

HEALTH RESEARCH ABSTRACT SUBMISSIONS

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Title of Research *	The University of Iowa program evaluation at a pediatric dental facility in southeastern Iowa
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Introduction & Purpose *

In 2004, Muscatine's Center for Social Action (MCSA) conducted a survey of 3,564 households to assess health care needs in Muscatine County. Access to affordable dental care was the "number one" unmet health care need identified. In January 2005 the College of Dentistry opened a Pediatric Dentistry clinic in Muscatine to help address this need.

The purpose of this study was to explore variables related to the Muscatine Pediatric Dental Clinic (MPDC) such as clinic facilities, convenience of clinic days and hours, satisfaction with treatment and overall satisfaction. This study investigated the satisfaction of the patients' parents, and the local dentists regarding this program, which has been in operation since 2005, and targets a population that has been underserved by local dentists. The results of this study will provide insight into the priority that the program will focus in the future.

Experimental Design *

Cross-sectional, observational study. A 20-item satisfaction survey (English and Spanish versions) was distributed during two months to the parents of pediatric patients and 9-item survey to local dentists. Descriptive analysis, Chi-square, Fisher Exact, Cochran-Mantel-Haenszel tests and logistical regression were used for statistical analysis to test associations of demographic characteristics with satisfaction. All analysis was conducted using SAS 9.2 statistical software and assumed a Type I error of $\alpha=0.05$.

Results *

112 patients' parents and 12 of 17 dental practitioners completed the satisfaction survey. According to the findings, most of children were white (83.9%), from Muscatine County (81%), and the main appointment reason is "needed a check-up and/or cleaning" (60%). The median wait time for appointments was 2-4 weeks. Parents of Hispanic children tended to be more satisfied with the amount of waiting time, and who waited longer were less satisfied with the easy of making an appointment category. The respondents reported that parents or guardians first heard about the MPDC primarily from a friend and/or family (36.8%) or another social service program at the MCSA (18.4%). The four most positive aspects of the clinic identified were: the dentists, convenient location, staff and the acceptance of Medicaid, respectively. Days that clinic offered appointments was indicated as an area for future improvement. Regarding private local dentists, they first

heard about the MPDC from the College of Dentistry, University of Iowa; and half of them had referred patients to the clinic because it accepts Medicaid. In their opinion, the communication between the MPDC and private practices could improve.

Conclusions *

In conclusion, 95.5% of parents or guardians reported to be very satisfied or satisfied overall with the clinic. The data showed that 100% of respondents were willing to return and 99% recommend the MCSA pediatric dental clinic.

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