

Referral and Follow-Up Care

Appropriate referrals are an integral part of our quality healthcare management. Our established referral system is designed to provide timely referrals and assist families to obtain needed dental treatment to achieve positive oral health outcomes for the children we serve. Community dental care coordinators and professional clinical staff work directly with parents/guardians of our patients to arrange appropriate and accessible follow up care.

Our referral and follow-up care is a continuum of the following processes:

- **Oral Health Report**
 - A written referral and the patient’s Oral Health Report stipulating additional treatment needs is sent home to the parent/guardian on the date of service

- **Referral/Dental Homes**
 - Referral resources include partnerships with community health clinics, pediatric dentistry training programs, hospital dental programs, dental schools, and private practitioners
 - Dentists are recruited throughout geographic regions and sign affiliation agreements to accept referral patients from our program
 - Contact information of dental providers located within a reasonable geographic distance is provided to the parent/guardian with the Oral Health Report and can be accessed online

- **Community Dental Care Coordinators**
 - Contact parent/guardian of all patients with emergent, urgent and other identified dental needs
 - Confirm receipt of the Oral Health Report (copy is sent via secure email and/or US Postal Service if not received)
 - Inform parent/guardian of need for additional dental treatment
 - Advise parent of dental providers list on Oral Health Report
 - A follow-up care and referral letter is sent via secure email or US Postal Service when a parent/guardian cannot be reached by telephone after two unsuccessful attempts
 - Offer bilingual communications

- **Clinical Staff Registered Dental Hygienist**
 - Contact parent/guardian of all patients with emergent and urgent dental needs to inform and advise of the need for immediate treatment
 - Coordinates care by working directly with parent/guardian and local dental providers to arrange accessible care for the timely treatment of identified dental needs

- ***Triage***
 - Follow-up treatment referrals are prioritized according to the urgency of the dental condition
 1. Emergent dental need: parental contact within 24 hours
 2. Urgent dental need: parental contact within 24-48 hours
 3. Other dental need: parental contact within 2 weeks
 - Parental contact is made immediately for children with emergent dental need by the onsite dental team. Community dental care coordinators and staff clinical dental hygienist assist in follow through for services to support a continuum of care for identified treatment need

- ***School Personnel***
 - School medical personnel are provided a copy of the Oral Health Report and the names of children who are identified with dental disease and require further treatment
 - Dental team and clinical staff dental hygienist engage school officials to assist families with follow through

- ***Patient Records***
 - Where parental consent has been granted, treatment information and radiographs are made available to the subsequent dental provider
 - Patient records are sent within a reasonable time to the referred dental provider via secure email and/or US Postal Service