

# GREETINGS from



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# Oral health equity for thriving families and empowered communities

# ARCORA

The Foundation of Delta Dental of Washington

## OUR MISSION

Bending the arc of oral health toward equity

## OUR VISION

All people enjoy good oral and overall health with no one left behind



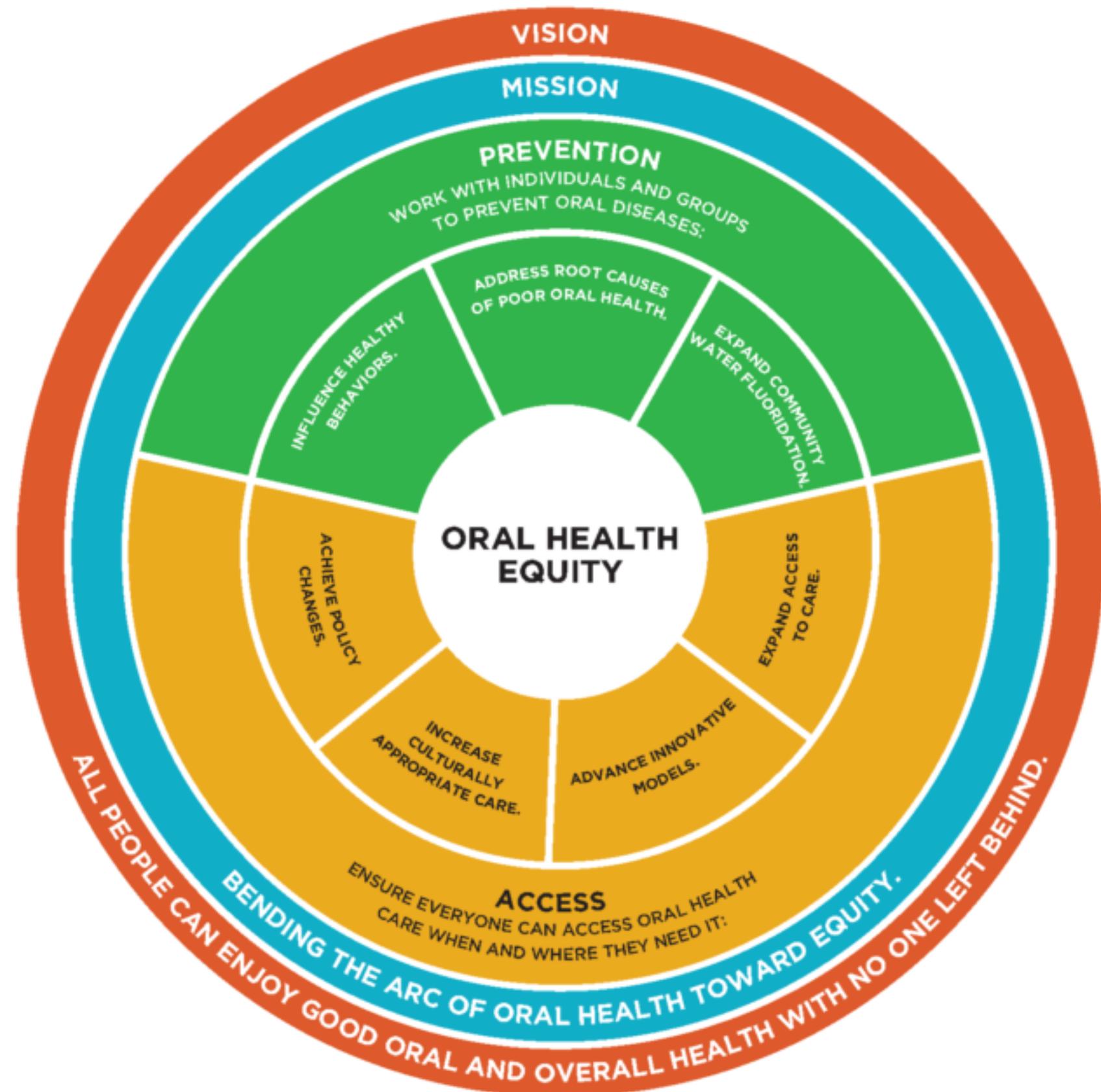
# Delta Dental of Washington

- > Arcora Foundation - founded and funded by nonprofit [Delta Dental of Washington](#), the state's largest dental benefits company, we work towards a shared vision: All people enjoy good oral and overall health, with no one left behind.



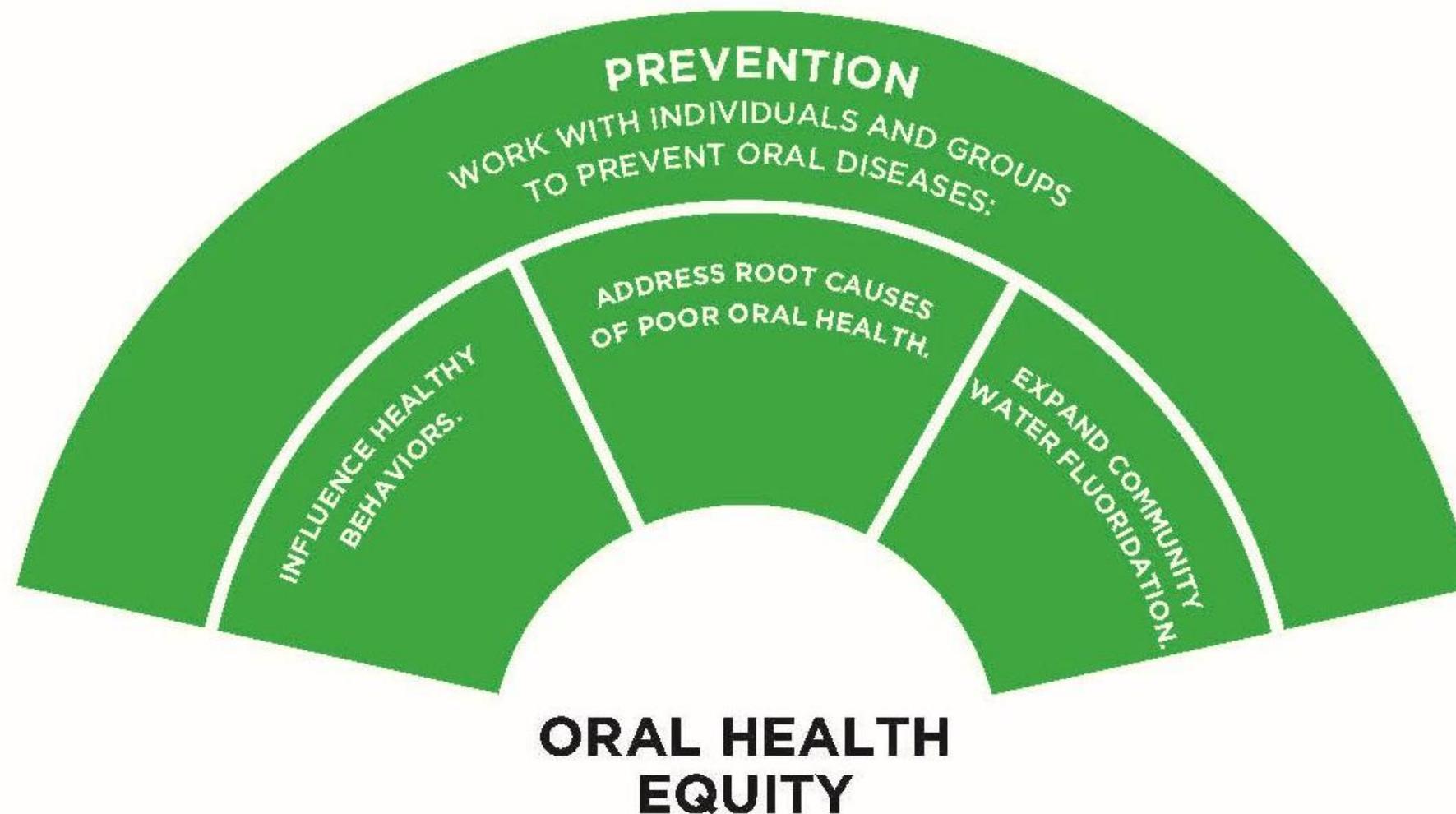
## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND GOALS FOR 2022 - 2024

We're focusing on prevention and access in underserved communities where disparities are significant—specifically Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC).



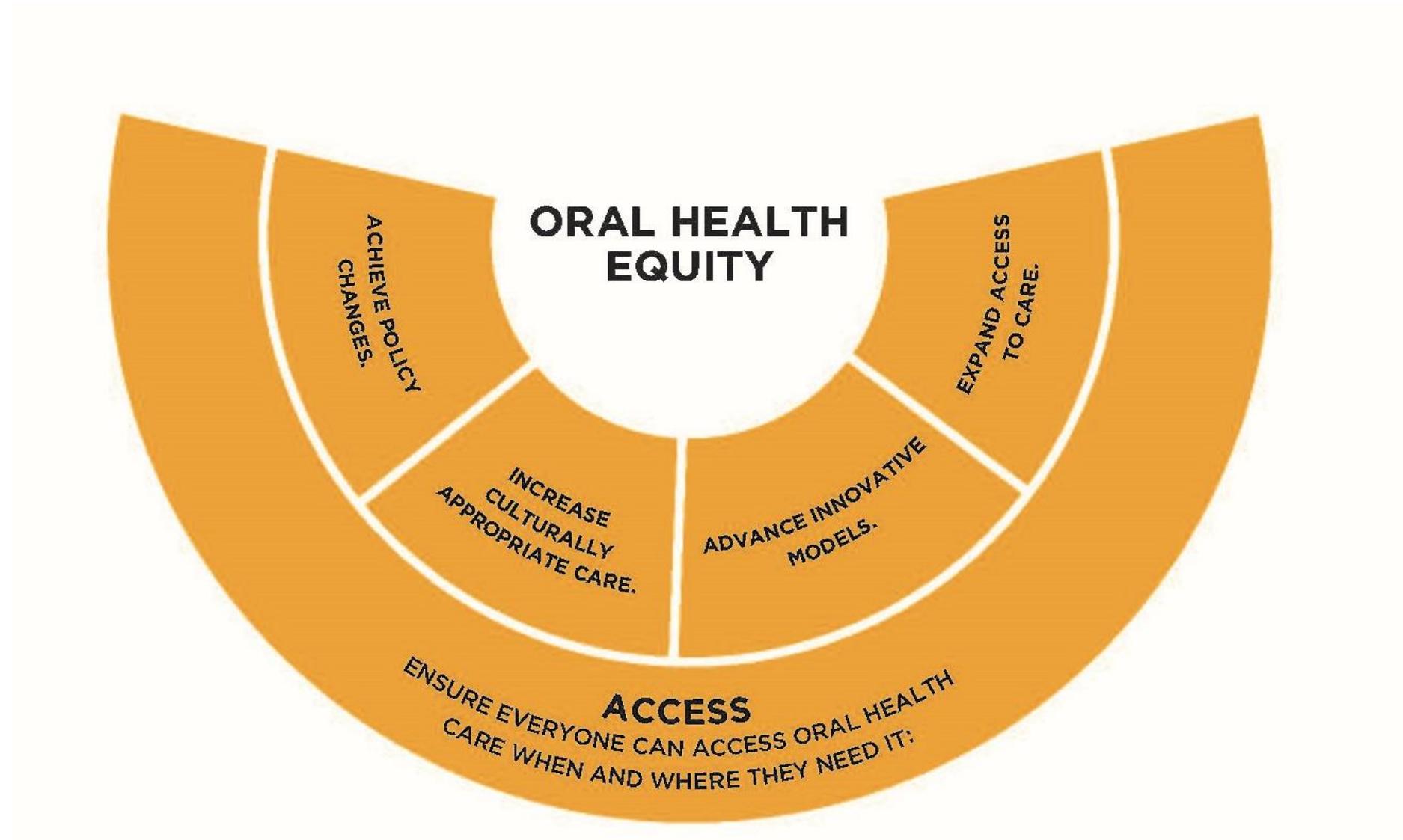
# Strategic Priority: Prevention

## Community-focused interventions



# Strategic Priority: Access

## Clinic-focused interventions



# Placing Health Equity at the Center

By leading with equity, we aim to:



**Assure high standards  
of health exist for  
everyone.**



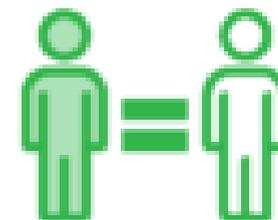
**Reallocate power  
and resources.**



**Dismantle oppressive  
systems.**



**Heal harm from  
system imbalances.**



**Eliminate racism and  
discrimination as predictive  
factors of life expectancy  
and health outcomes.**

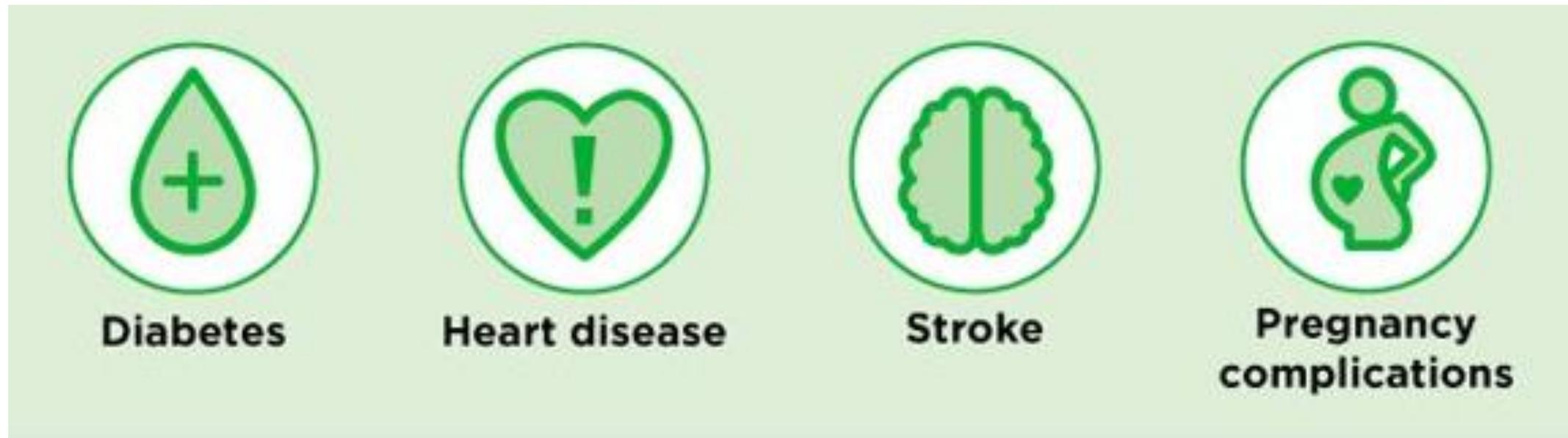


Why is oral  
health  
important?



# Oral Health and Overall Health

Oral disease is mostly preventable. And the health of your smile affects your overall health. Research shows links between poor oral health and conditions like:



# Poor oral health impacts kids

- > Trouble sleeping
- > Trouble eating healthy foods
- > Behavior issues
- > Self-confidence

# Poor oral health impacts adults and seniors too

- > Low-income adults are more likely to say the condition of their teeth has impacted their ability to interview for a job.
- > >Seniors and elders without teeth are impaired in getting the nutrition they need.



# Oral health in WA

# Smile Survey Results (2005-2016)

## Decay Experience

**Improved but remains high.** More than half of 3rd graders have experienced preventable tooth decay.

## Untreated Decay

Washington State results are far **better than the national average.** 17% vs 25% for low-income preschoolers and 12% vs. 17% for third graders.

## Sealants

**Over half of 3rd grade children have dental sealants,** far exceeding the national average. **Rates more than doubled** among Kindergarten kids since 2010.

- > On any given day, **144,300** seven, eight, and nine-year-olds in Washington are affected by **decay**.
- > Nearly **38%** of children start **Kindergarten** with **tooth decay**; almost **13%** have **rampant decay**.
- > Nearly **one in six** 3rd graders (7 or more decayed/filled teeth) suffers from **rampant decay**.
- > **Native American** and other racial and ethnic minority children have the **highest rates of tooth decay**.
- > **Twice as many** children from **low-income** families suffer from the effects of **rampant tooth decay** than did children from **higher-income** households.

Source: Washington State Department of Health. Smile Survey 2015-2016: The Oral Health of Washington's Children. Olympia, WA, 2017. Available from: <https://www.astdd.org/www/docs/wa-smile-survey-report-2016.pdf>  
Smile Survey Dashboard Link: <https://arcorafoundation.org/oral-health-status-dashboard/>

# Smile Survey Results: Progress Made

## BIG DROPS IN UNTREATED DECAY

HEAD START PRESCHOOLERS

**DOWN 35%**



3RD GRADERS

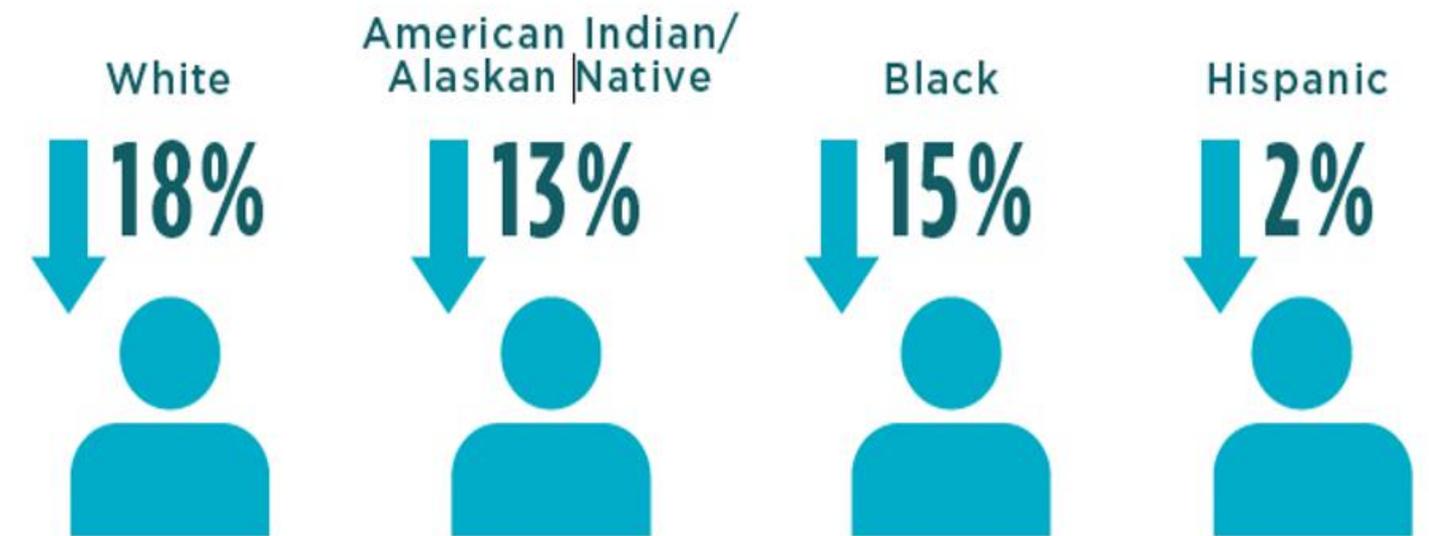
**DOWN 37%**



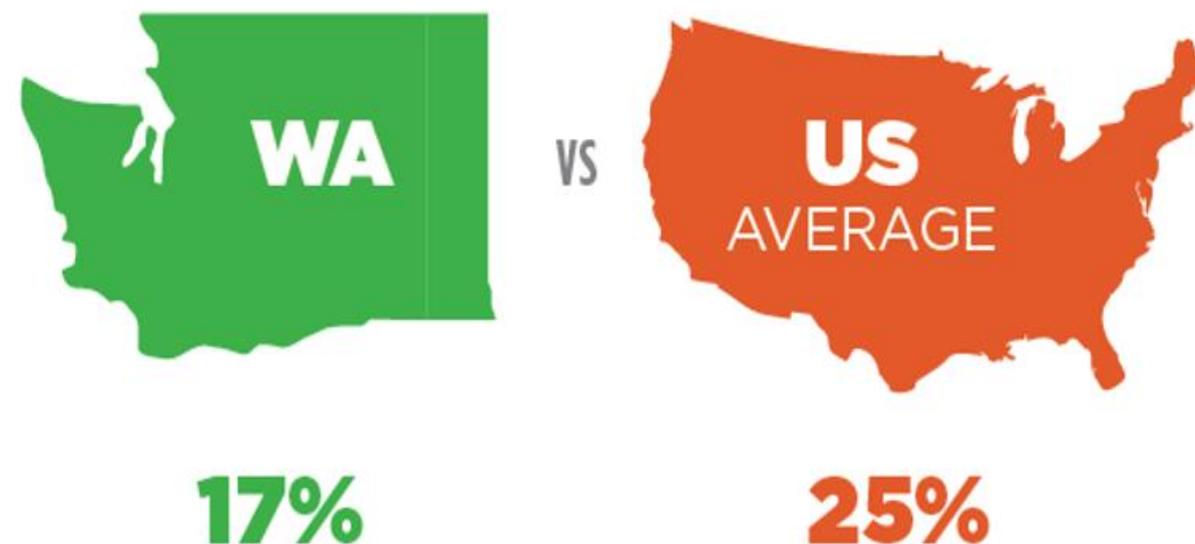
(Compared to 2005)

**FEWER LOW-INCOME PRESCHOOLERS IN WASHINGTON HAVE UNTREATED DECAY COMPARED TO THE REST OF THE NATION**

## DECAY DECREASED AMONG EVERY MAJOR RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUP SINCE 2005\*



(All race/ethnicity comparisons use 2nd & 3rd grade data.)  
\*Some decreases were not statistically significant.



### UPTICK IN PREVENTION:

Dental sealants have **doubled** for kindergarteners and remained steady for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders, **where it already exceeds national goals.**

# Smile Survey Results: Challenges Remain

**WE CAN DO (EVEN)  
BETTER.**

DESPITE PROGRESS, TOO MANY WASHINGTON KIDS ARE STILL DEALING WITH **PREVENTABLE** ORAL HEALTH ISSUES.

## HEALTH DISPARITIES ARE WIDESPREAD



**50%** HIGHER

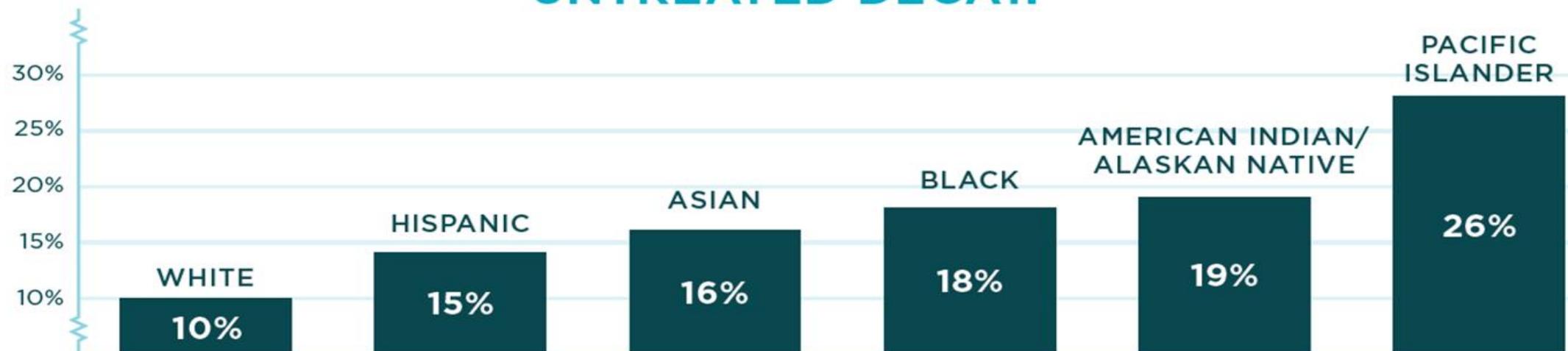
Hispanic and American Indian/Alaskan Native children have a **50% higher rate of decay.\***

*\*Compared to White children*

**2X**

Third grade children from low-income households suffer from rampant decay at twice the rate of children from higher-income households.

## CHILDREN OF COLOR HAVE HIGHER RATES OF UNTREATED DECAY.



# Adults Oral Health Status

Percent Who Had Any  
Permanent Teeth Extracted  
18 and Older



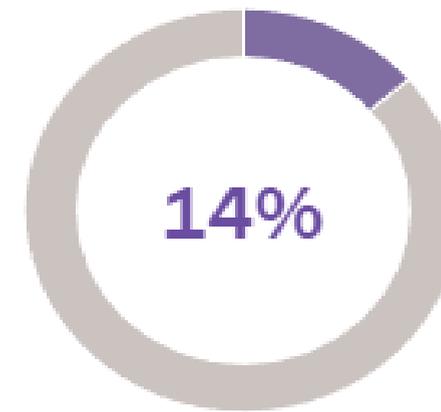
- > **Almost 4 out of 10** adults in Washington state in 2020 have lost at least one tooth because of oral disease.
- > Compared to the general US population, the percent of adults with **tooth loss is lower** in Washington state.

Percent Who Had All  
Permanent Teeth Extracted  
65 and Older



- > **About 1 out of 10 adults** in Washington State **age 65 and older** have lost all their teeth because of oral disease.
- > Compared to the general US population, the percent of adults with **tooth loss is lower** in Washington state.

Percent Experienced Pain  
Anywhere in the Mouth  
18 and Older



- > **Almost 2 out of 10** adults in Washington State report having painful aching in the mouth very often or occasionally.

# Oral Health Income Disparities Among Adults

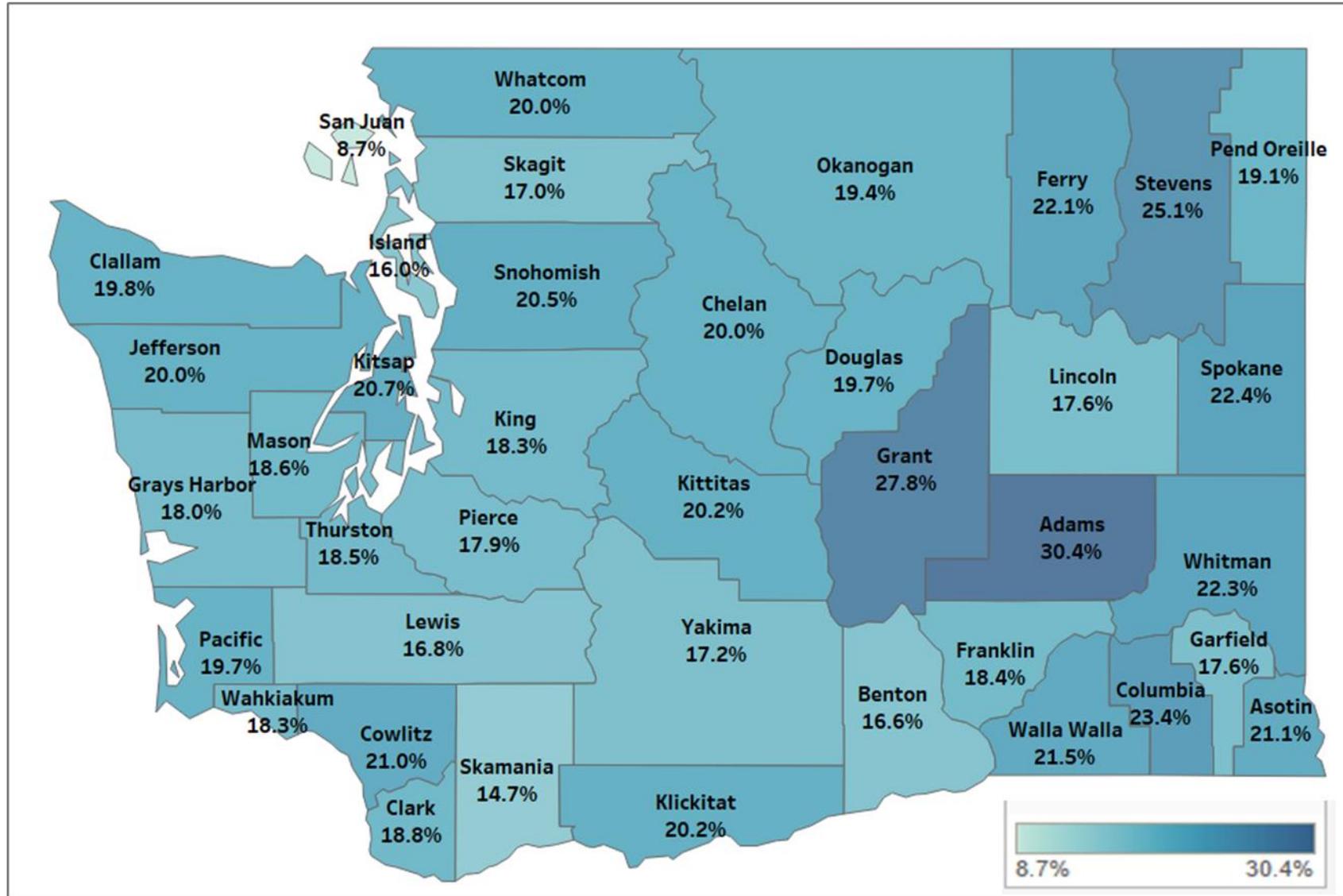
- > **Lower income** adults are **less likely** to have a **dental visit**. In 2020, 55% of adults (age 18+) with an annual income less than \$50,000 had a dental visit compared to 79% of adults earning more than \$50,000.
- > **Low-income** adults (age 18+) are **more likely** to experience **pain in the mouth** (20% versus 10%) and have permanent teeth extracted (49% versus 27%) than higher income adults.
- > **Low-income** older adults (age 65+) are **more likely** to have had **all permanent teeth extracted** (16% vs 4%) than higher income adults.

# Oral Health Racial Disparities Among Adults

Black, Indigenous and People of Color populations have the poorest oral health of any racial and ethnic groups in Washington state:

- > **American Indian/Alaska Native** adults are 50% more likely to have had a **tooth extracted** and **experience pain** in the mouth than **White** populations.
- > **Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander** adults are 50% more likely to have had a **tooth extracted** than **White** populations.
- > Three times as many **Black** older adults aged 65 and over have had **all permanent teeth extracted** than **White** older adults (33% versus 10%).

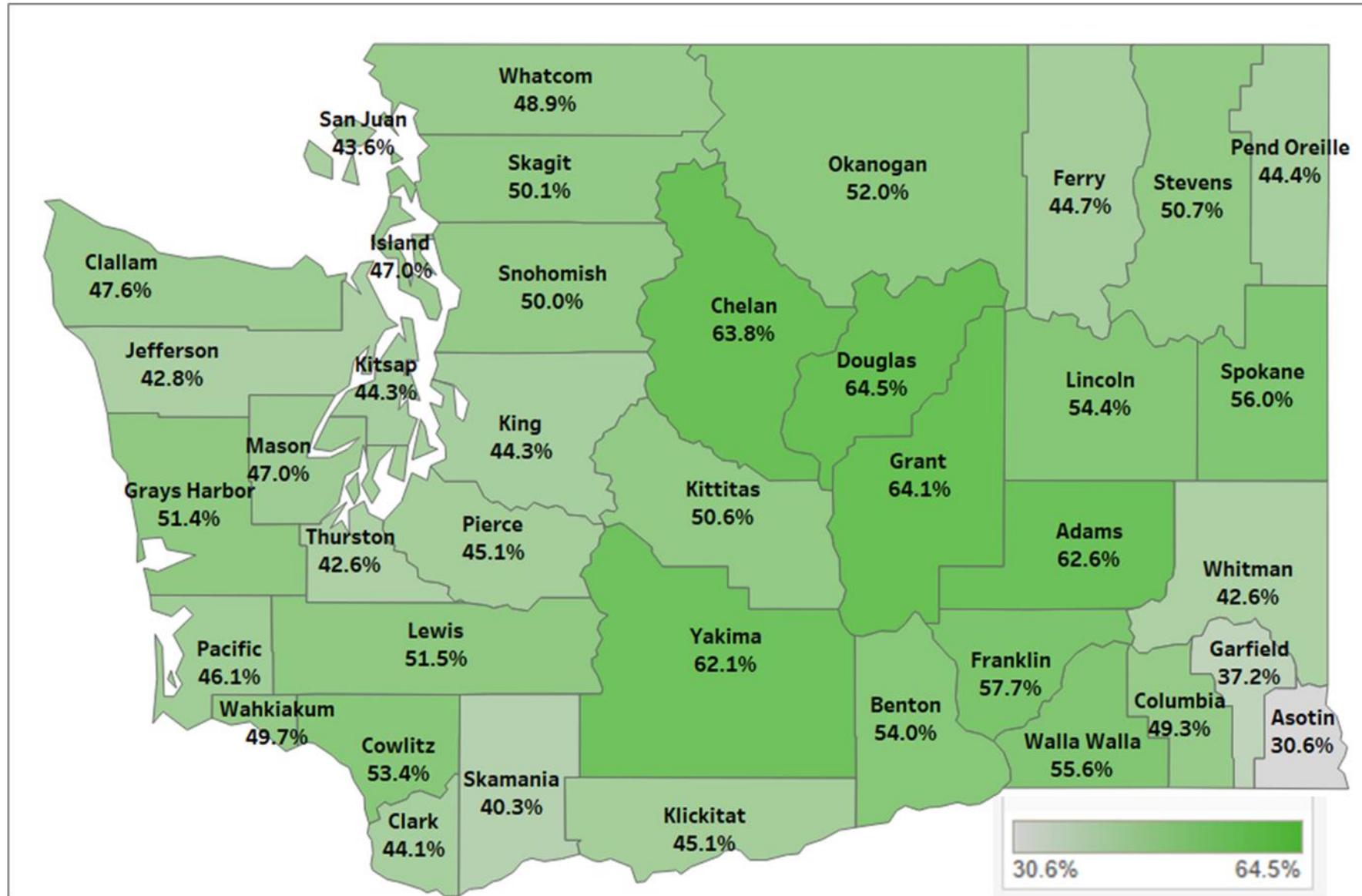
# Medicaid Adults Age 21 and Over Dental Utilization by County (FY 2021)



- > Adult utilization across the state ranged from 9% to 30%.
- > Adams County had the largest percentage of Medicaid-insured adults receiving dental services in FY 2021, 30% (indicated by darker shading), while San Juan County had the lowest at 9% (indicated by lighter shading).

**Statewide Medicaid Dental Utilization Total 20%**

# Medicaid Children Age 20 and under Dental Utilization by County (FY 2021)



**Statewide Utilization Total 51%**

- > Children utilization across the state ranged from 31% to 65%.
- > Douglas had the largest percentage of children receiving dental services in FY 2021 (65%, indicated by darker shading), while Asotin County had the lowest (31% indicated by lighter shading).



# Fluoridation: An Upstream Prevention Strategy

## Public Water System Population Receiving Dentally Significant Fluoride Levels (0.6 - 2.0 mg/L)



KEY:

- Less than 33%
- 33% - 66%
- More than 66%
- Fluoridating Systems

1. Fluoridating systems do not include all fluoridated systems; they exclude intertied and naturally fluoridated water systems. However, the color coded percentage of the population who receive fluoridated water by county does represent all types of fluoridated systems.  
2. Data covers years 2000-2015  
Source of data: Sentry Database.

> There are 50 water systems in Washington state that provide community water fluoridation to all their customers. Despite this, **only 56%** of residents on public water systems have access to water with enough fluoride to prevent tooth decay.



# Questions?



Here's the good news,  
“cavities are preventable  
and prevention saves you  
money. It's better to  
prevent cavities before  
they become painful and  
difficult to treat.”

**Ben Danielson, MD**  
*Clinical Professor of Pediatrics, UW*

# Discussion



# Questions for discussion:

- What oral health challenges do you see in your community?
- What would help improve oral health in your community?
- How do you find out/learn about resources (financial and other) that are available from the state and private funders?

# Resources for improving oral health



# Arcora programs



Access to  
Baby & Child  
Dentistry™

# MouthMatters

Integrating Oral Health into Medical Care



# DentistLink

Get connected to a Washington state dentist for the dental care you need to be healthy



**Search for a dentist near me.**

**Search Directory**

Provide basic information, and find a list of dental providers in your area.



**Call or text the DentistLink team.**

**844-888-5465**

Tell us what you need, we'll connect you to a dentist in your area.

Available Monday - Friday  
8am - 5pm



**Have DentistLink contact me.**

**Complete Form**

Answer a few questions, and we'll connect you with a dental provider that matches your needs.



# DentistLink

POWERED BY ARCORA FOUNDATION

# Expanding access to dental care

- > Arcora Foundation's Capital Clinic Access grants



# Opportunities for partnership

- > Reducing consumption of sugary beverages
- > Community water fluoridation

# What is fluoride?

- Fluoride is a mineral that occurs naturally in water
- Fluoride helps prevent cavities in people of all races, ages and income levels



# How fluoride works

- > Fluoride strengthens teeth as they form below the gums.
- > When we eat food or drink sugary beverages, the bacteria in our mouths produce acid that weakens our enamel, fluoride in our saliva rebuilds the tooth structure after we eat.
- > Fluoride slows down bacteria's ability to produce acid
- > Strengthens tooth enamel, making teeth more resistant to decay.



# Sources of fluoride

## Topical:

- > Fluoride varnish
- > Fluoride toothpaste
- > Fluoride mouth rinse

## Topical and systemic:

- > Fluoridated water

## Systemic:

- > Fluoride supplements (tablets or drops)



## What is community water fluoridation?

- > Community water fluoridation is the process of balancing the amount of fluoride in drinking water to a level recommended for preventing tooth decay

# What is community water fluoridation?



# Questions?





# Discussion



Thank you!

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