

Introducing The Oral Health Training Academy of Connecticut & The Social Worker's Role in Oral Health

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Is the dental plan for HUSKY Health and is administered by BeneCare Dental Plans under a contract with the Connecticut Department of Social Services.



CTDHP is the sole Dental Medicaid ASO – deeply local, plan administration plus:

- Oral Health Navigation
- Community Engagement
- Communications – Direct to Member Engagement
- Oral Health Equity Data and Promotion
- Local Member Services
- Professional Services

CTDHP Mission is to enable HUSKY Health Members to achieve and maintain good oral health. We work to ensure all members have equitable access to oral health services.

Oral Health Training Academy of CT



- Build oral health champions in non-dental settings.
- Increase knowledge, skills, abilities to promote and empower oral health literacy.
- Develop an understanding of the value and opportunity integrate oral health within their work.

First Course: The Social Worker's Role in Oral Health

Christina

- 41 year old woman referred by dentist for non-compliance, frequent no shows.
- Assessment identified significant dental phobia, readiness to accept help, medical and behavioral health history, supporters and strengths.
- Interventions:
 - Match dentist with patient needs.
 - Step wise approach to office visit.
 - Worked with therapist to obtain pre-visit medication.
 - Developed visit plan for reducing anxiety before, during, after appointments.
 - Check ins at minimum every 30 days.
 - Positive reinforcement on small wins.
 - Developing a shared humor/sarcasm about her experience.
- Outcomes: Multiple extractions, fillings, and partial denture completed. Patient now in routine preventive dental care.



“I cannot overstate the significance of Tyra's continued support in keeping me engaged with dental care—and the truth is that she helped me in many other ways by keeping me engaged. She may not have known it, but we have worked together through some of the darkest periods of my life and there were times when her monthly check-in calls were the most consistent thing happening for me...”

The Social Worker's Role in Oral Health: Learning Objectives

1

Identify how oral health intersects with social workers' roles within micro, macro, and mezzo levels of social work practice.

2

Define the benefits of good oral health, risks to oral health across the lifespan, and oral health literacy.

3

Identify the connection of oral health to systemic medical and behavioral health conditions.

4

Describe the barriers that clients may encounter in navigating oral health services.

5

List three useful tools to integrate oral health in your work with clients and systems.

6

Learn about and **access** resources for HUSKY Health Members with oral health needs in the state of Connecticut.

The Social Worker's Role in Oral Health: Actionable Tools

- 1 Perform a quick/basic oral health **screening** and assessment
- 2 **Identify** oral health related goals within the context of a social work treatment or service plan
- 3 **Apply** oral health interventions towards goal attainment. Examples in Motivational Interviewing, Incremental Change/Micro-Changes, role modeling (parenting environments) via social learning theory

You will also be able to find and **use resources** for HUSKY Health Members with oral health needs.

Next Steps

- Go to: [Oral Health Training Academy of CT](#)
- Register
- Complete!
- 1.5 CEs from NASW
- Give Feedback! Email us at communitypartners@ctdhp.com
- **Next course.....Community Health Workers, Spring 2025**