary to promote the benefits of community water fluoridation. The high prevalence of dental disease in Oregon could be addressed by this preventive intervention. To accomplish this, development of community-based planning involving water fluoridation, development of culturally sensitive educational materials on community water fluoridation, and the promotion of statewide opportunities for mandatory water fluoridation were selected as the goals. Community coalitions were the models to carry these goals forward. The activities of the pilot community coalitions has resulted in a higher awareness of the benefits of community water fluoridation and in the attainment of state appropriated funds to continue the development of coalitions and fluoridation initiatives. These funds will remain and continue to promote community water fluoridation.

KEY WORDS: Community Water Fluoridation, Dental Disease, Coalitions, Oral Health, Education.

ABSTRACT OF FINAL REPORT

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION: State Planning and Fluoridation Systems Development

Initiative (H43 MC 00002-03). PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT: To develop the

infrastructure necessary to facilitate the creation of community-based coalitions that will

promote the benefits and implementation of community water fluoridation. GOALS

AND OBJECTIVES: The short term goals were to develop community-based planning

initiatives in the form of coalitions to educate Oregonians on the prevention of dental

disease, primarily through the implementation of community water fluoridation, develop

education materials to promote such, and promote opportunities to advocate for statewide

mandatory fluoridation statues. The long term goal was to raise the level of knowledge

about the benefits of community water fluoridation and to improve the oral health status

of all Oregonians by increasing access to optimally fluoridated drinking water.

METHODOLOGY: To facilitate the coalition building process, a 0.5 FTE Community

Organizer was hired to develop and coordinate local coalitions and coalition-building.

The Community Organizer was associated with the Oregon Health Division, the lead

agency. The Community Organizer would be the collaboration agent for the Oregon

Health Division, the Multnomah County health Department, Oregon Health Sciences

University, the Oregon Dental Association and local leadership. After coalitions were

established, the Community Organizer would provide educational resources as required

to achieve the short term goals. Also, the Community Organizer developed plans to

provide technical educational opportunities to water engineers and decision-makers.

EVALUATION: Tracking of coalition numbers, total membership and diversity of each

coalition, and the success of each coalition in developing preventive oral health programs

at the community level was measured. Effectiveness of educational materials was measured by number of materials distributed and attendance at water fluoridation educational programs. RESULTS/OUTCOMES: A part-time Community Organizer was hired to achieve the short term goals of this Grant. Educational materials on the benefits of community water fluoridation were designed, published and distributed to all coalitions and requesting communities. Support was proved to coalitions in terms of strategy group organization and leadership development of the coalitions. Though statewide fluoridation failed legislatively, fluoridation funds were provided through other appropriations. Coalitions have struggled to maintain the momentum in educational and promotion of community water fluoridation in the absence of fiscal support.

PUBLICATIONS/PRODUCTS: Pamphlets, bookmarks, and stickers have been developed in cultural-sensitive formats to be the primary vehicles in the public education on the benefits of community water fluoridation. DISSEMINATION/UTILIZATION OF RESULTS: Results of coalition progress was reported via electronic mail. Educational materials were distributed through centralized ordering. FUTURE

PLANS/FOLLOWUP: Maintenance of coalitions is to be supported by state funds and effectiveness of the coalitions will include strategies to enhance campaigning skill to mandate community water fluoridation. TYPE/AMOUNT OF SUPPORT AND

RESOURCES NEEDED TO REPLICATE: Replication of this project must involve building additional coalitions, expand public education on the benefits of community water fluoridation, and provision for technical/organizational resources. This would include an expert in water fluoridation and community coalition building and additional source of funding to support these resources.

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Appendix A

(Printed fluoridation products affixed here)

(Printed fluoridation products affixed here)

Appendix B

**Fluoridation Education Materials
Order Form**

Item	Qty
Water Drop Tri-Fold Brochure - English	
Water Drop Tri-Fold Brochure - Spanish	
Water Drop Half-Fold Brochure - English	
Water Drop Half-Fold Brochure - English	
Bookmarks, 500/bundle - English	
Bookmarks, 500/bundle - Spanish	
Original Water Drop version - English	
Stickers, 4 styles, assorted, 500/bundle - English	
Stickers, 1 style, 500/bundle - Spanish	
AAPHD Pamphlet - English	
AAPHD Pamphlet - Spanish	
ADA Community Organization for Water Fluoridation Booklet	
ADA Fluoridation Facts	
ADA Community water fluoridation Videocassette - English	
ADA Community water fluoridation Videocassette - Spanish	

Mailing address: _____

