



Oral Health Services for Persons with HIV/AIDS in the Eligible Metropolitan Area of Chicago

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Description

Many people with HIV/AIDS depend upon public clinics for oral health care. MATEC studied capacity of oral health clinics in metro Chicago, (city and suburban) to assist the Title I grantee and Planning Council. We interviewed key informants at seven Ryan White funded oral health clinics and eight non-RWCA funded clinics (18 total clinical sites). Data was collected about clinic demographics, capacity, scope of services, HIV clinical training, HIV stigma and treatment barriers, and potential ways to expand capacity. Survey findings were compared to published literature about barriers to oral health care for patients with HIV/AIDS.

Methods

We contacted the 15 publicly supported oral health providers in Chicago's Eligible Metropolitan Area (EMA). Seven are RWCA Title I-IV funded with 10 clinical sites and eight are Non-RWCA Title I-IV funded. The RWCA funded providers were interviewed during late May 2005 and early June 2005 and non-RWCA funded providers between December and January 2006. We used semi-structured interview protocols jointly designed by MATEC and CDPH staff. The telephone interviews lasted between 15 and 45 minutes and were conducted by experienced staff from MATEC. Findings were recorded on the survey form then coded, analyzed and summarized by MATEC staff using standard qualitative methods.

Results

Provider Characteristics

RWCA funded providers

- All at capacity except one satellite clinic
- All offer basic dental care, one offers specialized care
- All have working knowledge for treating people with HIV/AIDS
- Most have difficulty recruiting more staff

Non-RWCA funded providers

- Limited data about service to people with HIV/AIDS
- Not want to be labeled an HIV clinic
- Clinicians worried about exposure to HIV
- Training could improve understanding HIV/AIDS protocols

Stigma

HIV+ patients concerns

- Disclosure means service denied
- Private dentists will breach confidentiality

Oral health clinicians concerns

- Their practice labeled an HIV clinic

✓ Providers

✓ Stigma

✓ Economics

✓ Managing Capacity

Economic Barriers

- Medicaid not reimburse for adult preventive care
- Medicaid reimbursement for adult routine care at prohibitively low rates
- Rare for people with HIV/AIDS to have oral health insurance

Managing Capacity

How providers compensate

- Schedule delays for return visits
- Schedule long waits for initial visits
- Limit acceptance of new patients

What effects capacity?

- Funding limits reduce availability dentists, hygienist, and operatories
- Recruiting more dentists hard because of lucrative opportunities in private sector
- Additional operatories could enhance capacity to underserved areas
- Adding operatories could require special funding

How providers could increase capacity with more funding

- ✓ 5 providers can open on more days
- ✓ 2 providers
 - Can add dentist/dental hygienist
 - Can deliver more preventive care
 - Can deliver more prosthodontic care
 - Can add operatoria if capital funding available
- ✓ One provider
 - Can do more subcontracting
 - Can do root canals, crowns, bridges
 - Can do more aftercare prevention

Conclusions

Funding and HIV stigma -- key barriers to oral health care capacity in Chicago.

1. Findings consistent with published literature about social and economic barriers
2. Priorities for increased RWCA funding
 - Increase hours at existing site
 - Contract some providers to increase clinic time
 - Deliver more preventive care
 - Increase dental support staff
 - Add operatoria

Challenges

1. Contract with more private practitioners
2. Train more Non-RWHC clinicians about HIV protocols