

Continued Effort with Innovative Approaches to Promote Oral Health in Pandemic Time

Rupinder Brar, IDS 2022; Christine Miller RDH, MHS, MA

INTRODUCTION

Participation in community work has always been important to me as it allows me:

- Serve the public
- Give back to the community
- The opportunity to learn what can be done further to improve what has already been implemented

Student Community Outreach For Public Education (SCOPE) committee at the UOP allowed me to take active role in participating in activities such as oral health education, screenings and presentations ⁽¹⁾

GOAL

- Plan and participate in community health programs
- Promote oral health awareness
- Collaborate with various stakeholders

CHALLENGES

With Covid-19; traditional methods of implementation, participation and collaboration with organizations to promote community programs became challenging. With COVID-19, it became even more important for dental student leaders to show up and continue the work with more enthusiasm so that public members and other students can feel motivated to participate. Thus research about innovative methods of implementing community health care programs became crucial to support the community. Besides, I personally had to reconsider my goals:

- Plan a new program or participate in ongoing programs?
- How to ensure that my role serves the purpose?

WHAT WAS BEING IMPLEMENTED?

- Phone calls
- Social Media- Facebook; LinkedIn
- Zoom Meetings ⁽²⁾
- Joint effort by various organizations and targeting specific areas ⁽³⁾
- Robust virtual education program to recruit volunteers considering travel restrictions ⁽⁴⁾
- Teledentistry and Outreach Strategies ⁽⁵⁾
- More Focus on non aerosol generating procedures ^(5,6)



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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* Followed proper PPE and Vaccination protocols

CONTINUED COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE PROMOTION EFFORTS

Pandemic to halt the community events in the beginning of the academic year but SCOPE Leaders managed to provide continued opportunities with innovative strategies to continue participation:

- 25th Annual Chinatown Community Health **Virtual Fair**
- Pilot **Virtual** health project to enhance senior wellness by Dr. Jue
- Dental **Screenings** at Skilled Nursing Facility site with Dr. Verceles
- **Oral Health Education** Elementary School Project, Class Leader
- Chinatown Community Health **In Person Fair** *

REFLECTION

Participation in these programs during COVID-19 time prepared me:

- Amazing tools and skills of organizing new community health programs virtually and improve ongoing programs as per need
- Besides, I was able to identify a very important concept of understanding the reciprocity of provided information which is the key when planning, preventing or providing any treatment. This allowed me to research, create teaching material and share information via presentation with IDS'23 Colleagues on "What is Health Literacy, What is it and Why is it important?"

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