

# ASTDD Perinatal Oral Health Committee (POHC) Annual Report January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024

Chair: Mark Moss

Consultant: Reg Louie

Members: Juyoung Joyce An\*, Laura Garman\*, Katrina Holt, Kally Kline, Emily Norrix, Shakalpi Pendurkar\*, Rocio Quinonez, Patrick M. Roberson\*, Renee Samelson, Ruma Simhan, Rhonda Stokley, Janis Valmond\*, Pam Vodicka, Jane Weintraub, Chris Wood (ex officio)

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1. List any new members or subcommittee members:

\*In 2024 POHC added the above new members.

2. Describe the purpose of your committee:

POHC continues to serve as the primary ASTDD focal point for issues and resources for state and territorial oral health programs (STOHPs) relating to perinatal oral health. Most POHC activities focus on programs, initiatives, and priorities addressing the maternal and child health (MCH) population, including the integration of POH into primary care. POHC operates as a large group and as smaller ad hoc work groups or assigns individuals to work on specific projects and activities.

3. List your committee accomplishments for the last calendar year.

From January through July, POHC continued its partnership with the National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center (OHRC) in its Center for Oral Health Systems Integration and Improvement (COHSII) project funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB). This three-year project was completed in June.

This report describes POHC's and other ASTDD members' participation in various program activities. Specifically, through June, it focuses on perinatal oral health centered on assisting COHSII in providing technical assistance (TA) to three MCHB-funded Networks for Oral Health Integration (NOHI) within the MCH Safety Net. The NOHI learning collaborative (LC) was comprised of three regional projects, each consisting of four states.

COHSII provided TA to the LC projects to share successes, lessons learned, and challenges focused on building capacity around three core functions: (1) data, analysis and evaluation; (2) outreach and education; and (3) policy and practice. Assisted in completing the COHSII final report, which can be found at [Integration-Partnership-Report.pdf](#).

In addition to the aforementioned TA to COHSII, POHC participated in the planning and conducting the final annual NOHI-grantees meeting in June. The meeting featured formal

presentations from each of the three multi-state projects, accomplishments/challenges faced over the last five project years, and proposed efforts for sustainability.

Beginning in 2023 and extending into 2024, POHC continued to provide assistance in the development of the OHRC's application in response to the HRSA Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for *Improving Oral Health Integration National Consortium* (MCH-IOHI Consortium). The OHRC's application was approved/funded for a third cycle (2024-2028) beginning in August. At this point POHC began its new partnership with OHRC to implement this Consortium.

POHC assisted in developing documents promoting the inclusion of oral health in the upcoming FY 2025 Title V MCH block grant applications regarding the MCH five-year state/jurisdiction needs assessment. The three were: a rationale for OH inclusion, a "tip sheet" and an "elevator pitch".

In addition, POHC members provided review and comments on a number of draft publications, including *Networks for Oral Health Integration (NOHI) Within the Maternal and Child Health Safety Net: Overview and Project Profiles-Update 2024*; and *Promoting Oral Health During Pregnancy: Update on Activities-October 2024*. All of these publications can be found at: [Publications by Date | OHRC](#).

Regarding other MCH Title V-related activities, POHC provided follow-up assistance to the Guam SDF training in 2023 of MCH health care providers. Of note, this training was supported by a partnership of Guam Title V, MCHB, PIPCA, ASTDD and OHRC. Fourteen nurses and nurse assistants received training and subsequently, provided oral health services, including SDF, in their respective MCH and CHC clinical sites. In addition, POHC presented a roundtable at the 2024 NOHC entitled *From Tragedy to Success: Integrating Preventive Oral Health Care into Primary Care in Guam*.

In this same context, POHC planned and carried out an SDF training in American Samoa in June for oral health and MCH/CHC clinical staff. This training was also supported by local resources and the aforementioned partnership of agencies and organizations. Over 20 clinical staff received training. In addition, POHC developed an abstract for a roundtable at the 2025 NOHC entitled *Improving Access to Critically Needed Oral Health Care Through SDF-A Case Study: American Samoa*, which was accepted.

POHC continued to provide information to CDC funded Strategy-3 listserv regarding perinatal oral health, including information from the American Dental Association, CDC, OHRC and OSAP, and information about teledentistry, which is especially relevant to the US Affiliated Pacific Islands (USAPI) and Caribbean jurisdictions.

In addition, POHC assisted in the completion of a report entitled *History, Status and Strategies to Improve Oral Health Program Infrastructure and Capacity in the U.S. Virgin Islands: A Needs Assessment Project (2024)*. This is the final component of the CDC funded Infrastructure and Capacity Project targeting the US jurisdictions.

POHC assisted in updating Strategy-3 listserv roster and establishing the new [usterritories@groups.astdd.org](mailto:usterritories@groups.astdd.org), which includes the USAPI in addition to the US Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

POHC members continued to participate as members of the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACCD) Medical-Dental Integration Project.

4. Describe the future activities planned by your committee:

Title V Oral Health related NPM:

- POHC will explore updating the ASTDD Perinatal Oral Health Policy Statement (2020) and Best Practices Report (2019).
- POHC will explore conducting on-site training for MCH programs in Republic of the Marshall Islands on providing silver diamine fluoride treatment to arrest caries in children. Funding support for the proposed on-site training will be sought from MCHB and the Pacific Islands Primary Care Association, respectively, as well as from local sources.
- POHC members will provide TA efforts to states and jurisdictions retaining an oral health related NPM for FY '25 as resources permit.

COH-IOHI:

- POHC is committed to build upon the work which has been accomplished to date. Special COH-IOHI focus will be on State Core Function 2- Outreach and Education.
- POHC will assist in planning and implementing the IOHI annual meeting for grantees scheduled for March 2025.
- POHC intends to engage the eight new IOHI grantees, especially the three that will be focusing on the pregnant women and early childhood populations, as resources permit.

5. Describe any subcommittees your committee uses, their roles and activities:

POHC does not have any established subcommittees and constitutes ad hoc work groups to address specific tasks and functions.

6. List any unmet needs of your committee (e.g., members, funding):

A number of activities in the POHC work plan include the caveat “as resources permit.” As in past years, the extent of requests for TA exceeds our resources. This is particularly critical due to the loss of funding from the CDC cooperative agreement.