

# PCHC

## Panhandle Counseling & Health Center, Inc.

is a Federally Qualified Health Center  
serving Texas County & the OK Panhandle

Est. 2005

# OVERVIEW OF GUIYMON & TEXAS COUNTY

Population of Texas Co is just over 20,000; over half live in Guymon

SoonerCare covers 26% of the population (5400); 3700 (69%) of those are under 18

27 languages spoken in the Guymon School Dist.

About 51% of Guymon pop is Hispanic; 25% of those are foreign born

Language, Education, Culture, Customs, Transportation etc. complicates things

## **The biggest problem is a lack of dentists**

Texas CO ratio of population : dentists is **over 3400:1** the state average is only 1600:1

HPSA rating for medical is 25; dental is 31

# WHAT HAVE WE DONE TO PROVIDE DENTAL CARE

Spent 5 yrs and \$\$\$\$ trying to recruit a dentist. Even hired professional recruiter .  
Zippo results.

Learned three things: unless they're from around here, most won't come here and new grads often want to intern first. Want partnership vs salary.

Bought a nice 2-chair dental clinic, fully equipped, ready to go.

Trained nursing staff to do fluoride treatments, teach oral hygiene, give out paste, floss and brushes.

Partner with Great Salt Plains to do the more serious adults. Transportation is still a problem. (GSP > 200 miles) We're 2hrs or more from anywhere in OK.

2006 had volunteer (retired) dentist go thru K-2 for quick eval, fluoride & brushes/paste

# WHAT HAVE WE DONE : CONTINUED

Brought in Mobile Smiles as often as we could. So glad they're back in service!!!

Partnered with Great Salt Plains to treat the more urgent adults.

Proposed model legislation for AP Hygienist; Dental Therapists; teledentistry

Proposed legislation to make mid-level care billable. Including store & forward dentistry.

Bottom line is we're not likely to ever find a dentist.

# POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

OK Dental Association needs to actively support development of mid level providers.

Legislation to make mid-level providers billable for Soonercare & insurance co. Especially in rural areas.

Expand teledentistry to allow “supervision” of mid level providers, like telemed is designed.

Store & Forward video, x-rays and history etc. for dentist to do care plan. Mid-level carries out the plan to max of their ability. (cat 1 & 2 & dentures). Save the rest for a dentist. Even if that means sending pts to them vs bringing dentist here.

## POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Other states are using mid-level dental providers very successfully.

We need to learn from and emulate what other states have done to ease the burden in rural areas & low-income populations.

Why does OK treat Dental like the red-headed step-child??

Let's move into the 21<sup>st</sup> century!

Pewtrust.org –Model legislation  
dimensionsofdentalhygiene.com

Successful mid-level provider states:  
Minnesota, Maine, Vermont, Arizona,  
Michigan, NM, Nevada