



# AAPD 2013 LEGISLATIVE FACT SHEET

## HRSA TITLE VII PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY APPROPRIATIONS

**REQUEST:** Provide FY 2014 funding of \$32 million for the HRSA Title VII Primary Care Dental Training Cluster and related oral health programs, with not less than \$8 million going towards Pediatric Dentistry Training programs. This represents funding at the FY 2013 level pre-sequester.

**BACKGROUND:** Pediatric Dentistry training is critical to meeting the nation's oral health care needs. The two to three year Pediatric Dentistry residency program<sup>1</sup>, taken after graduation from dental school, immerses the dentist in scientific study enhanced with clinical experience. This training is the dental counterpart to general pediatrics. The trainee learns advanced diagnostic and surgical procedures, along with:

- child psychology and behavior guidance
- oral pathology
- pharmacology related to the child
- radiology
- child development
- management of oral-facial trauma
- caring for patients with special health care needs
- sedation and general anesthesia.

Since children's oral health is an important part of overall health, pediatric dentists often work with pediatricians, other physicians, and dental specialists. Healthy children, as well as hospitalized and chronically ill children or children with disabilities, often benefit from a team approach. Access to dentists is critical for Medicaid and CHIP populations. By the nature of their training, pediatric dentists are able to provide comprehensive oral health care to children. **Pediatric dentists treat a higher percentage of Medicaid and CHIP patients in their practices than any other type of dentist, and are especially successful with this population because of their advanced clinical training and expertise in behavior guidance.** Pediatric dentists are the backbone of the pediatric oral health care delivery system, helping to ensure all children have access to high quality

comprehensive dental services. Contemporary pediatric dental practice demonstrates the specialty's commitment to access to care. **Nearly 70% of pediatric dentists treat children enrolled in Medicaid, CHIP or both, which represents on average 25 percent of their patients.** Almost all pediatric dentists care for patients with special needs. With on average 3390 patient visits per year per pediatric dentist, in aggregate they account for approximately 4.58 million Medicaid dental visits per year. Pediatric dentists also provide a significant amount of charity care and care at a reduced rate.

The authority to fund Pediatric Dentistry residency training under Title VII was first enacted under the Health Professions Education Partnerships Act of 1998. This expanded the existing General Dentistry training authority, providing "start up" funds to either increase Pediatric Dentistry positions at existing programs or initiate new programs. **In the first decade-plus of funding, almost \$60 million has supported over 60 Pediatric Dentistry programs, including 10 new programs.** Every program that can be funded is critical, as Pediatric Dentistry residency programs provide a significant amount of care to underserved populations. **Two-thirds of the patients treated in these programs are Medicaid recipients.** Mentally or physically disabled persons are also treated through these programs.

**JUSTIFICATION:** There is a clear shortage of pediatric dentists, as the U.S. is not training enough pediatric dentists to meet the increasing need for pediatric oral health care services. Training slots have not kept pace with demand. **43 percent of all applicants to Pediatric Dentistry training positions for 2013–14 were turned away due to a lack of positions.** Because of increased attention to this problem—and primarily as a result of



Congressional support for increased funding of Title VII—over 200 new first-year positions have been created, although more pediatric dentists are still needed in both private practice and academics. **Pediatric dentists are critical to caring for the children expected to immediately gain dental insurance coverage under the Affordable Care Act: an estimated 3 million under state health insurance exchanges and an additional 3 million under Medicaid.**

Pediatric Dentistry Title VII grantees are meeting stated federal goals. A 2008 article “The Impact of Title VII on General and Pediatric Dental Education and Training” presented a comprehensive review of the impact of the Title VII program on general and pediatric dental training, as part of an entire issue of the journal *Academic Medicine* (November 2008, Volume 83, Issue 11) devoted to Title VII issues. The main conclusion was that the program has been important in the growth and expansion of residency training in pediatric and general dentistry, by facilitating a more diversified dental workforce and providing outreach and service to underserved and vulnerable populations. Furthermore, “as the need for more pediatric dentists and general dentists with advanced training is expected to continue, Title VII’s role in expanding workforce capacity, and in supporting [general dentistry and pediatric dentistry] curricula, will remain important in the foreseeable future.”

Under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), Title VII authority was expanded to create a primary care dental funding cluster under Section 748 of the Public Health Service Act. Authority was broadened to allow use of funds for faculty development, predoctoral training, and **faculty loan repayment**. The latter initiative had long been advocated by the AAPD, on account of the significant difficulties in recruiting qualified individuals to fill faculty positions. This is especially acute in pediatric dentistry. A critical factor in recruiting and retaining dental school faculty from recent dental school or residency program graduates is the staggering student loan debt and income disparity with private practice. The average graduating dental student loan debt was \$200,000 in 2010, and academic positions typically pay only one-third of what graduates can earn upon entering private practice. Thanks to strong support from Congress, FY 2010 funding allowed for the first new grants since FY 2007, including the first-ever pediatric dentist faculty loan repayment awards. Programs may support loan repayment contracts of up to \$250,000 in aggregate over five years to recruit and retain faculty. Full-time faculty members are eligible for repayment of 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30 percent of their student loan balance (principal and interest) for each year of service with the pediatric or general dentistry program. Funding provided by Congress in FYs 2011, 2012, and 2013 has allowed for continuation of all grants first awarded in FY 2010, which are on a five year cycle.

## FUNDING PROFILES

### Title VII Dental Faculty Loan Repayment Grantees FYs 2010-14

Program	State
Medical College of Georgia	GA
University of Mississippi	MS
Lutheran Medical Center (this is a large multi-site program with 24 pediatric dental residents; funds are expected to assist several faculty members in both pediatric and general dentistry).	NY
University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>The UNLV program is an excellent example of the effectiveness of this new initiative</b> according to Dean Karen P. West: “We have been delighted to have [Dr. Cody Hughes] return to UNLV as a faculty member. It was an honor for the school to be able to hire one of its premier graduates. This grant will give us the ability to retain an emerging leader in pediatric education which Dr. Hughes is quickly becoming.” Dr. Hughes’ program director, Dr. Jeanne Hibler, observes: “Recruitment of qualified young faculty, like Cody, allows an institution to shape and train the practitioner as a professional educator while allowing clinical experience and expertise to develop. Without a loan repayment program, it is financially difficult for recent graduates and specialists to maintain a career as an educator in dentistry.”</li> </ul>	NV
University of Washington <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>University of Washington</b> was able to assist Dr. Travis Nelson, the son of a pediatric dentist, who saw firsthand that “in spite of the thousands of teeth his father had fixed over the years, the problem of childhood dental caries was only getting worse. That realization influenced me to pursue a career in which I could have an impact in the way we manage this disease and train the clinicians of the future.” Dr. Nelson accepted the position of Acting Assistant Professor at UW School of Dentistry, starting in October 2010. In this role he serves as supervising attending dentist for the resident clinics, and is responsible for treating patients in faculty practice and operating room environments. Dental school dean (and AAPD President) Dr. Joel Berg indicates that: “The Title VII award represents a real “win-win” for the UW Department of Pediatric Dentistry. Like many recent graduates, Dr. Nelson has significant educational debt – and like many programs of its kind, UW faces a huge obstacle in the recruitment and retention of new faculty. The large reduction in salary earned in academia as opposed to private practice deters many new dentists.”</li> </ul>	WA

## Title VII Postdoctoral Pediatric Dentistry Grantees FYs 2010-14

Program	State
University of Alabama-Birmingham	AL
UCLA	CA
University of Southern California	CA
University of Connecticut	CT
Yale – New Haven Hospital (CT)	CT
Howard University (DC)	DC
Miami Children's Hospital	FL
Nova Southeastern University (new program for children with autism) (FL)	FL
Children's Hospital, Boston	MA
Tufts University (MA)	MA
University of Nebraska	NE
Columbia University	NY
Lutheran Medical Center (NY)	NY
Montefiore Medical Center (NY)* Note that the grant at this hospital will benefit both the General and Pediatric Dentistry residency programs	NY
University of Puerto Rico	PR

Some examples of the key impact of these grants are follows:

- At the **University of Alabama-Birmingham**, their grant will maintain and increase the program's exposure to Alabama's children from disadvantaged backgrounds and those with special needs. It will open more doors of opportunity to minorities, especially with plans to reach a large Hispanic population in Birmingham. A new partnership with United Way of Central Alabama will provide the program with greater access to children in Head Start programs and agencies focused on children with special needs. Through the proposed sealant and statewide oral health surveillance programs in partnership with the Alabama Department of Public Health, **the grant will help insure a decrease in caries experience to disadvantaged children in Alabama and identify dental homes for those without dental care.**
- At **Miami Children's Hospital**, their residents and staff provided critically needed dental services to approximately 5,000 children every year for the past three years (8,500 total visits and 38,000 procedures), mostly to children with special health care needs and with incapacitating diseases. **In this grant, they will expand the Pediatric Dentistry Residency Program so that a greater focus can be placed on serving patients through an Infant and Toddler Dental Program (ages 0-3).** This will be a major component of their health outreach initiatives, bringing critical services to low-income families throughout the community. 94 percent of their dental clinic patients are on Medicaid.
- At the **University of Nebraska Medical Center, College of Dentistry**, the grant will allow the program to increase its off-site rotations to additional rural communities, and also train physicians about infant oral health while demonstrating the use of tele-dentistry services in rural physicians' offices. The goal is to provide pediatric dental expertise throughout the region, and increase access to care for underserved populations—especially children and those with developmental disabilities. This residency program plays a major role in access to care, as more than \$1 million of Medicaid dental care is provided by the program annually. **A earlier Title VII grant led to a pediatric dentist opening a practice in the western half of state where there had never been a pediatric dentist.**
- At the **Dental Department of Lutheran Medical Center (NY)** the grant will expand partnerships and develop Pediatric Dental Residency programs in five separate health centers in Florida, Wisconsin, Washington, California, and Maryland. The overarching goal of the project is to demonstrate the knowledge and experience in distance learning by utilizing past experience in **working in geographically isolated, underserved, and culturally diverse training sites.**

## Title VII FY 2012 Faculty Development Grants

HRSA was able to fund FY 2012 faculty development awards for clinical care and education in primary care dentistry at the following institutions: University of California, San Diego, University of Florida, University of Kentucky, University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, Bronx Lebanon Hospital Center (NY), Lutheran Medical Center (NY), Columbia University (NY), and University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio. **However, approximately 30 applications were not funded.** Worse, HRSA may not have sufficient funds to initiate any new Section 748 grant cycle in FY 2013.

<sup>1</sup>Three year programs generally require additional masters' level research and often prepare trainees for careers in academic dentistry.