Medical-Dental Integration: Preventive Dental Care

Taking Dental Care Out Into the Community

FACTS
- Tooth decay is the most common chronic disease among children in the US
- Tooth decay is 100% preventable
- Untreated tooth decay causes pain; sleeping, speech and eating problems; missed school and work; emergency room visits; hospitalization; and even death
- Preventive services are affordable
- Preventive visits reduce emergency room visits for dental pain
- Dental hygienists are prevention specialists
- 50 of 56 counties in Montana are designated dental shortage areas

BENEFITS
- Reduces health care costs
- Improves overall health
- Reduces barriers to care such as transportation, time needed for appointments, distance traveled to get to dental office, lack of Medicaid dental providers
- Dental care access for Montanans who do not have dental homes
- Facilitates referrals and streamlines care
- Increases oral health literacy
- Reimbursed by Medicaid and some private insurances

LAP RDHs
- Licensed healthcare provider, with a special endorsement to practice in public health settings
- Limited Access Permit (LAP)
- Successful passage of both national and regional boards
- Malpractice coverage
- Must have 2400 hours of clinical experience to qualify
- Complete a minimum of 15 continuing education every year
- CPR certified
- Collaboration with dentists for care outside scope of dental hygiene practice

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