



dientes
COMMUNITY DENTAL

2022 ORAL HEALTH REPORT



DIGNITY THROUGH DENTISTRY

Dear Oral Health Advocates,

So much has changed in our world since our first oral health needs assessment in 2016. Overcoming the obstacles of COVID, Dientes has proven itself to be a resilient organization. This year we mark our 30th Anniversary, proudly celebrating the 50,000 unique patients we have served through over 500,000 visits!

Also worth celebrating is our community's increase in access to dental care.

Today, 6,000 more children, teens, adults, and seniors have dental homes! We are seeing a dramatic increase in 0-2-yr-olds going to the dentist, dental decay in kindergarteners is down, and more adults are accessing care. These improvements are largely due to an engaged group of oral health champions — Oral Health Access Santa Cruz County — who are committed to expanding awareness of and access to oral health care.

Even with this good news, there is more work to be done.

Access to care remains inequitable for low-income people: most adults with Medi-Cal benefits still don't see a dentist; dental care for youth ages 12 -19 continues to lag behind younger children; there are still too few dentists taking Medi-Cal; specialty services, including sedation dentistry, are not available for all who need it; and seniors on Medicare still do not have dental benefits.

With a continued focus on increasing access to care in a sustainable way, we have set forth exciting goals as part of our strategic plan. By 2024, Dientes will grow to add at least two more clinics, establish programs to teach and build our workforce, seek out new partnerships, and invest more in the heart of our organization – our staff.

Thank you for supporting our vision of a community where everyone has access to a healthy smile!

In health,



Laura Marcus, CEO

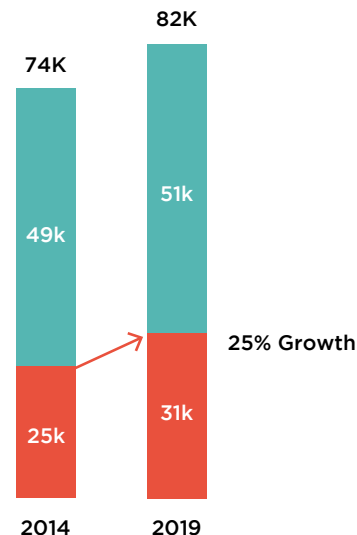


THE 2022 STATE OF ORAL HEALTH IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

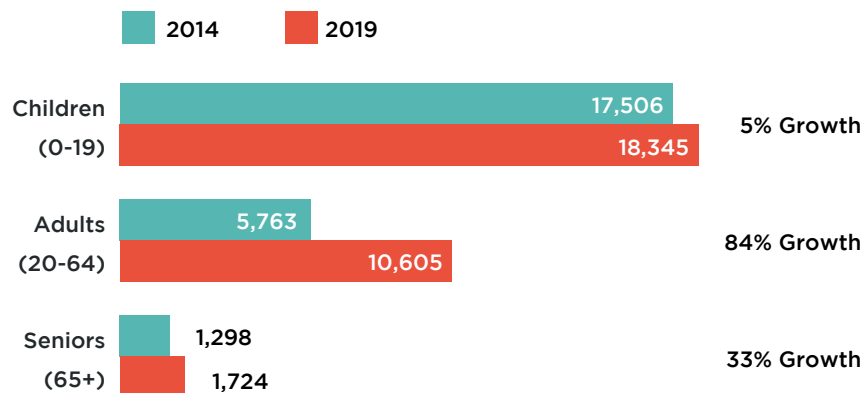
THE “UPSHOT”: 2014 vs 2019

82,000 people in Santa Cruz County are on Medi-Cal — but only 30,000 accessed dental care

- While there was a 25% increase from 2014, still only 37% accessed care
- That leaves 52,000 people with no access to affordable dental care
- In addition to community clinics, there are only 13 private dental offices accepting Medi-Cal – 8 are accepting new patients.



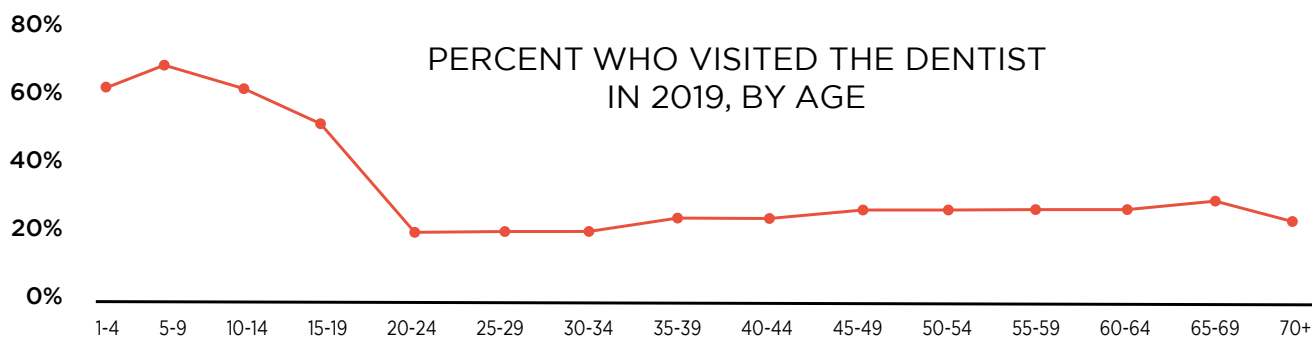
PATIENTS WITH A DENTAL HOME



OUR CHILDREN

- 57% of 0-2 year olds went to the dentist in 2019 — up from 36% in 2015
- 18% of kinders had cavities in 2019 — down from 24% in 2014
- 29% of Santa Cruz County teens missed school due to a dental problem — as compared to 11% in California in 2019
- Tween and teen visits to the dentist decline after age 9, from 68% all the way down to 21% by age 20, a trend that continues into adulthood (see graph)





ADULTS

- Adults are 2.5 times less likely to go to the dentist than children
- Nearly 1 in 4 adults went to the dentist in 2019, a 5% growth from 18% in 2014

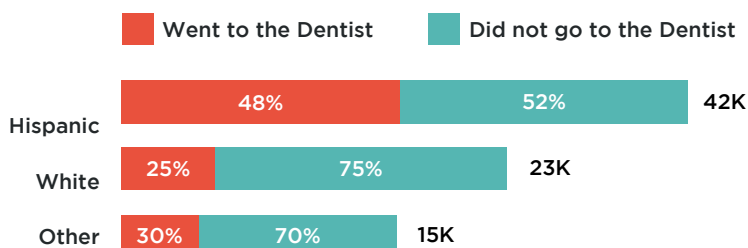
SENIORS

- Still no dental benefits with Medicare
- 64% of seniors have gum disease as compared to 38% of younger adults
- Gum disease is linked to tooth loss, arthritis, heart disease, and diabetes



RACE / ETHNICITY

UTILIZATION MEDI-CAL DENTAL BENEFITS



In addition, the following is the number of people with Medi-Cal and the percent who went to the dentist: 870 Asians - 33%, 740 Blacks - 22%, 650 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders - 23%, and 300 Alaskan Native/American Indians - 21%. Other includes races/ethnicities that are not listed and unknown.

THE EFFECTS OF COVID

The pandemic impacted safety net dental clinics in a significant way. Combined, Dientes and Salud Para La Gente experienced a 24% drop in patients and a 29% drop in visits between 2019 and 2020.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS AND COLLABORATORS:



Note: Statistics included refer to individuals who have Medi-Cal Dental as their insurance type. Medi-Cal is the state's public health insurance for people who make less than \$19,000 for an individual, or less than \$39,000 for a family of four.



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STRATEGIC 2022-2024 PLAN

Responding to the need for increased access to care for the Central Coast, Dientes has developed a multi-pronged approach to provide high quality, comprehensive oral health care. Our aim is to make dental care accessible to all so that untreated problems are truly rare events. Our goals include:

EXPANDING

Addressing the lack of available services, Dientes will expand our clinical capacity to meet more of the demand from low-income people of all ages. We will create spaces for oral healthcare to be delivered in an integrated, patient-focused way adding at least two new clinics.

TEACHING

Building a workforce committed to caring for underserved populations, Dientes will become a teaching clinic, operating the first dental residency program in the County to train the next generation of dentists and launch a registered apprenticeship program to grow local dental assistants who are skilled and compassionate.

PARTNERING

Looking outward, Dientes will focus on our partnerships to address more of the need for integrated dental care. Expanding existing relationships and entering new collaborations will contribute to our financial sustainability, an area of focus highlighted by the impacts of the pandemic.

INVESTING

Looking inward, Dientes will focus on investing in our staff, our most important resource, to maintain high employee satisfaction and enhance retention. Taking great care of our staff through competitive wages, generous benefits, and family-friendly policies allows us to also take great care of our patients!



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COMMUNITY DENTAL CARE

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PERMIT NO. 322

Our work is guided by our values:

Cultivate Learning
DIGNITY **TEAMWORK**
Excellence
Collaboration **Compassion**
OPEN COMMUNICATION
DARE TO LEAD **Use Resources Wisely**



**50,000 Patients
and 500,000 Visits
over 30 Years!**

