

# ***2001 Littleton Area Community Benefits Plan***

Prepared by:  
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## ***Increase Access to Oral Health Care***

### **1. Community Needs Assessment**

Littleton area institutional health care providers have assessed the Littleton community's health care needs through surveys, focus groups and review of data about the characteristics of the Littleton area population. The results of this needs assessment have been compiled and put in order of priority. Both empirical and anecdotal data indicate that the need to increase access to affordable dental care for the area population is a priority.

- The low income population in Northern Grafton County is 31.8% of the total resident civilian population, representing 8,716 people
- A dental survey sponsored by Bi-State Primary Care Association reported that 58% of adults surveyed need to have dental work done
- This service area is designated as a Dental Health Professional Shortage Area (DHPSA). The bi-State Study showed 1 provider for 5,999 low-income residents.
- 28% of residents who participated in the recent Littleton Area Healthcare Survey listed lack of affordable dental care as one of the three most pressing issues facing their community.

### **2. Community Benefit Plan Goals:**

- Address the needs of adults in North Grafton County who cannot obtain adequate oral health services by developing a collaborative partnership with local dentists and health care providers to increase access to affordable oral health care for indigent and uninsured adults by 30%
- Increase the dental workforce in the North Country utilizing benefits of designation as a Dental HPSA
- Increase awareness of oral health disease prevention

### **2. Target populations:**

- Residents ages 21 and over
- Low-income, uninsured, and under insured
- Dental health care professionals
- School aged children

### **3. Suggested activities to accomplish goals**

- Expand case management system to outreach to more low-income and uninsured families providing assistance with transportation, verifying eligibility, and assuring dental appointments are kept
- Support the Dental Task Force's effort to provide dental care through a voucher system
- Work with Northern New Hampshire Area Health Education Center to encourage local students' interest in oral health career opportunities
- Support preventative oral health education in area schools
- Participate on the statewide Oral Health Learning Team

### **4. Roles and responsibilities of participating organizations**

Ammonoosuc Community Health Center, Littleton Regional Hospital and North Country Home Health Agency will work together to increase access to dental health care through the activities of the Dental Task Force and North Country Health Consortium including accessing additional resources to continue to expand the services and population reached.

## **5. Anticipated outcomes**

- Dental care will be provided to 100 low-income and uninsured patients (21 years >) for each FY 2001 and FY2002
- The number of dentists participating in the program will increase from 7 to 10 by the end of FY 2001
- The number of patients being seen in local Emergency Departments for dental emergencies will decrease
- Increased funding will be secured to maintain and increase the level of services offered.

## ***Reduce Tobacco Use***

### **1. Community Needs Assessment**

Littleton area institutional health care providers have assessed the Littleton community's health care needs through surveys, focus groups and review of data about the characteristics of the Littleton area population. The results of this needs assessment have been compiled and put in order of priority. Both empirical and anecdotal data indicate that the need to reduce tobacco consumption by the area population is a priority.

- The maternal smoking rate in the Littleton area is 33% higher than the state average.
- 34% of youth report having used tobacco
- One of leading causes of chronic illness and premature death in NH.
- Public sentiment to reduce exposure to tobacco smoke has increased.

### **2. Community Benefit Plan Goals:**

- Increase the number of smoke-free homes for children by raising awareness about the harm of childhood exposure to ETS.
- Increase the number of restaurants that are 100% smoke-free.
- Increase the number of pre-conceptual and pregnant smokers who successfully quit smoking.
- Increase the number of youth who believe tobacco use is harmful

### **3. Target populations:**

- Youth and their families
- Pregnant women and couples contemplating pregnancy
- Community in general
- Health care professionals

### **4. Suggested activities to accomplish goals**

- Education and training for health professionals on their role in educating families on risks of environmental tobacco smoke (ETS)
- Support of alternative youth activities (leadership development,)

- Provision of education to area restaurant owners on residents desire for smoke-free dining and risks to employees from second hand smoke
- Educate store owners on impact of tobacco advertisement on youth initiation of smoking
- Increased availability of smoking cessation programs

#### **5. Roles and responsibilities of participating organizations**

Ammonoosuc Community Health Center, Littleton Regional Hospital and North Country Home Health Agency will work together to implement tobacco use prevention programs through the activities of the North Country Health Consortium by leading the development of and supporting a Northern Grafton County Coalition for tobacco use prevention.

#### **6. Anticipated outcomes**

- Reduction in the proportion of youth who use tobacco and increase the proportion of youth who never use tobacco.
- Health care providers in the community will improve their skills in providing office interventions to help their patients stop smoking resulting in a decrease in pregnant women who smoke and children who are exposed to ETS.
- Increased number of restaurants that are 100% smoke-free.
- Storeowners who sell tobacco products will be encouraged to join the efforts to reduce the number of youth who initiate smoking.