

Pulling Together to Salvage the *“Shiny Smiles”* Program

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Key Learning Outcomes

Nurses will:

- recognize their skill & ability to assess a community situation and provide credible leadership
- identify the importance & value of engaging a community in a consultative process from a foundation of equity & social justice
- identify the necessity of collaborating with community partners to promote effective working relationships that contribute to optimal client care and outcomes

What is It?

The “*Shiny Smiles for All*” program began in 2007 as an initiative designed to provide access to needed dental care for students of elementary schools located in a priority neighbourhood.

Free dental treatment.
Transportation provided.

Who is involved?

Interprofessional & intersectoral collaboration of:

- grassroots organization
- schools
- community college
- service club
- public health unit

How does it work?

- Public health dental staff identify students in need of fillings during school screening
- Students are bussed from school to the community college's dental clinic
- Dentists provide free dental treatment

Why do we do it?

- Provide students with FREE dental treatment
 - largely from low-income families
- Reduce barriers to accessing needed care
 - parents don't lose time from work
 - may not have available funds or benefits
 - may not have access to transportation
 - may not have the capacity to seek treatment

Why do we do it?

BECAUSE TEETH ARE IMPORTANT!

“Decay in children is the most widespread chronic disease of childhood, much higher than the No. 2 which is asthma”.

~ Dr. Ian McConnachie
Past president of the Ontario Dental Association

Why do we do it?

BECAUSE THERE ARE DISPARITIES IN ORAL HEALTH!

- Much of the burden of dental disease is concentrated in disadvantaged individuals, particularly among low-income families
- In addition to having higher levels of dental disease, these marginalized populations often have limited or no access to oral health care

Shiny Smiles ran successfully for many years!

What happened?

The program and partnerships evolved over the years resulting in:

- roles and staffing changes
- no clear leadership
- no clear direction
- confusion

Why did it happen?

- The lead person retired
 - possessed most of the process knowledge & did all the coordination
 - there was no backup person
- The new lead was at a disadvantage
 - there was no process to follow
- Partners depended on direction given to them
 - now there was no direction

Why did it happen?

- Public health dental program began receiving calls & emails from confused partners
 - inadvertent middleman
- None of us really knew anything about the process or coordination
- The future of Shiny Smiles became uncertain

Enter Community Health Nurse...

Community Health Nursing

Standard of Practice

1. Health Promotion
2. Prevention & Health Protection
3. Health Maintenance, Restoration & Palliation
4. Professional Relationships
5. Capacity Building
6. Access & Equity
7. Professional Responsibility & Accountability

Community Health Nurse

The community health nurse maintains awareness of community resources, values and characteristics (Standard 4)

- The partners value the Shiny Smiles program
- The resources are available & helping kids
- Dental decay rates are high in these schools
- This program addresses a health equity gap in a priority neighbourhood

*From the confusion came the clarity that
change was needed*

What could this CHN offer?

- Reconnect the partners
 - to establish, build and nurture professional relationships
- Address the community health issue
 - dental decay in low-income children
- Collaborate with community partners
 - to promote effective working relationships & leverage resources

Then what happened?

- Several stakeholder meetings were held
- We had a common vision
- Every partner willingly offered up their respective resources
 - the decision-makers were at the table
 - no one held back
- The energy stimulated further creativity & innovation
- We developed a process map!

Community health nurses connect with others to establish, build and nurture professional relationships. These relationships promote maximum participation and self determination of the individual, family, group, community or population.

Standard 4: Professional Relationships

Community health nurses build individual and community capacity by actively involving and collaborating with communities, families, groups, organizations, populations, communities and systems. The focus is to build on strengths and increase skills, knowledge and willingness to take action in the present and in the future.

Standard 5: Capacity Building

What does it look like now?

Better than EVER!

- Shiny Smiles was not only brought back from the brink, it was strengthened & enhanced
- In leveraging one another's resources, we cobbled together a comprehensive coherent process that will withstand any future staffing changes among the partners
- Everyone now knows & understands their "pieces" along the process

Questions?

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THANK YOU!!