

**256B.53 DENTAL ACCESS GRANTS.**

(a) The commissioner shall award grants to community clinics or other nonprofit community organizations, political subdivisions, professional associations, or other organizations that demonstrate the ability to provide dental services effectively to public program recipients. Grants may be used to fund the costs related to coordinating access for recipients, developing and implementing patient care criteria, upgrading or establishing new facilities, acquiring furnishings or equipment, recruiting new providers, or other development costs that will improve access to dental care in a region.

(b) In awarding grants, the commissioner shall give priority to applicants that plan to serve areas of the state in which the number of dental providers is not currently sufficient to meet the needs of recipients of public programs or uninsured individuals. The commissioner shall consider the following in awarding the grants:

(1) potential to successfully increase access to an underserved population;

(2) the long-term viability of the project to improve access beyond the period of initial funding;

(3) the efficiency in the use of the funding; and

(4) the experience of the applicants in providing services to the target population.

(c) The commissioner shall consider grants for the following:

(1) implementation of new programs or continued expansion of current access programs that have demonstrated success in providing dental services in underserved areas;

(2) a program for mobile or other types of outreach dental clinics in underserved geographic areas;

(3) a program for school-based dental clinics in schools with high numbers of children receiving medical assistance;

(4) a program testing new models of care that are sensitive to the cultural needs of the recipients;

(5) a program creating new educational campaigns that inform individuals of the importance of good oral health and the link between dental disease and overall health status;

(6) a program that organizes a network of volunteer dentists to provide dental services to public program recipients or uninsured individuals; and

(7) a program that tests new delivery models by creating partnerships between local providers and county public health agencies.

(d) The commissioner shall evaluate the effects of the dental access initiatives funded through the dental access grants and submit a report to the legislature by January 15, 2003.

**History:** *1Sp2001 c 9 art 2 s 47; 2002 c 379 art 1 s 113*