

Oral Health Promotion/Disease Prevention: Increasing Preventative Dental Services at KPHC

Statement of Purpose

Native American children suffer disproportionately from dental disease making evaluating the oral health of school-aged children as they acquire permanent teeth vital to identifying and addressing issues early. KPHC previously provided on-site preventative dental services at nearby schools; however, these school-based services were interrupted as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic. During 2022, the incidence of dental disease among 6–9-year-olds was higher than national tribal rates.

Background Data

Dental disease rates among KPHC dental patients aged 6-9 years-old seen in 2022 compared to area and national averages:

	Caries Experience, 6-9 year-olds	Untreated Decay Rate, 6-9 year-olds
KPHC	97%	76%
Albuquerque Area	90%	44%
Overall for the IHS	87%	47%

35 children aged 6-9 were seen by the KPHC dental clinic from January 2022-June 2022. Preventative Dental Services were provided at the following rates:

Percent of Patients Seen Receiving Preventative Services				
	Dental Screening	Dental Fluoride	Dental Cleaning	Dental Sealants
Jan 2022- June 2022	100%	45%	35%	25%



Kewa Pueblo Health Corporation

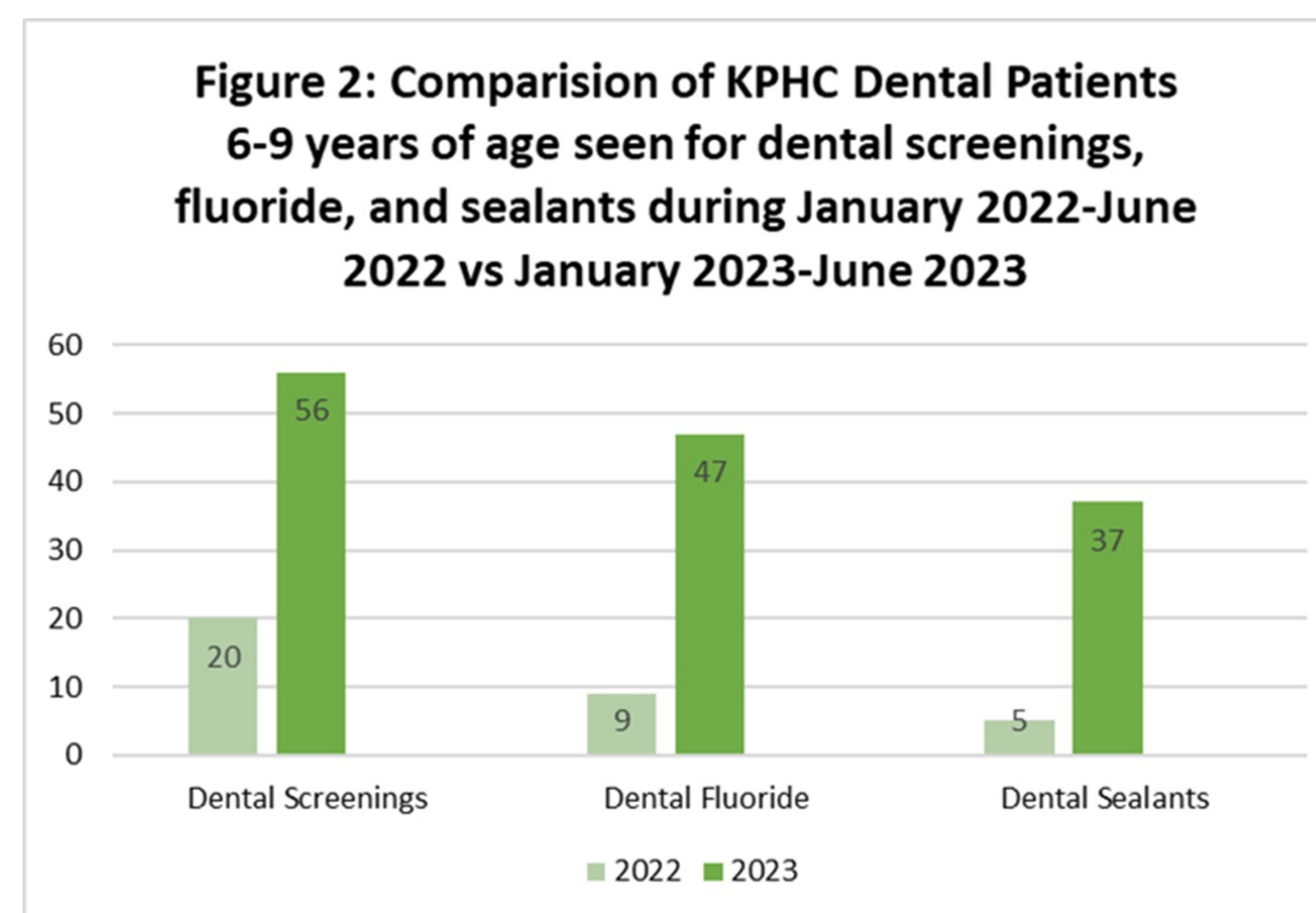
Goals

- Increase the total number of dental screenings of children aged 6-9 by at least 50%.
- Increase dental fluoride treatments for aged 6-9 by at least 50%.
- Increase dental sealants placement in children aged 6-9 by at least 50%.

Activities

- Proactively reach out to patients aged 6-9 years old who were due for preventative dental services and schedule treatment at the KPHC dental clinic.
- Incentivize patients to complete preventative dental treatment with electric toothbrushes.
- Modify clinic workflow to allow for as much same day preventative care as possible.

Outcomes



- Dental screenings for target group increased from 20 to 56 representing a 180% increase.
- Fluoride treatment for the target group increased from 9 to 47 representing a 422% increase.
- Dental sealants for the target group increased from 5 to 37 representing a 640% increase.

Did Increasing Preventative Dental Services Affect Disease Rates?

KPHC Dental Disease Rates		
	Caries Experience, 6-9 year olds	Untreated Decay Rate, 6-9 year olds
Jan 2022-Dec 2022	97%	76%
Jan 2023-June 2023	86%	52%

Lessons Learned

- Since schools are focused on addressing educational needs and catching up on missed classroom time from the pandemic, alternative approaches or strategies may be helpful to ensure children’s dental needs are met.
- Proactively reaching out to patients helps reinforce the importance of oral health to our patients.
- Many of the children previously served in the school-based program did have other dental homes in Santa Fe and Albuquerque where they hopefully receive preventative dental care.
- While we achieved the goals set forth in this project, we realize we are still not seeing as many children as we could potentially see if on-site dental services were resumed at the nearby schools.

TEAM MEMBERS

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