

AAPD 2017 LEGISLATIVE FACT SHEET

HRSA TITLE VII PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY APPROPRIATIONS



AMERICA'S PEDIATRIC DENTISTS
THE BIG AUTHORITY on little teeth[®]

REQUEST: Provide FY 2018 funding of \$35.873 million for the HRSA Title VII Primary Care Dental Training Cluster and related oral health programs, with not less than \$10 million for Pediatric Dentistry Training programs. This will support continuation of dental faculty loan repayment program awards, postdoctoral and predoctoral awards, plus a new dental faculty loan repayment grant cycle. Retain authorizing language as provided in the Affordable Care Act.

Background. Pediatric dentistry training is vital to meeting the nation's oral health care needs. The two to three year pediatric dentistry residency program¹, completed 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; and
- 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 Children's Health Insurance Program (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 percent 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. 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. Since FY 2000, approximately \$90 million has supported over 60 pediatric dentistry programs, including 10 new programs. Every program that can be funded is important, 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 continues to be a 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. 40 percent of all applicants to pediatric dentistry training positions for 2017-18 were turned away due to a lack of positions. Because of increased attention to this problem, primarily as a result of Congressional support for increased funding of Title VII, over 250 new first-year positions have been created. However, more pediatric dentists are still needed in both private practice and academics. Pediatric dentists are critical to caring for children obtaining dental insurance coverage under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) or its replacement, either through private plans or Medicaid. Pediatric dental faculty train not only pediatric dentists but all general dentists.

Pediatric Dentistry Title VII grantees are meeting stated federal goals. A 2008 evaluation² concluded 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 under-served 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, because 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 \$262,119 in 2016, and academic positions typically pay only one-third of what graduates can earn upon entering private practice. Thanks to strong support from Congress in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, Public Law No. 114-113, \$875,000 was provided to initiate a new Dental Faculty Loan Repayment Program (DFLRP) grant cycle in FY 2016, in addition to the \$10 million provided for pediatric dentistry. Eight grants were awarded, and several are currently in the process of selecting loan repayment recipients.³ Programs may support loan repayment contracts 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. HRSA is also awarding new grants in FY 2017 focused on improving pediatric dental training opportunities in predoctoral (dental school) programs.

Profiles of Recent Pediatric Dentistry Title VII Grantees

Dental Faculty Loan Repayment Program (awarded from FYs 2010-14)

University of Washington School of Dentistry experience

The school was able to leverage the DFLRP award to retain three outstanding different faculty:

Pediatric dentist Dr. Travis Nelson in his young academic career has already published extensively on a variety of subjects in dentistry, particularly in the care for patients with special health care needs. Four years ago, he started an Autism Clinic which aims to provide comprehensive clinical and other services for children with ASD. The program has been exceptionally successful and has received national accolades. As a skilled clinician, Nelson originally planned to go into private practice. *The loan repayment funds were a major factor in his decision to stay in academics.*

Pediatric and public health dentist Dr. Donald Chi also has a Ph.D. in Dental Public Health Sciences. Without DFLRP funds, Chi might have pursued other activities. Chi's early academic career accomplishments include an exceptional publication record, teaching excellence, impressive course preparation, mentoring of students, and service to external communities.

General dentist Dr. Amy Kim has stayed with the school in academics as a clinical research director as opposed to going into private practice, in large part due to the DFLRP.

Pediatric Dentistry Title VII Grants – FY 2015 awardees (five year grants)

HRSA Title VII Pediatric Dentistry Grants - FY 2016 Funding Level		
Grantee Name	State	Amount
PREDOCTORAL – Pediatric Dentistry-focused or collaborative grants		
UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA, SF	CA	\$350,000
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY	NY	\$340,534
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY	NY	\$347,179
POSTDOCTORAL – Pediatric Dentistry-focused or collaborative grants		
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES	CA	\$739,850
UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT	CT	\$526,150
NOVA SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY.	FL	\$682,269
NICKLAUS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL	FL	\$499,765
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-CHICAGO	IL	\$242,937
BOSTON UNIVERSITY	MA	\$429,209
TUFTS COLLEGE	MA	\$737,114
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA	NE	\$447,372
BRONX LEBANON HOSPITAL CENTER	NY	\$747,965
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY	NY	\$749,055
NY CITY HEALTH AND HOSPITALS CORP.	NY	\$496,097
UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER	NY	\$635,917
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH	PA	\$360,455
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY	TX	\$748,606
VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY	VA	\$476,817
		TOTAL= \$9,557,291

Profiles of Several FY 2015 Pediatric Dentistry Postdoctoral Grantees (five year grants)

- Dentists and other health care providers who treat patients with **autism spectrum disorder (ASD)** require special training to understand the skills and techniques needed to care for this growing population. At **Nova Southeastern University (NSU) College of Dental Medicine** the grant will allow for the development of a curriculum addressing the transition of children and adolescents with ASD to adult dental care and aims to increase access to dental care for children and adolescents with special health care needs such as ASD. NSU currently has pediatric special needs dental clinics at NSU's Mailman Segal Center for Human Development in Davie, Florida, and Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital in Hollywood, Florida, and also operates a pediatric dental clinic at Kids in Distress in Fort Lauderdale.

- In collaboration with Building Healthy Futures, an Omaha non-profit that aims to improve health for underserved children and youth, the **University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) College of Dentistry** has developed a plan to provide dental care to children in need right at their own schools. **The grant allows residents to go into ten Omaha Public Schools and provide restorative care using a portable dental unit.** UNMC will also be working with dental clinics at Charles Drew Health Center, One World and Creighton University along with their own pediatric clinic to help establish dental homes for these children. Previous Title VII grants allowed UNMC College of Dentistry 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. Title VII funding also led to a pediatric dentist opening a practice in the western half of state where there had never been a pediatric dentist.
- **Boston University School of Dental Medicine** is using its funding to establish a team-based inter-professional pediatric dental care model for underserved children and children with special health care needs, partnering with primary care pediatricians. They are also creating an integrated 3 year combined residency training program in pediatric dentistry and dental public health.
- Funding received by the **University of Pittsburgh** is supporting the expansion of the current residency program in pediatric dentistry that includes two multidisciplinary program tracks specializing in the care of patients in underserved rural settings and special needs populations. One track focuses on providing advanced dental care to the special needs community and the second focuses on dental public health policy and practices for children in the rural and underserved areas of northern Appalachia. The funding gives the pediatric dental residency program an opportunity for educating additional residents to be dually-trained and providing much needed dental services to the region's most vulnerable populations. Pitt's Dental School will expand its collaboration with the Department of Family Medicine, the Center for Patients with Special Needs and many regional and national community health partners to provide residents family-oriented, community-based training that emphasizes cultural competency.
- The **Virginia Commonwealth University School of Dentistry** grant is funding the development of a new interprofessional curriculum, providing funds for teledentistry equipment and expanding the pediatric dental residency program at two clinical care sites. Pediatric dentistry residents will have the opportunity to participate in the VCU Center for Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Care's educational programs while providing dental care for children at various clinical sites. **Residents will provide care at the Children's Hospital of Richmond at VCU and the Piedmont Regional Dental Center, which is a safety net dental practice in Orange, Virginia.** The grant also covers the cost of dental technology equipment such as a digital X-ray and an intra-oral video camera. The new technology will enable pediatric dentistry residents to provide consultation services for children at rural sites without necessitating a trip to a dental office.

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

²The 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).

³Unfortunately HRSA used overly restrictive criteria for clinical training sites, which should be broadened for future grants.