

# FLOSS SF

## Fostering Local Oral-Health Support Services in San Francisco

Kevin Adams, Alini Agnes, Garrett Barnett, Kim Lam, Juliana Towle  
University of the Pacific, Arthur A. Dugoni School of Dentistry, San Francisco

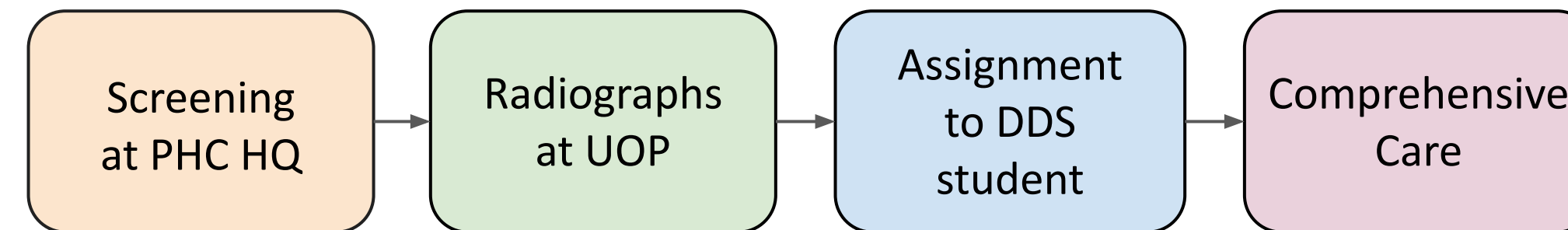
### PURPOSE

This project aims to improve access to dental care for low-income and unhoused adults in the San Francisco area through a partnership with Project Homeless Connect (PHC). By providing high-quality dental care services, this project will help prevent dental diseases and improve systemic health outcomes. PHC already provides services to those who are unhoused or low-income, so the project will leverage their existing infrastructure to deliver high-quality dental care services.

This project is significant in addressing a critical public health issue prevalent in the San Francisco community. Lack of access to dental care can be detrimental to marginalized individuals, as highlighted by a study conducted by Freitas et al (2019), which found that 54.6% of people experiencing homelessness in the Bay Area reported oral pain in the past 6 months. Additionally, 28.9% reported having oral pain that prevented them from eating, while 20.9% reported having pain that prevented them from sleeping. By providing access to dental care services, we can make a meaningful contribution to improving the overall health and equity of our community.

### OBJECTIVE

To address oral health inequities experienced by people who are unhoused, our project will partner with community organizations, like Project Homeless Connect, to provide comprehensive dental care to members of the unhoused community. This will be accomplished by establishing monthly screening events that will transition patients into becoming full patients of record at Dugoni. Patients will be enrolled into Denti-Cal and grant support will allow *pro bono* care to be offered for full mouth rehabilitation. Creating a direct link between the organizations will ensure longevity of the program and will allow the patients to sustainably receive comprehensive dental care and experience improved oral health outcomes.



### METHODS/PLAN

To identify patients who can benefit from the school's scope of services, we plan to screen future patients at the Project Homeless Connect headquarters. This will be accomplished with the support of three DDS, IDS, or hygiene students and one attending faculty. During the screening process, patients will be assisted in enrolling in Denti-Cal and offered hygiene supplies and education. Eligible and interested patients will be registered as patients of record. Screening will consist of the following:

- **OHI/Education Station** (~10 minutes)
  - At this station, attendees will receive an oral hygiene packet that includes toothpaste, toothbrush, and floss. In addition, verbal and written Oral Health Instruction (OHI) will be provided to educate attendees on proper oral hygiene practices. This station also offers attendees the option to receive a brief oral health check-up.
- **Oral Health Check-Up** (~15 minutes)
  - Attendees will have their medical and dental history briefly evaluated, and any chief concerns identified. Dental students will inform attendees of their findings. If the attendee chooses to sign up for treatment at the school, they will proceed to the next section. Otherwise, we will provide them with a list of local dental clinics from UOP.
- **Patient Sign-Up** (~15 minutes)
  - During this station, attendees will be informed of school policies and the importance of attending all appointments to ensure successful treatment. Additionally, they will be informed that treatment at the dental school takes much longer and will require more appointments. Once attendee has signed screening forms, they will be provided with a future appointment date and contact information for the clinic.

Once screened, eligible patients will be referred to the university. PHC will provide bus tokens for patient transportation. At the first appointment, radiographs will be taken and the patient will be assigned to a dental student. Time slots in the radiology clinic will be allocated on specific days for patients screened at PHC HQ. During the second appointment, a comprehensive exam will be completed.

### ANTICIPATED OBSTACLES

- Patient expectations → thorough screening appointments at PHC, with emphasis on school's policies
- Patient communication and follow up → emails, texts, calls, or written communication if needed
- Patient health history → PHC connects people to local health clinics for check ups
- Health Literacy → provide verbal and written information and oral hygiene instructions, pamphlets with visual aids
- Sufficient funds for comprehensive patient care and emergency care → continued efforts to receive funding

### CONCLUSION

The pandemic resulted in a severe reduction in the amount of dental services that were being provided to people experiencing homelessness. Through our partnership with PHC, we understand that there is a waitlist of unhoused individuals in the San Francisco area who are in need of dental services. Our project is set to re-establish their connection to dental services in the Spring of 2023.

Although our project is in its early stages, we currently have planned the process for the screening and integration of low-income and unhoused adults who qualify for Denti-Cal into the clinic. The logistics for the integration of this new population of patients into clinic have been considered as well. Additionally, we have secured funding to provide immediate dentures for individuals who do not qualify for Denti-Cal insurance.

Our aspiration is to integrate this program seamlessly into the school's clinical services in a permanent capacity. We aim to ensure the sustainability of the initiative by delegating the roles and responsibilities to future cohorts of students.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We extend our appreciation to Dr. Des Gallagher for his guidance and support. Moreover, we express our gratitude to Project Homeless Connect for allowing us the opportunity to collaborate with them in expanding access to oral health services for members of the SF community.

**OKU Sutro Excellence Day Project Cover Sheet**

(ONE Cover Sheet per project)

Project Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Award Category:

List names of all contributors to this project:

1. Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ #989 \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_ Class Year \_\_\_\_\_

2. Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ #989 \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_ Class Year \_\_\_\_\_

3. Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ #989 \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_ Class Year \_\_\_\_\_

4. Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ #989 \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_ Class Year \_\_\_\_\_

5. Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ #989 \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_ Class Year \_\_\_\_\_

6. Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ #989 \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_ Class Year \_\_\_\_\_

7. Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ #989 \_\_\_\_\_

Program: \_\_\_\_\_ Class Year \_\_\_\_\_

Last field on next page...

8. Enter your abstract text here (300 word max) :

Thank you for filling out the OKU Sutro Excellence Day Project Cover Sheet! Please merge this Cover Sheet with your Final Project Materials (ie, research poster, clinical case, paper, or other creative production) before uploading to the Final Project Submission Form.