
Oral Health of Older Adults

Present status, future challenges
and opportunities.

Karen Phillips, MPH, RDH, EPP

Oral Health Program Analyst



Oregon
Health
Authority

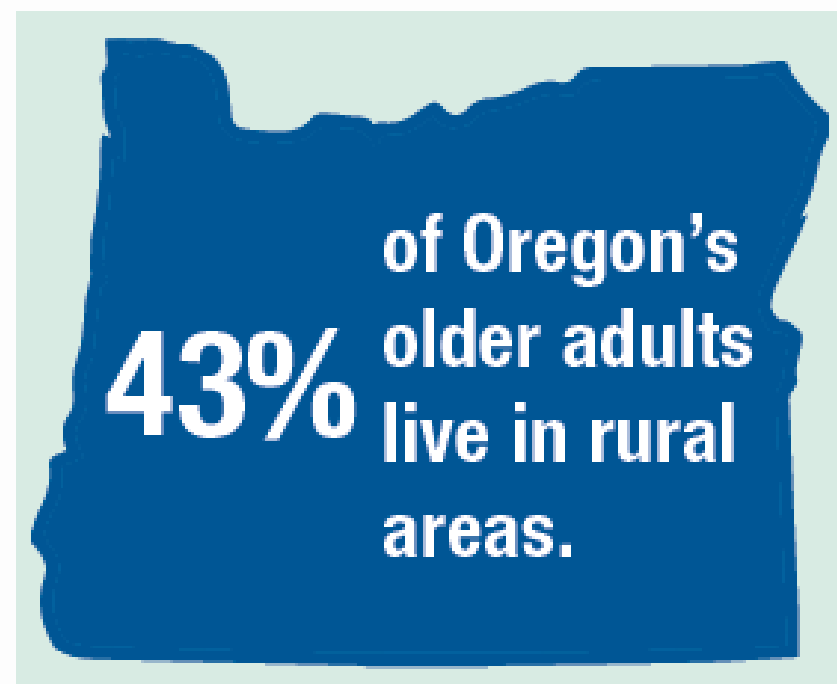
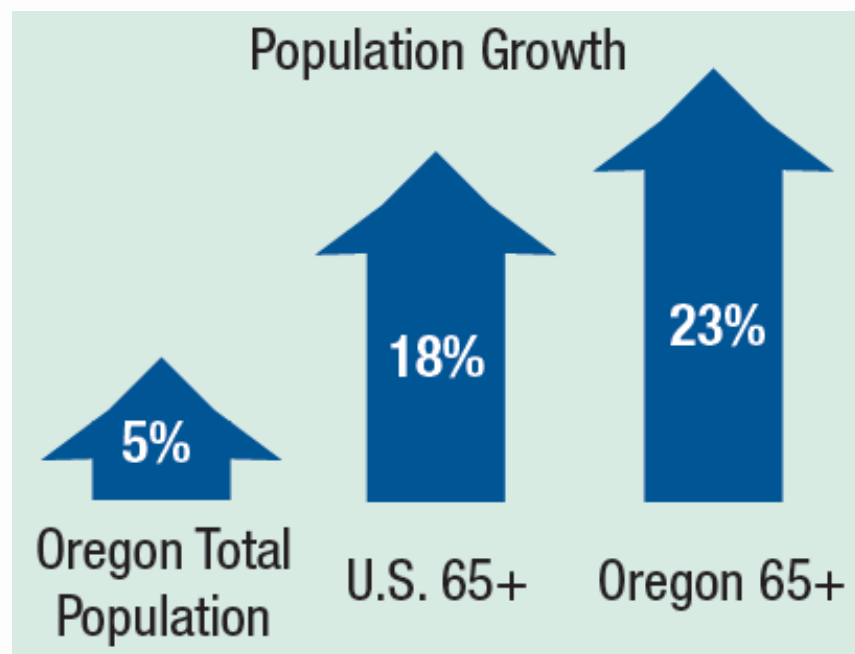
Objectives

1. Describe the current oral health situation of Oregon's older adults
2. Identify challenges and opportunities for communities to meet the oral health needs of Oregon's older adults

Background

- Focus on children
- Lack of resources
- Burgeoning older adult population
- Gaps identified
- State Health Improvement Plan Priority

Population Growth

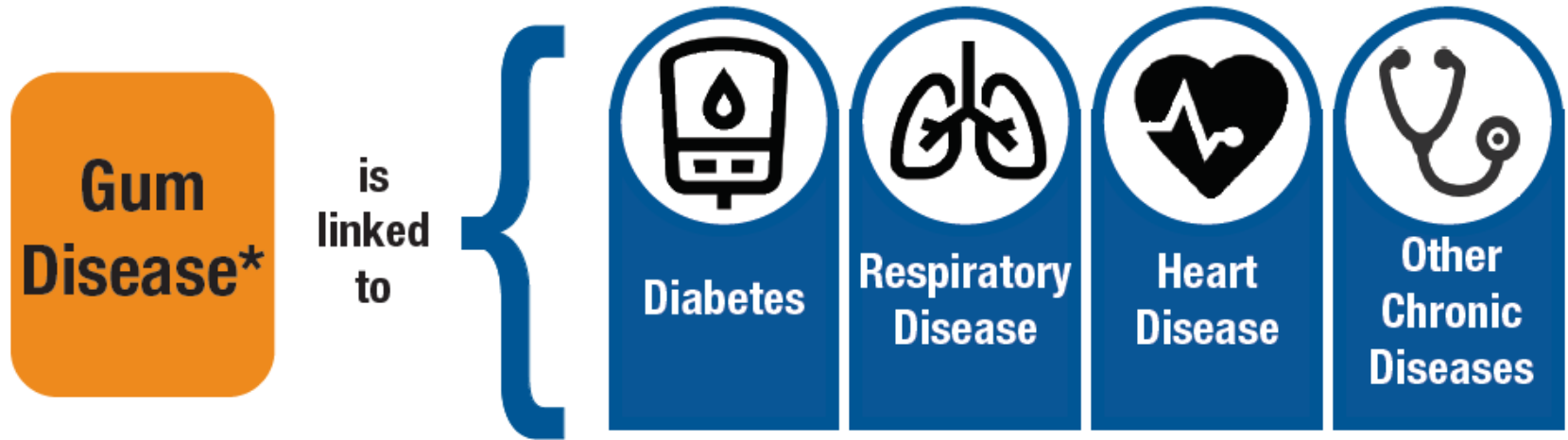


Myths about oral health and aging



- It is inevitable that we lose teeth as we age
- Fluoride only benefits children's teeth
- Dry mouth is a normal part of aging
- If you don't have natural teeth, then you don't need to go to the dentist

Value of oral health



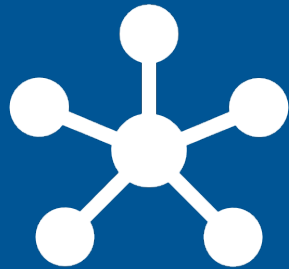
- Bi-directional link between diabetes and periodontal disease
- Association with cardiovascular disease, respiratory illness, stroke, aspiration pneumonia

Value of oral health

- Dental pain and loss of teeth decreases the ability to eat nutritious food
- A healthy mouth improves self-esteem, employability and social interactions
- Prevention costs less than treatment



Disparities and barriers



- Racial and ethnic
- Income
- Rural vs. urban
- Lack of dental benefits
- Mobility

Resources and Recommendations

Mobile
Dentistry

Expanded
Dental
Workforce

Dental Pilot
Projects

Dental
Champions

Inter-
professional
education

Caregiver
Education

Additional resources



Mouth Care without a Battle:

<http://www.mouthcarewithoutabattle.org/>

Oral Health America: Tooth Wisdom Project:

<https://www.toothwisdom.org/>

Smiles for Life:

<https://bit.ly/2FPWtNL>

Thank you!

Contact information:

Karen Phillips

karen.phillips@state.or.us

971-673-0235