

# Making the Case for A NATIONAL INTERPROFESSIONAL INITIATIVE ON ORAL HEALTH

## Problem Statement

Patients of all ages experience dental disease – incurring unnecessary pain and expense, in part because their primary care providers do not understand how to prevent or address this disease process.

## Initiative Goal

Put oral health into the education, training and reimbursement of primary health care professionals

## Outputs

- evidence-based curriculum (*Smiles For Life*) spread from Family Medicine Residency Programs to pre-doctoral medical education, training of Physician Assistants and Nurse Practitioners, residency programs of Internal Medicine, Pediatrics and OB/Gyn as well as continuing medical education
- common website/ interactive learning technology
- technical assistance regarding implementation
- convenings of cross specialties to reach agreement, facilitate collaboration
- create expectations of prevention; advocacy

## Outcomes

- number of primary care clinicians ready/willing to deliver oral health preventive care:
  - 105,000 Family Physicians
  - 45,000 General Pediatricians
  - 70,000 General Internists
  - 36,000 Primary Care Physician Asst.
  - 125,000 Primary Care Nurse Practitioners
- *Smiles For Life* in use in 500 programs
- national network of oral health champions

A culture of collaboration, between medical and dental interests and across medical specialty groups exists; evidence: common website and curriculum; ability to dialogue across MD/DDS

## Process Outcomes

- professional organizations (AFIFP, AAPA, ACOP, etc.) officially endorse *Smiles For Life* curriculum; have oral health on annual meeting programs
- accrediting bodies and certifying organizations in primary care specialties have an oral health component to their process
- payors (public and private) reimburse medical for oral disease prevention and qualify practitioners users of *Smiles For Life* curriculum
- primary care specialty groups meet annually to strategize on effective next steps