

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

DENTAL HEALTH AIDE - UPDATE

January 2007

Dental Health Aides - Increased number of providers in villages

- The Alaska Tribal Health System now has thirty certified Dental Health Aides practicing in seventeen villages.
 - Nine Primary Dental Health Aide I;
 - Eleven Expanded Function Dental Health Aide I;
 - Two Expanded Function Dental Health Aide II; and
 - Eight Dental Health Aide Therapists.
- Three more DHAT's graduated from Otago on December 12, 2006.
- These individuals are from the villages. They continue to contribute to better oral health care and serve as role models to the people of their village.

Dental Health Aide Therapist - Training Center

- The students have begun their training!
- In addition to the \$2.8M grant from Kellogg Foundation, ANTHC was recently awarded \$450,000 from Rasmuson Foundation for the DHAT Training Program of which \$50,000 is designated for evaluation of the program.
- University of Washington will provide the curriculum and instruction.
- ANTHC will provide the training site in Anchorage for the first year program.
- The training center is currently under construction and should be fully operational by mid-March. The students have begun classes at an alternate site and will utilize other resources for the clinical requirements.
- Three staff members were hired to run the DENTEX DHAT training center. They are assigned to work at the direction of the University of Washington. The staff are **Dr. Mary Williard**, DDS, as Clinical Site Director; **Mary Anaruk** as Program Coordinator; and **Sophia Strange** as Senior Office Assistant.
- We have worked in partnership with Southcentral Foundation (SCF) to allow the students to see SCF patients during their first year of training. In addition, SCF has offered limited use of its dental clinic for training until the DENTEX training center renovation is complete.
- Seven students were selected after an interview process held by the University of Washington. They are:
 - **Louisa Beal** from Annette Island Service Unit
 - **Danielle Boston** from Mt. Sanford Tribal Consortium
 - **Christopher Evan** from Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation (YKHC)
 - **Daniel Kennedy** from SEARHC
 - **Sheena Nelson** from Yakutat Tlingit Tribe
 - **Danelle Shellikoff** from YKHC
 - **Archie Watson** from YKHC
- The students began the training on January 15, 2007, with an orientation from the University of Washington faculty. They all passed their first exam after two weeks of instruction on the Primary Dental Health Aide curriculum!
- A reception was held on January 15th to honor the start of the program, the first of its kind in the United States. ANTHC and UW took the opportunity to thank the tribal health system, all contributing staff, the program funders, and the students for their valuable time and commitment.