

Expanding the Dental Workforce: A Strategy for Reducing Oral Health Disparities

Kristen Mizzi Angelone


Officer , Pew Dental Campaign

“Good health requires good oral health, yet millions of Americans lack access to basic oral health care.”

-Institute of Medicine, 2011

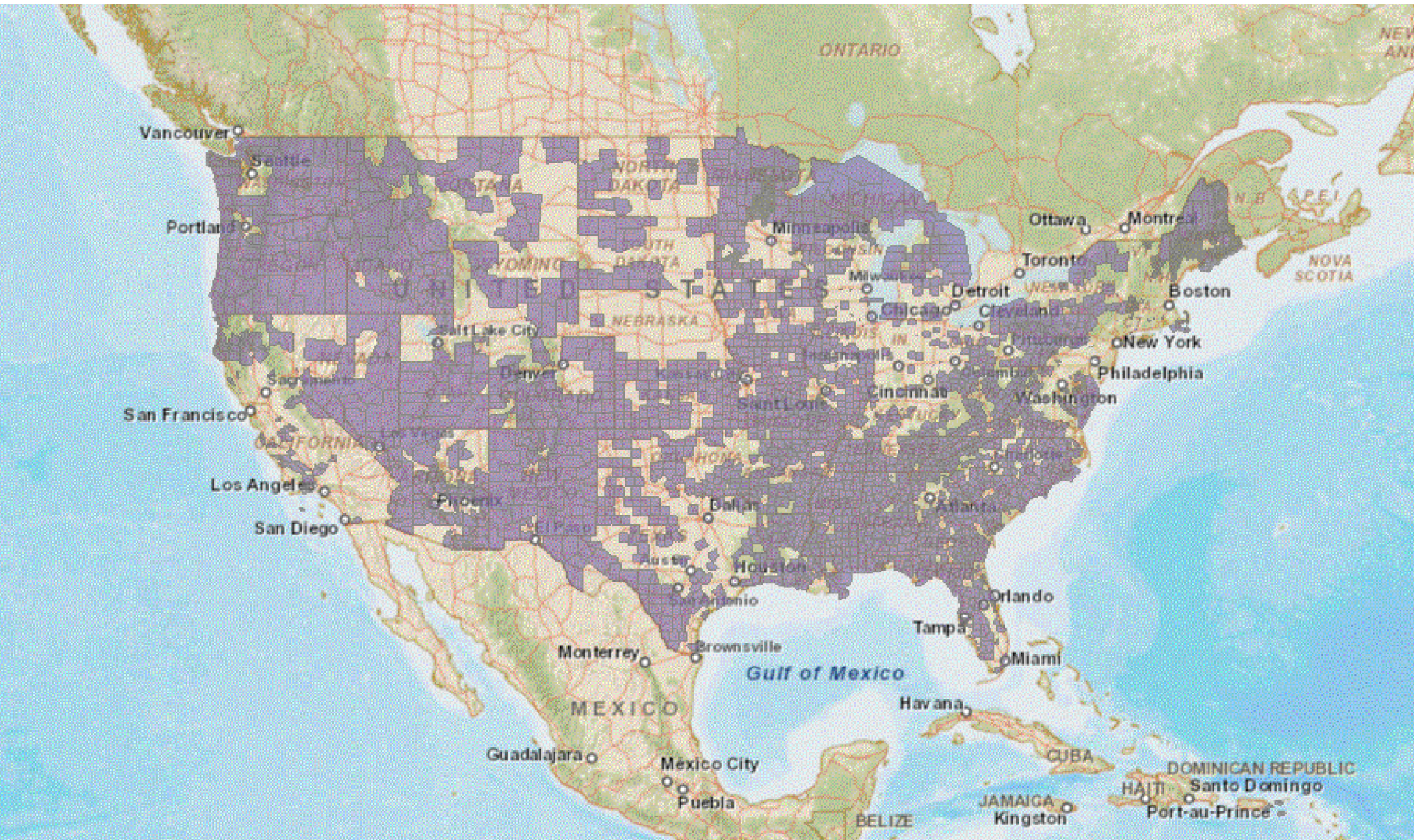
Care

Mission of Mercy clinic in Missouri
May 3, 2013

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- Many Americans lack dental insurance (*114 million in 2014*)
 - Maldistribution/shortage of dentists

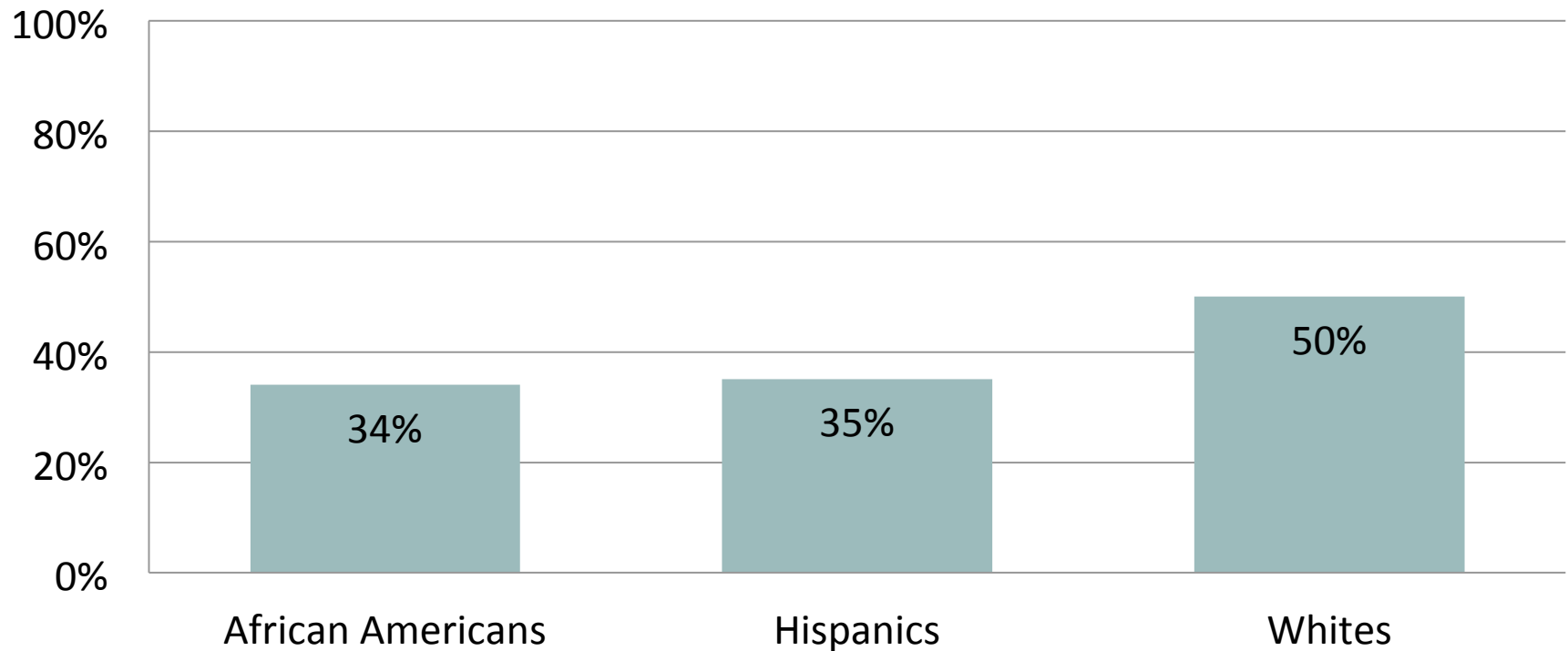
National Association of Dental Plans, *Who has Dental Benefits?*
http://www.nadp.org/Dental_Benefits_Basics/Dental_BB_1.aspx

Nearly 49 million Americans live where dentists are scarce



Preventive Dental Visits 2011-2012

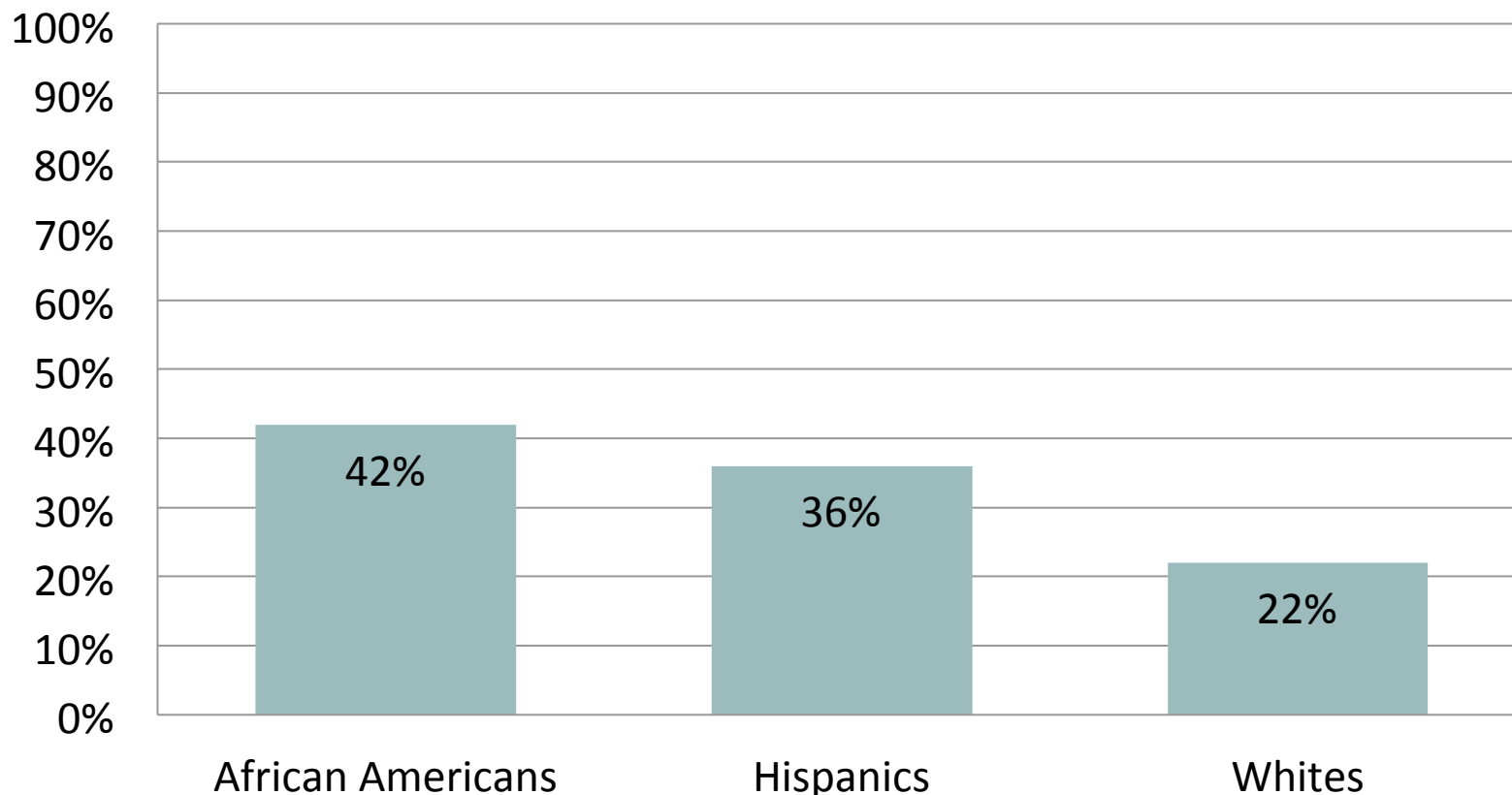
Children ages 0-21



Susan O. Griffin et al., "Use of Dental Care and Effective Preventive Services in Preventing Tooth Decay Among U.S. Children and Adolescents—Medical Expenditure Panel Survey, United States, 2003-2009, and National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, United States, 2005-2010," *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 63, table 1 (Sept. 12, 2014) http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/su6302a9.htm?s_cid=su6302a9_w

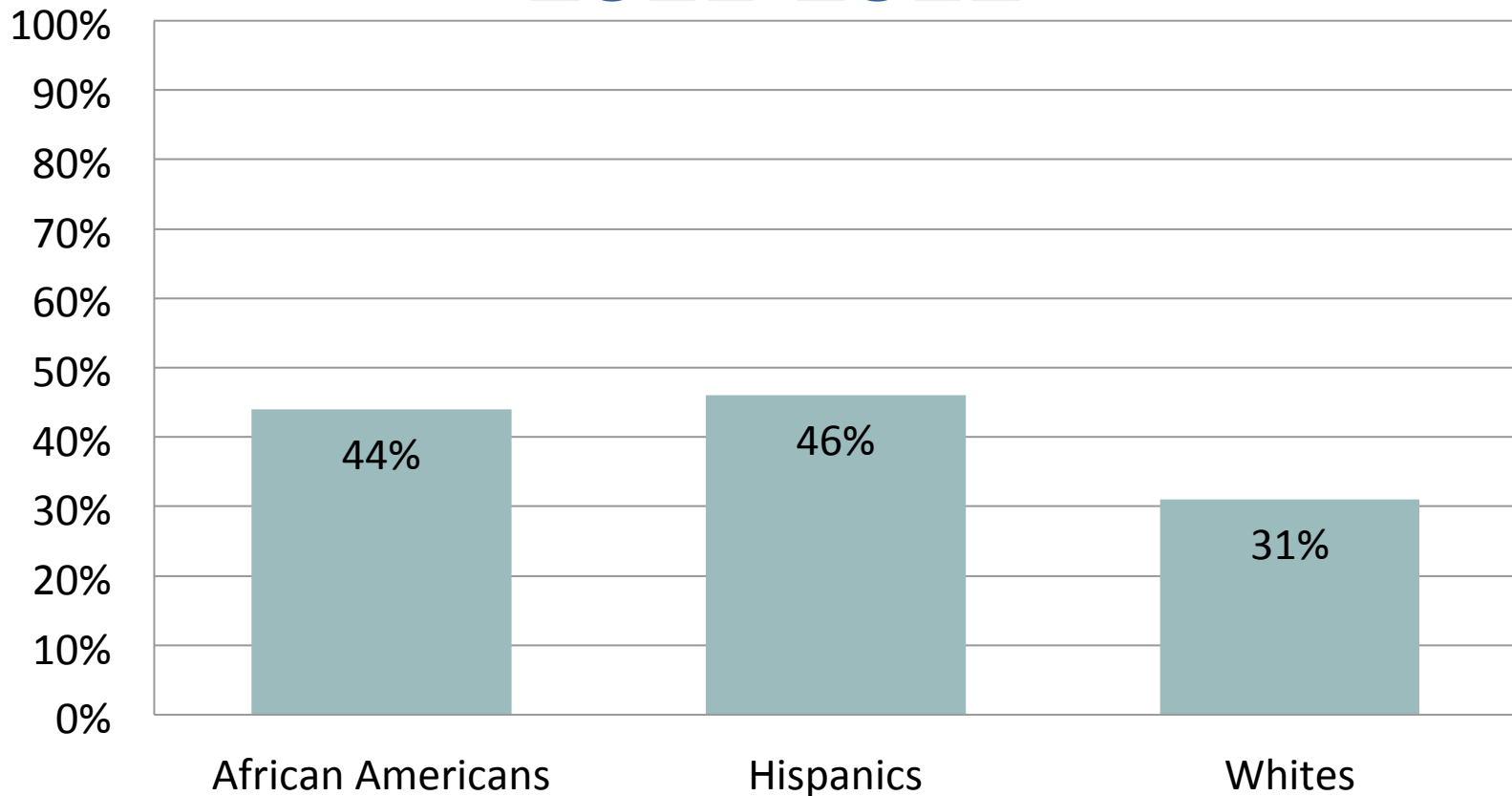
Untreated tooth decay, 2011-2012

Adults ages 20-64



Bruce A. Dye et al., "Dental Caries and Sealant Prevalence in Children and Adolescents in the United States, 2011–2012," National Center for Health Statistics, NCHS Data Brief, no. 191, fig 1 (March 2015), <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db191.pdf>.

Untreated tooth decay, Children age 2-8 2011-2012



Bruce A. Dye et al., "Dental Caries and Tooth Loss in Adults in the United States, 2011–2012," National Center for Health Statistics, NCHS Data Brief no. 197 fig 1 (May 2015), <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db197.htm>

The Washington Post

For Want of a Dentist:

Prince George's Boy Dies After Bacteria From Tooth Spread to Brain

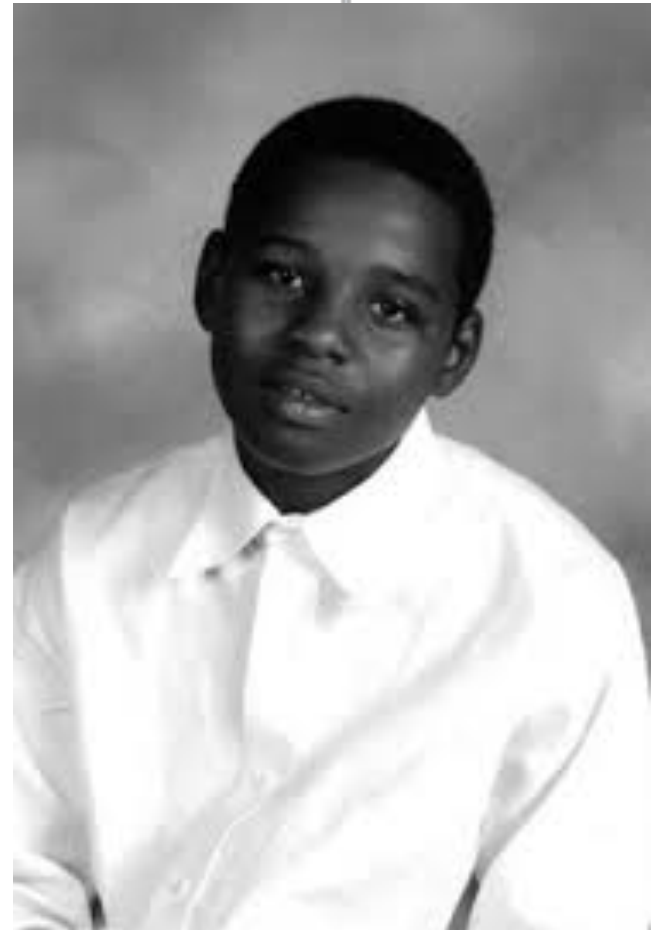
By Mary Otto

Washington Post Staff Writer

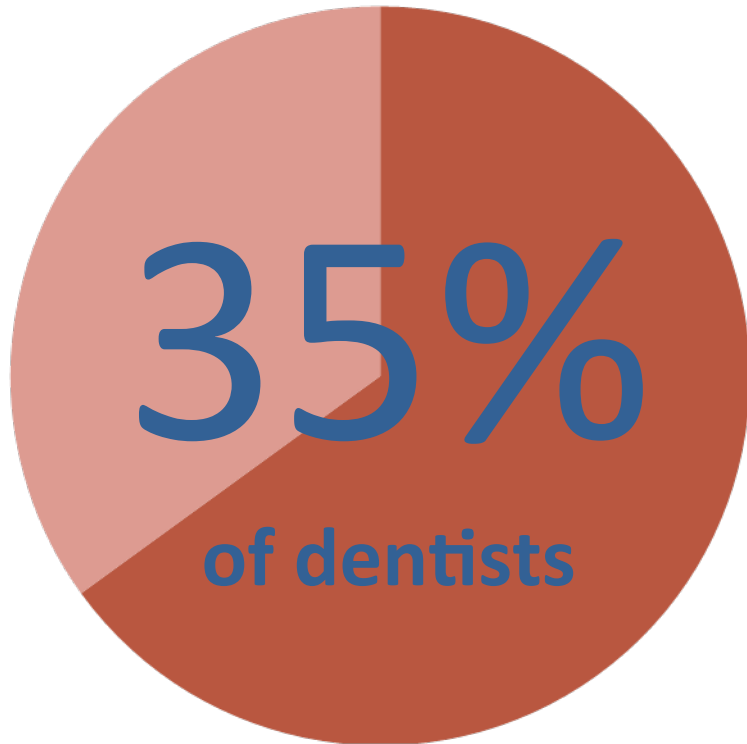
Wednesday, February 28, 2007

Twelve-year-old Deamonte Driver
died of a toothache Sunday.

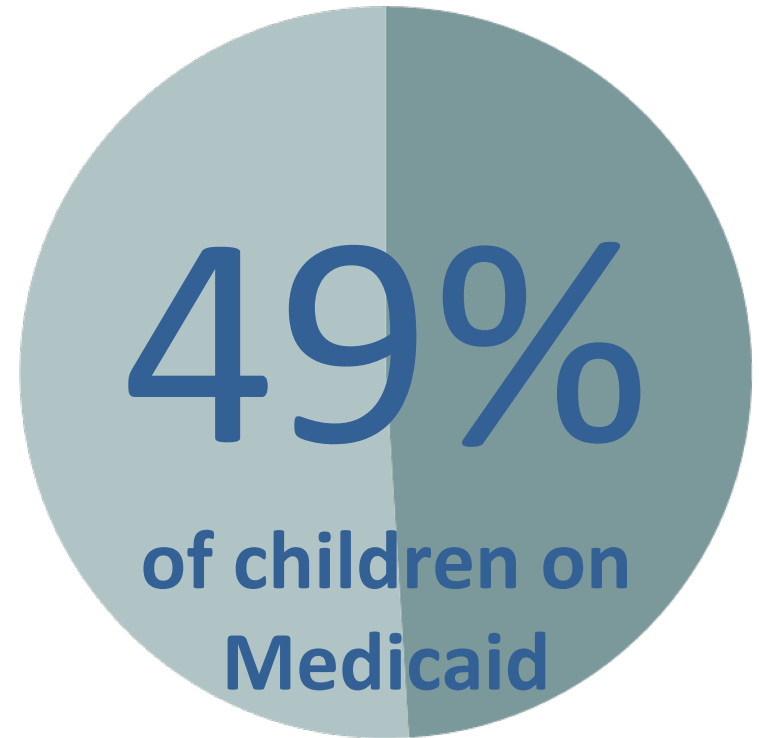
A routine, \$80 tooth extraction might
have saved him...



Children on Medicaid struggle



Accept Medicaid or other public insurance



Saw a dentist in 2015

Medicaid matters for communities of color

- In 2011, nearly 1/3 of non-elderly African Americans relied on Medicaid or other public insurance, compared with 15% of white people
- More than half of all African American children relied on Medicaid, compared with 26% of white children

Kaiser Family Foundation, *Health Coverage for the Black Population Today and Under the Affordable Care Act*, Jul 24, 2013 | Philethea Duckett and [Samantha Artiga](#)

Expensive and Inadequate Care

- In 2012, two million Americans visited ERs for dental problems at a total cost of **\$1.6 billion**
- Medicare and Medicaid paid **\$679 million**



Expanding the dental team

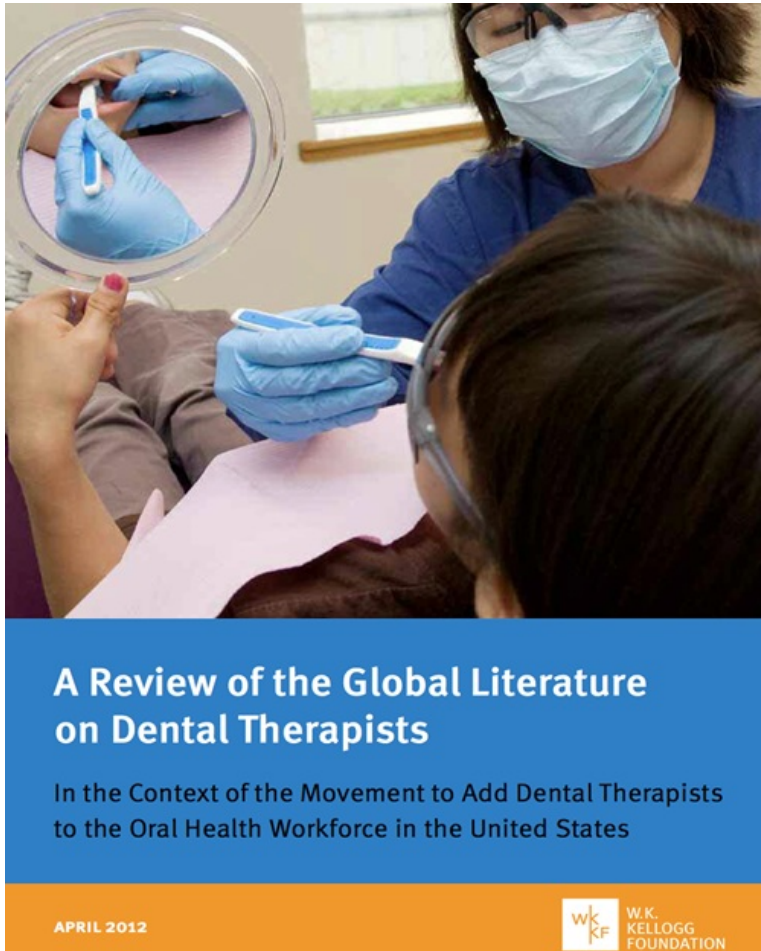
- Improve the **productivity and efficiency** of dental practices
- **Free the dentist** up to focus on more complicated procedures
- Make community-based care models more **economically sustainable**





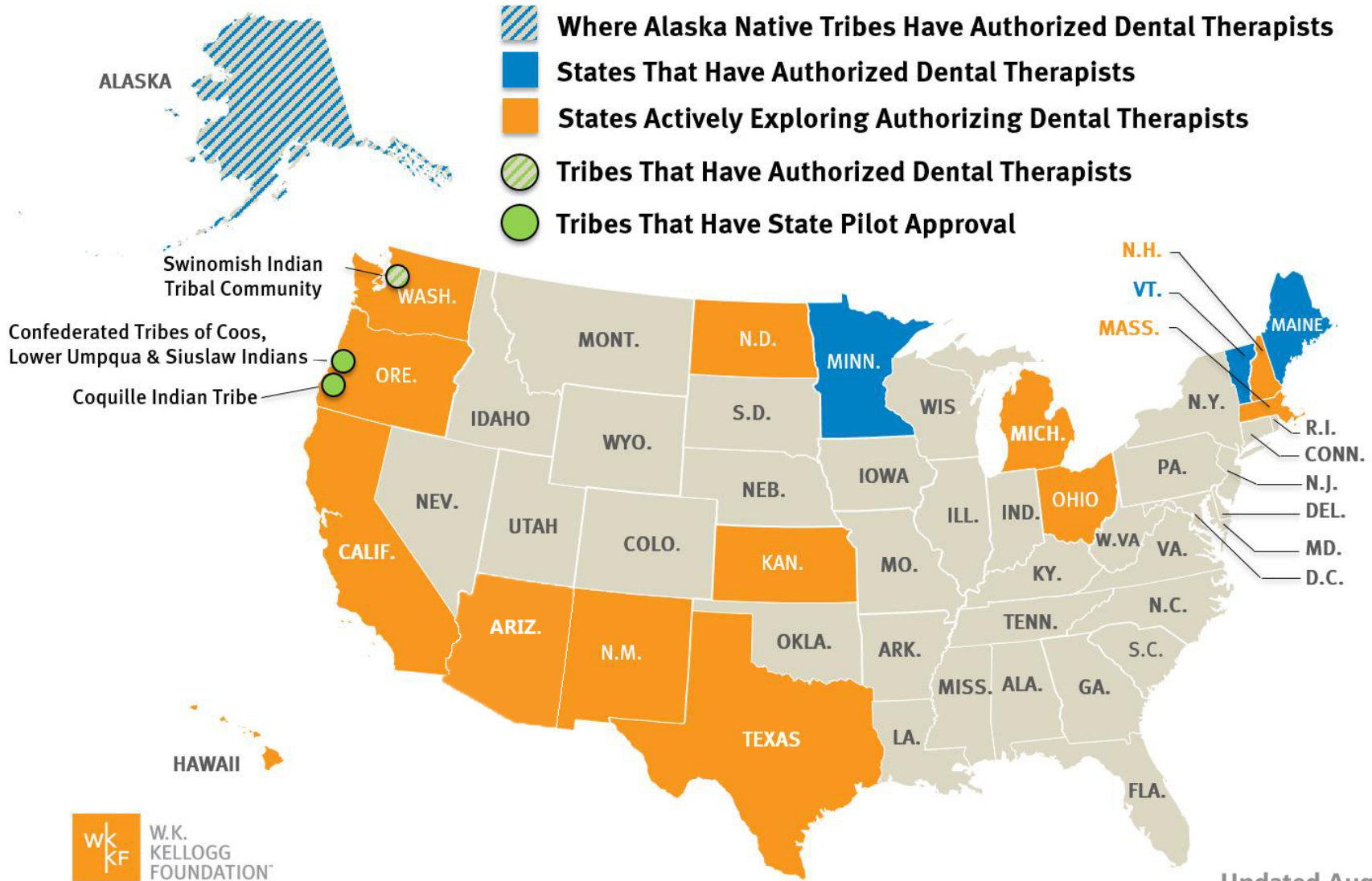
- Cost to employ: \$136,000
- Medicaid revenue: \$167,000
- **Medicaid revenue exceeds costs by over \$30,000**

**FQHC Revenues: People's Health Center
Minneapolis, MN**



Review of 1,100 studies show that dental therapists deliver **safe, effective care**

Building Momentum for Dental Therapists



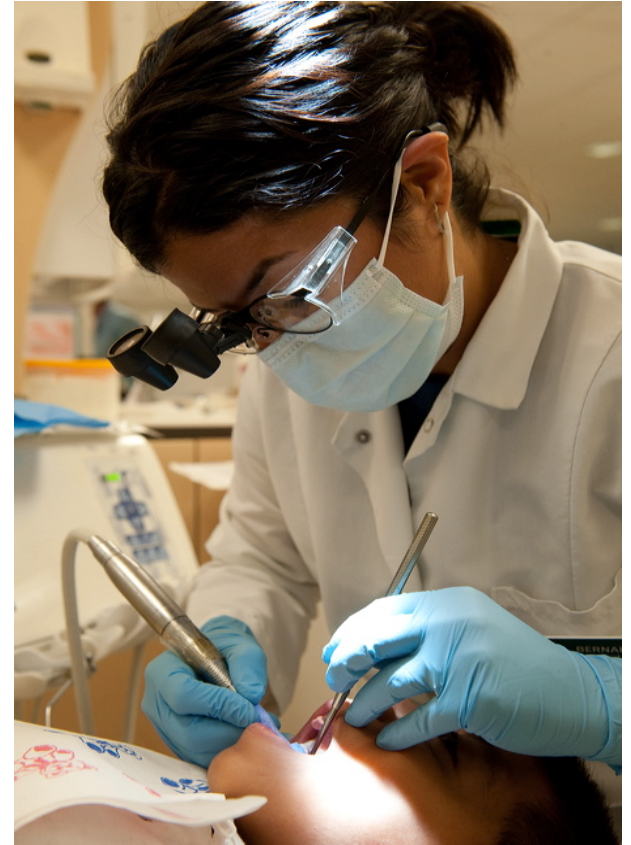
Building Momentum: ADA Affirms Quality

“The results of a variety of studies indicate that appropriately trained midlevel providers are capable of providing high-quality services, including irreversible procedures such as restorative care and dental extractions.”

- American Dental Association Council on Scientific Affairs, 2013

Building Momentum: Educational Standards Approved

**Commission on Dental
Accreditation
Implements Accreditation
Standards for Dental
Therapy Training
Programs**



Building Momentum: Growing Political Support

- AARP
- National Congress of American Indians
- National Caucus of Native American State Legislators
- National Black Caucus of State Legislators
- National Foundation of Women Legislators
- Harvard School of Dental Medicine
- Americans for Prosperity
- Americans for Tax Reform



Thank you!

Questions?

Contact: kmizzi@pewtrusts.org

Learn more at pewtrusts.org/dental