



ORAL HEALTH BYTES

A Newsletter For Local Oral Health Programs

Tobacco Cessation and Oral Cancer Awareness



Oral cancer is the largest group of cancers that fall into the head and neck cancer category, which includes mouth, tongue, head and neck, and throat cancer. According to the [National Institutes of Health](#), only 68 percent of people diagnosed with oral cancer survive more than five years. Those who do survive may suffer long-term problems, such as severe facial disfigurement or difficulties with eating and speaking. The reason for such a high mortality rate is that these cancers are usually found in late-stage development. The best method to detect oral cancer in its early stages is through regular oral cancer examinations by a dental provider or oral health professional.

Quick Statistics:

Oral Cancer Relative Survival (2012–2018)

- Overall, 68% of people with oral cancer survive for 5 years.
- Oral cancer survival rates are significantly lower for Black and American Indian/Alaska Native men and women.
- Diagnosing oral cancer at an early, localized stage significantly increases 5-year survival rates.



OOH Team Spotlight: Nicole Garvin



Nicole is a contract manager and personal liaison for the Office of Oral Health. She started as an office assistant for Dr. Kumar then promoted twice to her current role. Nicole has worked for the state for 6.5 years, and all that time has been with the Office of Oral Health.

As a contract manager, Nicole processes budgets, invoices, and contract renewals for the LOHP counties that she oversees. She enjoys establishing and building partnerships with her counties and appreciates the ongoing collaborative effort between OOH and the LOHPs to improve and advance oral health equity for their communities. As a personnel liaison, Nicole serves as the bridge between OOH and the CDPH human resources branch. She is the go-to person for figuring out the forms and processes needed to make HR transactions smooth and effective. Not an easy feat.

Born and raised in Sacramento, Nicole, her husband, daughter, and 3.5-year-old Yorkie still call it home. When not at work, she enjoys spending time with her family, going to theme parks, and basketball. She’s in her “Basketball Mom Era,” meaning her family lives and breathes the sport. Nicole coaches her daughter’s 3/4th recreation team, where they went 11-0 for Winter League, winning the championship game against a 5/6th team. The team is now preparing for Spring League. Outside of sports and family, Nicole enjoys a good walk around the neighborhood. Happy Springtime!



LOHP Spotlight: Nevada County



Nevada County, California, is in the western slope of the Sierra Nevada foothills and has a population of roughly 102,000. The county is rural with deep historical significance from the gold rush era and is home to the historic towns of Grass Valley, Nevada City, and Truckee. The area is a nature lover’s paradise with many hiking trails, lakes, and the famous Yuba River.

For National Children’s Dental Health Month (NCDHM), the Nevada County Oral Health Program (NCOHP) wanted to bring awareness to the importance of children’s oral health and how public health is working to address the needs of the community through a school-based dental program.

Continued LOHP Spotlight: Nevada County



The program focuses on education, screenings, prevention, and providing a pathway to care in a community underserved by Medi-Cal providers and affordable dental care. This school year, approximately 500 students have been screened, mostly for Kindergarten Oral Health Assessments.

In honor of NCDHM, the program announced it was expanding screenings to second and third graders for sealants and other treatment recommendations. Thirty-five second and third graders were screened at Scotten Elementary in Grass Valley. “We hope that the screenings will help families without a dental home find a pathway to the care they need,” said Program Coordinator, Jamie Hanf.

Students with Medi-Cal will have the option to receive preventive treatment services with a Registered Dental Hygienist in Alternative Practice (RDHAP) on a second visit after their initial screening. Students without insurance are encouraged to sign up for Medi-Cal to take advantage of what the school-based program offers.

By expanding the program and making preventive services more available, the NCOHP is addressing key barriers to good oral health facing children and families in Nevada County. The NCOHP Coalition website, SmileNevadaCounty.com, provides education and local resources.

[Nevada County Public Health’s Oral Health Program Encourages Good Dental Habits for National Children’s Dental Health Month \(yubanet.com\)](http://yubanet.com)

Email DentalDirector@cdph.ca.gov to suggest future articles and provide feedback.

Design by Pang Vang. Content by Karen Jacoby.