

South Carolina Integration Demonstration (SCID) Project

The SCID project is one of eight Maternal and Child Health—Improving Oral Health Integration (MCH-IOHI) projects funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau. MCH-IOHI projects aim to advance the integration of preventive oral health care (POHC) into primary care to make POHC more accessible to infants, children, adolescents, and pregnant women, including those with special health care needs, who are at risk for poor oral health.

SCID is implementing a two-tier, state-and local-level approach to improve access to oral health care for their target population—infants and children from birth to age 11 who receive care in participating community health centers (CHCs).

Partners

SCID is led by the South Carolina Department of Public Health, Section of Oral Health, in partnership with the South Carolina Oral Health Action Network. SCID receives assistance from the South Carolina Dental Association (SCDA) for provider training and anticipatory guidance; the University of South Carolina, Center for Applied Research and Evaluation, for data analysis and evaluation; and the South Carolina Primary Health Care Association (SCPHCA) (the state association that oversees the CHCs in the state) to support primary care integration sites. The SCID Alliance, composed of key partners at the state and regional level who seek to improve the oral health of South Carolina residents with the greatest oral health needs, provides guidance and recommendations to the project team. The alliance's collaborative structure supports dissemination of promising practices and provision of technical assistance (TA).

State-Level Approach

SCID's state-level approach aims to advance three core functions (policy and practice; outreach and education; and data, analysis, and evaluation) to promote integrated POHC for the target population.



Core Function Activities

Policy and Practice

SCID completed an environmental scan to gain knowledge about factors that could impact the integration of oral health care into primary care for the target population at the state level. The scan included questions focused on medical providers' and dental providers' scope of practice, Medicaid billing and payment, and policies and regulations. SCID helped modify pediatric medical setting guidelines to allow dental hygienists to provide POHC in primary care settings in compliance with South Carolina's dental practice act. SCID used the *Capacity Inventory for*

Integrating Oral Health Care into Primary Care for Children: Tool to identify policy and practice improvement opportunities. SCID selected four policy and practice strategies to address during the 4-year project period to improve access to oral health care for the target population:

- Enhance surveillance through the creation of an accessible data dashboard that includes project data and relevant county-level data.
- Advocate for practice and policy changes related to silver diamine fluoride and teledentistry.
- Expand continuing education opportunities for medical providers that address integrated POHC.
- Include oral health in certification trainings for community health workers.

Education and Outreach

SCID aims to increase oral health literacy across the state using an organizational health literacy approach. SCID will conduct an oral health literacy knowledge gaps analysis of health organizations and the professionals they represent to evaluate how well each organization helps the target population find, understand,

and use oral health information and services. The SCID Alliance helped identify health organizations and professionals to participate in the gaps analysis. SCID is also reviewing training tools and educational materials and has identified state oral health literacy efforts that are currently reaching the target population to further inform the gaps analysis. Results of the analysis will guide the development and implementation of a state organizational oral health literacy plan, including strategies for education and outreach.

Data, Analysis, and Evaluation

SCID aims to improve the state oral health surveillance system to better monitor disparities in oral health status and the burden of oral disease among the maternal and child health (MCH) population, particularly the target population. To accomplish its goal, SCID is partnering with the South Carolina Department of Public Health, Section of Epidemiology, Analytics, and Data Visualization, and South Carolina's Medicaid program to create a data dashboard that includes project data and relevant Medicaid and county-level data to help guide oral health





program decisions and increase impact across program areas for the MCH population. The dashboard will be accessible to stakeholders, including community members.

Local-Level Approach

SCID is working with three CHCs located in communities across South Carolina that are underserved by oral health care to develop, implement, evaluate, and improve sustainable models of care for integrating oral health care into primary care for the target population. Participating CHCs have multiple sites with co-located medical and oral health care. SCID's approach incorporates three core function areas: policy and practice; outreach and education; and data, analysis, and evaluation.

Core Function Activities

Policy and Practice

SCID is supporting participating sites to align internal practices with pediatric medical setting guidelines that allow dental hygienists to provide POHC in primary care settings in compliance with South Carolina's dental practice act. After signing a memorandum of agreement (MOA) to participate, each site completed a readiness assessment to identify existing resources for the provision of POHC in primary care

and areas needing TA and support. SCID is working with the pediatric team at each site to implement an integrated POHC model, including revising workflows, training health care providers and health care staff, integrating anticipatory guidance, and documenting the provision of POHC in the electronic health record (EHR).

Education and Outreach

SCID conducted an analysis of oral health knowledge and skills gaps at participating sites with medical providers and dental providers and health care staff, along with support staff, such as community health workers. Results are informing site-specific training and programming for quarterly learning collaborative meetings with all three participating sites. Also, the gaps analysis is guiding the development of educational materials for families with infants and children from birth to age 11. SCDA is assisting SCID with training and anticipatory guidance.

Data, Analysis, and Evaluation

SCPHCA is working with participating sites to optimize their EHRs and processes for documenting the provision of POHC. SCPHCA will use Azara DRVS (Data Reporting and Visualization System) to collect and report on project metrics from each site monthly via data dashboards. The dashboards will allow SCID to analyze and evaluate progress at each site and for the three sites overall. SCID will review the dashboards with each site monthly to monitor and track progress and identify areas for improvement.

Early Successes/Lessons Learned

A key achievement in project year 1 was the formation of a strong, well-rounded alliance composed of key partners at the state and regional levels. This engaged, diverse group provided essential expertise to guide SCID in its early stages. The alliance includes representation across critical content areas, and the collaborative dynamic has fostered productive and effective meeting discussions, contributing to a positive start for the project.



The SCID project team also recognized the need to strengthen data collection activities across participating CHC sites to address recurring challenges from previous initiatives that had a data collection component. To support these activities, SCID established a strategic partnership with SCPHCA. This collaboration will enhance the development of a data dashboard designed to align with the EHR systems used by participating CHC sites to streamline and enhance data collection, data sharing, and reporting capabilities.

Early Challenges

Establishing consistent communication between SCID and participating CHC sites proved a challenge in project year 1. This challenge contributed to delays in finalizing MOAs and made it difficult for SCID to gain a clear understanding of how local project implementation was progressing. However, following the MCH-IOHI meeting in March 2025, and with TA from the Consortium for Oral Health, the state team developed a plan to conduct site visits at each participating CHC location. A standardized set of questions was also created and used across all sites, allowing the team to collect consistent and comparable feedback. This process helped identify each site's strengths and areas for improvement.

Project Contacts

Project director: Michael Tredway, M.S.P.H.
South Carolina Department of Public Health,
Section of Oral Health
E-mail: tredwamc@dph.sc.gov

Project manager: Mary Kenyon Jones, M.Ed.
South Carolina Department of Public Health,
Section of Oral Health, and South Carolina
Oral Health Action Network
E-mail: kenyonm@dph.sc.gov