



## Roles for State Health Officials: Supporting the 10 Essential Public Health Services to Promote Oral Health in the US

Several ASTDD reports, best practices, and policy statements produced since 2000 document the need for state populations to understand and support State Oral Health Programs (SOHP). State health officials are key players in this process. ASTDD is one of 20 members and collaborators of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO). Health officials should also be familiar with the many resources on the ASTDD website at [astdd.org](http://astdd.org).

### Key Messages About State Oral Health Programs

State oral health programs (SOHP) make an essential contribution to public health and must be continued and enhanced. A successful SOHP strives to accomplish roles and strategies outlined in the [ASTDD Guidelines for SOHP](#) and to highlight the following messages:

- A successful SOHP must have diversified funding that includes funding for state and local evidence-based programs.
- A successful SOHP needs a continuous, strong, credible, forward-thinking and action-oriented leader.
- A successful SOHP needs a complement of staff, consultants and partners with proficiency in the *ASTDD Competencies for SOHPs*.
- A successful SOHP needs collaboration with one or more broad-based coalitions that include partners with fiscal and political clout.
- A successful SOHP must have valid data (oral health status and other) to use for evaluation, high quality oral health surveillance, a state oral health improvement plan with implementation strategies, and evidence-based programs and policies.

## What Public Health Officials Can Do

### to Support Oral Health and State Oral Health Programs

- Position oral health programs in a health agency to address all life stages.
- Facilitate linkages between oral health programs and any established healthcare workforce or access to care programs.
- Encourage oral health programs and oral health coalitions to seek diversified public and private funding for sustainability.
- Promote and support leadership and professional development, including public health training.
- Ensure capacity for development, implementation, and evaluation of an oral health surveillance system with high quality data analysis and use of the information to guide decision making for programs and policies.
- Facilitate integration of oral health data with other health and health equity data and needs assessments.
- Promote integration of oral health and other health messages and programs, especially prevention and risk reduction strategies and medical-dental integration.
- Develop the capacity to conduct comprehensive evaluation and quality improvement of oral health programs, interventions, and policies.
- Encourage use of ASTDD and partner resources and technical assistance.

#### STATE ORAL HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE ELEMENTS



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