

Dental Therapy in the US

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Consortium



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Overview

- Background
- Training/Accreditation
- Licensure/Supply
- Sustainability



Alaska Tribal Health System



- Voluntary affiliation of Tribes and Tribal organizations providing health services to Alaska Native and American Indian people
- Approximately 11,600 employees statewide
- Each Tribal health organization is autonomous and serves a specific geographical area



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Importance of Tribal management in health care



- Tribal-owned health program
- Local decision-making and flexibility
- Local priority setting and budget allocation
- Integration of primary care around the family
- Culturally relevant health programs



The Alaska Community Health Aide Program



Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
web: www.akchap.org | www.anthc.org



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Community Health Clinics



- 180 Small Village Health Clinics
- Primary health care providers
 - 550 Community Health Aides/Practitioners
 - 125 Behavioral Health Aides
 - 60 Dental Health Aides/20+ Therapists
 - 100 Home health/Personal Care Attendants
- Average Alaska village: 350 residents



CHAP History

- 1950s** Chemotherapy Aides (Volunteers)
- Direct Observed Therapy for TB patients
- 1960s** Formal Training/Federal Funding 1968
- 1975** Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (PL 93-638)
- 1998** CHAPCB Standards and Procedures Authority:
Act of November 2, 1921 (25 U.S.C. § 13, popularly known as the Snyder Act) pursuant to 25 U.S.C. § 16161
(Section 119 of Public law 94-437, the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, as amended)
- 2005** Dental Health Aides Certified
- 2009** Behavioral Health Aides Certified
- 2014** Distance Learning Network Launches Blended Session IV
- 2016** iPad app for CHAM- Alaska Community Health Aide/Practitioner Manual

Dr. Walter Johnson, MD (1922-2015)
<http://jukebox.uaf.edu/CHA/htm/wjohnson1.htm>



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Certification

CHAP Certification Board

Federal Authority, 12 members

Standards and Procedures

Individuals, Training Centers, Curricula

487 individuals certified

405 CHA/Ps certified, 328 meet criteria for reimbursement for services to Medicaid eligible clients (July 2016)

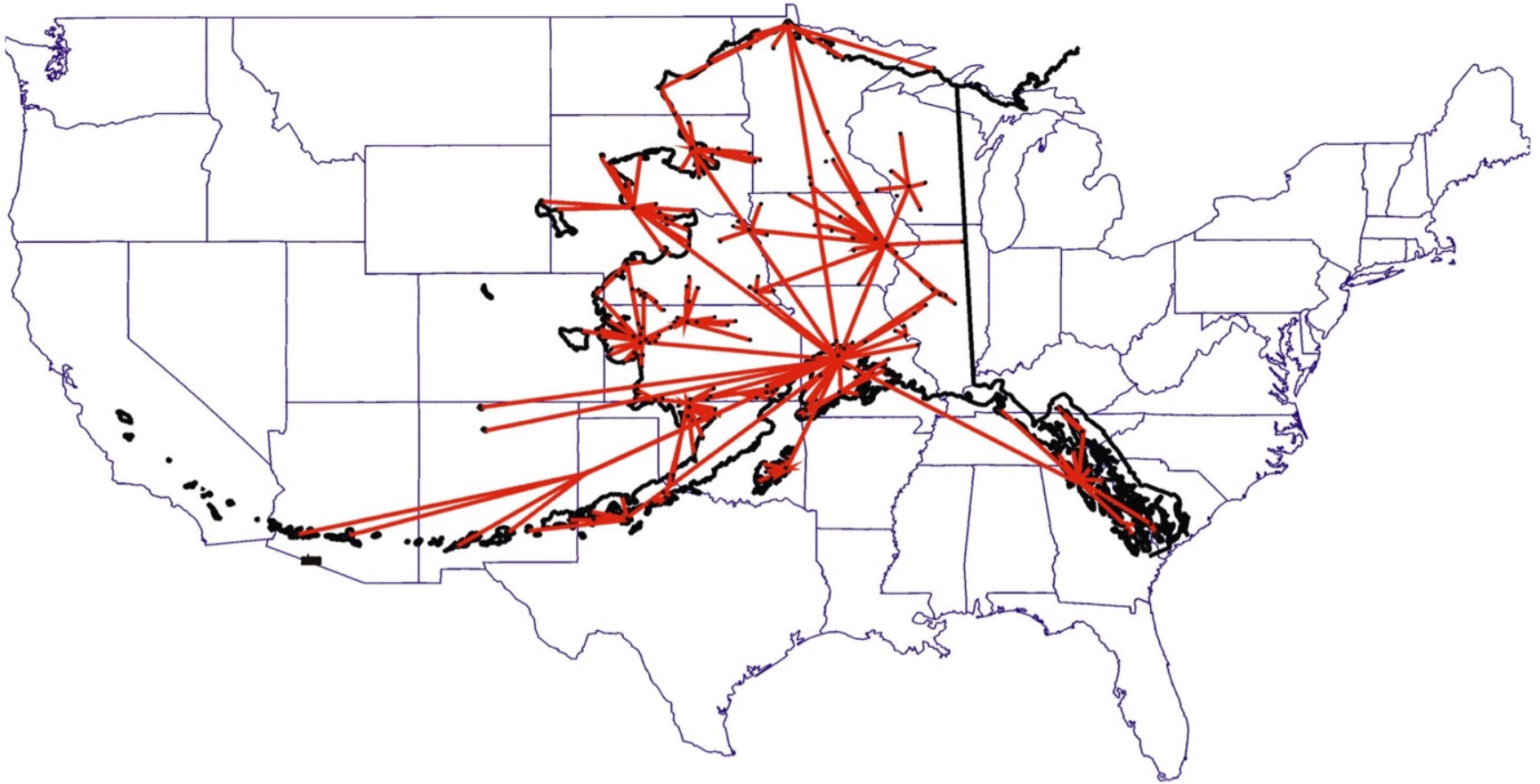
51 Dental Health Aides certified

31 Behavioral Health Aides certified



Alaska Native Health Care System Referral Pattern

(Same scale comparison – Alaska Area to Lower 48 States)



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THE ALASKA NATIVE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Typical Referral Patterns



Health Aide Program Key Components

- **Community's Role in Selection**
- **Culturally Competent Care and Curriculum**
- **Competency base curriculum**
- **Part of a team**



Misconceptions

- We don't need to change how dentistry is delivered in the US.
- Those who want care can access it.
- We just have a maldistribution of dentists.
- If Medicaid would just pay more, more dentists would accept it.



History of Dental Caries in Alaska Native People

Archeological records show caries rate of ~1%

Improved air transportation and dietary changes



1928 – 1930's



1984

1999

Present

1925



Studies show lowest caries rate in the world



Prevalence of dental caries in children 2x same aged U.S. children



Vast majority of children have dental caries



Still the same after all these years

Price, WA. 1939. *Nutrition and Physical Degeneration*. 8th ed. Lemon Grove, CA.

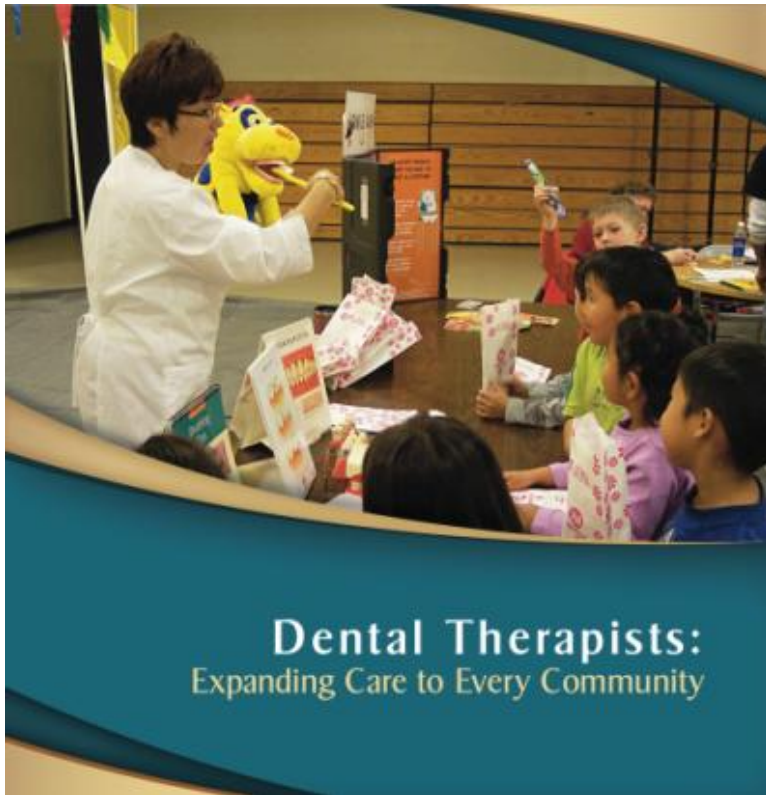


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AI/AN adult dental patients suffer disproportionately from untreated dental caries, with twice the prevalence of untreated caries as the general U.S. population and more than any other racial/ethnic group. *

*IHS Data Brief, March 2016,
Results of the 2015 IHS Oral Health Survey - Drs. Phipps and Ricks

Dental Therapists: A Definition



Primary oral health care professionals

- Basic clinical dental treatment and preventive services
- Multidisciplinary team members
- Advocate for the needs of clients
- Refer for services beyond the scope of the dental therapist's practice.*

*SASKATCHEWAN DENTAL THERAPISTS ASSOCIATION

WK Kellogg Foundation,
<http://www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resource/oral-health-resources/dental-therapists-expanding-care-to-every-community>



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DHAT Scope of Practice

2 year educational program

- Diagnosis and Treatment
- Planning, Prevention
- Basic Hygiene
- Radiographs
- Infection Control
- Restorative
- Pediatric
- Urgent Care
- Extractions
- Community Projects
- Clinic Management
- Equipment Repair and Maintenance
- Referral Process



DHAT, Ben Steward, examining patient



Licensure

- State regulations determine Licensure requirements.
- Smart legislation: “CODA approved”

Educational programs

- 3 existing, many more on the horizon
- Over 100 DT in US today



Information

- Dental therapists take the same American Heart Association Provider course as dentists
- Dental therapists malpractice= \$100-150/year
- Dentist malpractice= \$500-1500/year
- 10 years of DHAT practice in AK, no reports of patient harm



How Supervision of a DHAT Works

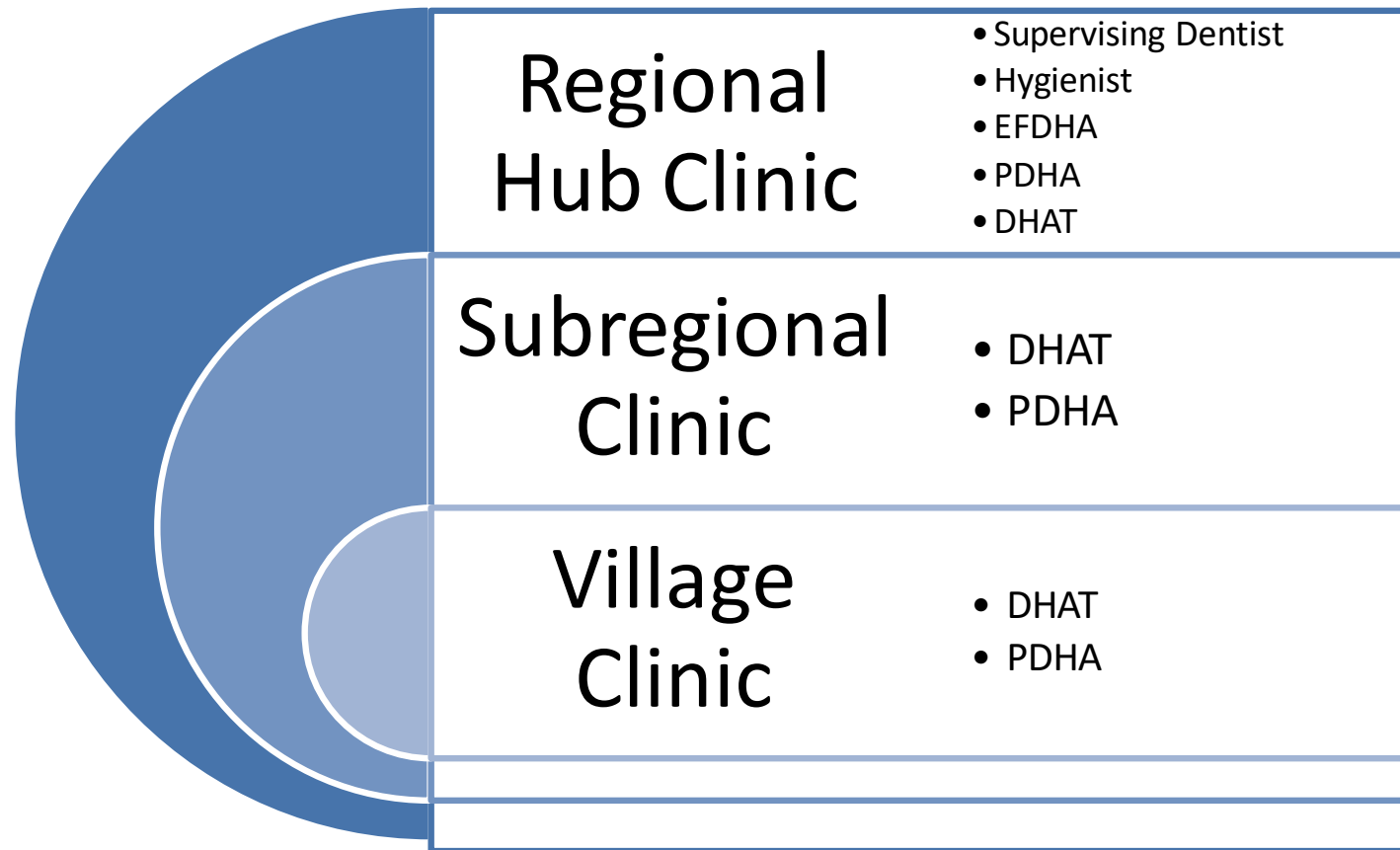
- Education
- Communication
 - Telehealth
- Teamwork
- Regulations



DHAT Ben Steward in pre-clinical lab with mock Telehealth case on monitor



DHAT as part of a dentist led team



Checks and Balances

- Regulations require a supervisor to:
 - Know the standards
 - Work within the tribal health system
 - Be in contact/ accessible
 - Regularly observe skills
- Each program develops a process by which supervision takes place and is recorded
- Best practices are shared



Dentist Supervisor Douglas White with DHAT
Marian Petla, Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation



Improved Access, Improved Care

- 40,000 people in rural AK now have direct access to care
- Living and working in communities
- Continuity of care
- Higher level of care



DHAT Aurora Johnson, NZ Educated



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32 certified
DHAT
practicing
in Alaska,
some for
more than
10 years.

American Academy of Dental Therapy
Annual Meeting- March 2012



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Research Triangle Institute

Clinical Evaluation*



- Summary of findings
 - Technically competent
 - Providing care safely and appropriately
 - Successfully treating cavities and helping relieve pain for patients without previous access to regular care
 - High patient satisfaction
 - Well accepted in AK tribal villages

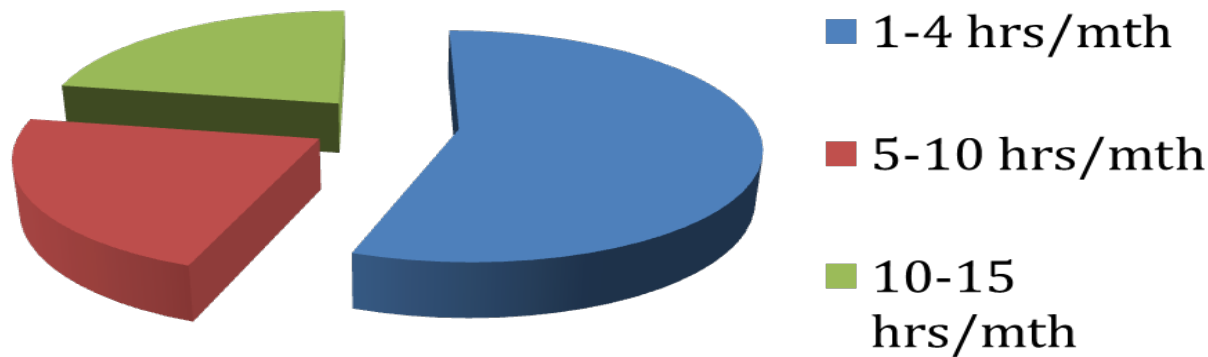
*“Evaluation of the Dental Health Aide Therapist Workforce Model in Alaska Final Report” Prepared for: W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Rasmuson Foundation, Bethel Community Services Foundation. Prepared by: Scott Wetterhall, MD, MPH, James D. Bader, DDS, MPH, Barri B. Burrus, PhD, Jessica Y. Lee, DDS, PhD, Daniel A. Shugars, DDS, PhD, MPH. RTI International 3040 Cornwallis Road Research Triangle Park, NC 27709. RTI Project Number 0211727.000.001



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Provide Community Education

Patient education



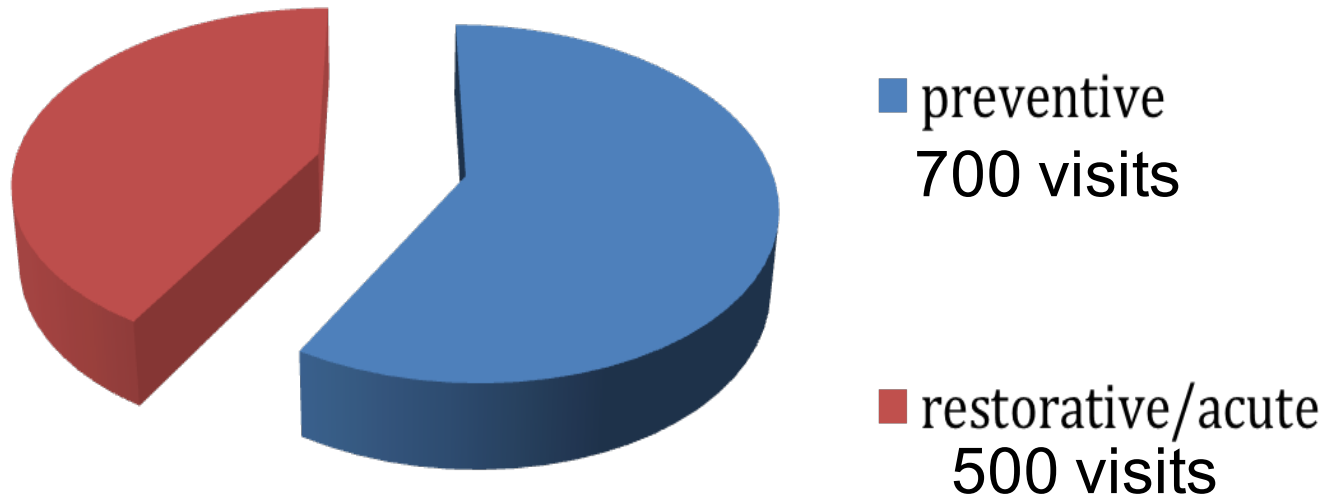
55% spend 1-4 hours per month;
22% spend 5-10 hours
22% spend 10-15 hours per month on education.

From ANTHC Consultant Survey of AK Tribal Dental Directors
Scott and Co. Consulting



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Patient visits



Each DHAT team on average, provides care to 830 patients during approximately 1200 patient encounters (or visits) each year.

From ANTHC Consultant Survey of AK Tribal Dental Directors
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Head Start Oral Health Education



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Alaska DHAT Educational Program information

Curriculum Break-down first year

Biological Science: 30%

Social Science: 10%

Pre-clinic: 40%

Clinic: 20%

Curriculum Break-down second year

Biological Science: 15%

Social Science: 7%

Pre-clinic: 0%

Clinic: 78% (1215 hours)

Curriculum Training

First year: 40 weeks

Second year: 39 weeks

Total: 79 weeks (3160 hours)



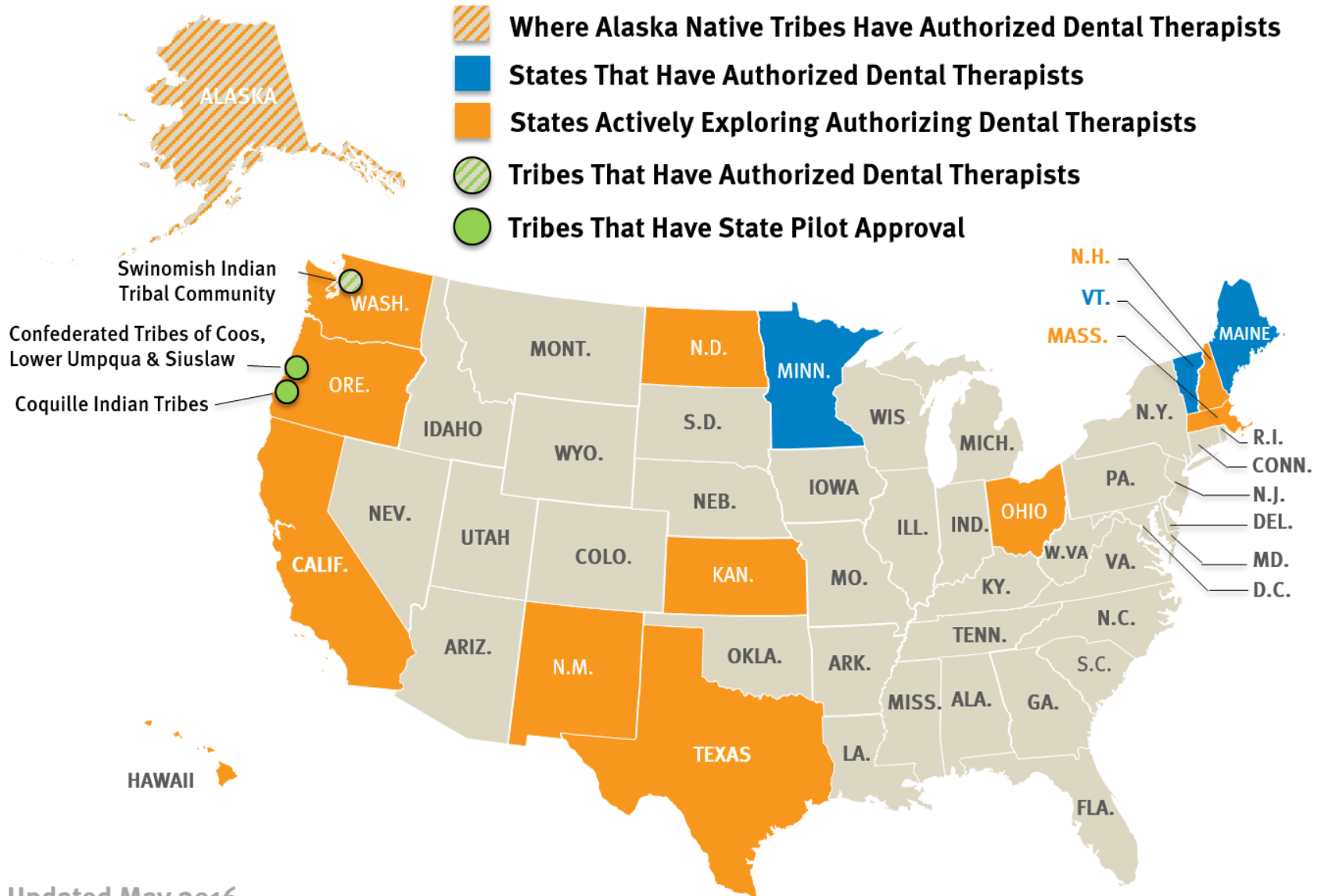
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Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA)

- In August 2020, ADTEP became the first CODA accredited dental therapy education program in the US
- DT education meets the same standards as other dental professional education



Building Momentum for Dental Therapists



Updated May 2016



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Sustainability

- Grant funds
 - Very competitive; short term
- CHAP Nationalization
 - Very limited IHS funds
- Medicaid reimbursement (States & CMS)
 - State Plan Amendment required
- HRSA Workforce Opportunities



Questions



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Quyana (Thank You)

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OUR VISION:

**Alaska Native people are the
healthiest people in the world.**