



## Nontraditional partners and creating legislative champions

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August 1, 2024

In partnership with:





# Agenda

1. Welcome, Housekeeping, and Overview
2. Nontraditional partners and creating legislative champions
3. Participant Q&A
4. Next Steps

**Thank You to Our Funder!**



# Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- 1.** Explain why and how to meaningfully involve people with lived experience in their advocacy work.
- 2.** Identify appropriate potential non-traditional partners in their own networks as well as opportunities to build relationships with new partners.
- 3.** Analyze the role of legislative champions in formulating and reforming Medicaid dental policies for adults with disabilities.
- 4.** Apply lessons learned from the Texas case study to propose innovative solutions for improving dental healthcare access in other states.

# Disclosures

The presenters declare that they do not have a financial arrangement or affiliation with any corporate organization offering financial support or grant monies for this continuing dental education program, nor do they have a financial interest in any commercial product(s) or service(s) they will discuss in the presentation.

# Housekeeping



This session  
is recorded.  
Please stay muted  
until called upon.



Slides, forms, and  
materials will be  
available on the  
AIDPH website.



Please type  
your email and  
organization in  
the chat.



Questions  
about Zoom?  
Ask in the chat.

## The Mission

Empowering our community to advance oral health through **science**, **education**, and **advocacy**

## The Vision

A **justice-oriented** oral health system



# Our Communities of Focus



## LGBTQIA+

By tailoring preventive and treatment strategies to the unique needs of this community, we can contribute to reducing disparities and promoting oral health equity for all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or intersex status.



## Veterans

By recognizing and addressing the distinct challenges faced by veterans, we can contribute to improving oral health outcomes, promoting preventive care, and enhancing the overall quality of life for those who have served in the military.



## Disabilities

By prioritizing inclusivity, accessibility, and targeted education, we can contribute significantly to improving the oral health outcomes and overall well-being of people with disabilities.



## Rural

By addressing the unique challenges faced by residents in rural areas, we can contribute to reducing oral health disparities and improving the overall well-being of these communities.



# Strengthening State Medicaid Advocacy for People with Disabilities



## Training Webinars

Virtual sessions sharing real-time successes and strategies for building relationships and advancing legislative action.



## Advocacy Toolkit

A step-by-step guide for advocacy efforts, including templates, research, scripts, sample legislation, and more.



## Bill Bank

A bill bank containing sample legislation for state-based stakeholders to review and replicate in advocacy work.



## Continuing Education Credits

Oral health professionals can request ADA CERP continuing education credits for each training webinar.

# Advocacy Training Series

- March — A Community-Led Approach to Increasing Dental Benefits in Medicaid: A Texas Case Study
- April 30, 2024 — Data-Driven Advocacy: Shaping Medicaid Dental Policies for Disability Access
- August 1st — Non Traditional Partnerships and Creating Legislative Champions
- **September 25 — Storytelling to Engage Audiences in Medicaid Disability Advocacy**

# Strengthening State Medicaid Advocacy for People with Disabilities

## Advocacy Toolkit

- **Section 1:** Understanding Political Landscapes
- **Section 2:** Engaging with Decision Makers
- **Section 3:** Using Data for Policy
- **Section 4:** Building Non-Traditional Partnerships
- **Section 5:** Frameworks for Storytelling

### Key Challenges for Data and Research in Policy Change

The process of leveraging data to advocate for expanded Medicaid dental benefits for adults with disabilities involves navigating a complex landscape of data collection, analysis, and policy application. This section outlines the key challenges associated with identifying competing data for this demographic and offers strategies to address these issues.

#### IDENTIFYING IMPORTANT DATA

##### Challenge

With vast amounts of potential data, pinpointing what is most relevant for policy advocacy can be overwhelming. Essential data should illuminate the needs, barriers, and potential outcomes of expanded dental benefits for adults with disabilities.

##### Strategies to Address this Challenge

- Focus on data that directly links oral health to broader health outcomes, access barriers, and economic implications of dental care in Medicaid.
- Engage with community members and stakeholders to determine the most pressing data needs and questions.

#### ACCESSING RELEVANT DATA

##### Challenge

Identifying and accessing the right datasets can be daunting. Data on Medicaid dental benefits and usage by adults with disabilities is scattered across various sources, including state Medicaid programs, healthcare providers, and research institutions.

##### Strategies to Address this Challenge

- Build partnerships with state Medicaid agencies, academic institutions, and nonprofits focused on disability rights to access and share data.
- Utilize Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests as necessary to obtain public records on Medicaid dental services.
- Partner with legislators to request data that can be difficult or time-consuming to access.

### Action

ing and facilitating processes that build alignment for social change within organizations. Includes: designing the planning process, engaging and agreement that informs taking concerted

Goals of the Process

2. Where do we want to be?

the change effort? What are the social effort? What are the structural

ation that needs to be changed.

# Session Facilitators



**Chase Bearden**

*Coalition of Texans  
with Disabilities*



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*Coalition of Texans  
with Disabilities*



**Brooke Hohfeld**

*Co-Executive Director,  
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**Samantha Lossett**

*American Institute of  
Dental Public Health*



# Nontraditional partners and creating legislative champions

# Some types of non-traditional partners

## **People with lived experience**

Community-led groups, self-advocates

Family members, service providers, groups in frequent contact

## **Neutral parties**

Research organizations, academic institutions

Trade associations

## **Unlikely allies**

Legislators, influential groups or individuals

**Is there a non-traditional partnership you have already pursued in your dental benefit advocacy? Answer in the chat!**



***Texas Advocates is recognized as the leader in IDD self-advocacy in Texas. Texas Advocates fight to stop unfair treatment and advocate for more and better services and supports for people with disabilities to be included in their communities.***



# What is IDD?

## *Intellectual and Developmental Disability*

**Intellectual disability** occurs before age 18; significant limitations in both intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior, such as social and practical everyday living skills.

**Developmental disability** manifests before age 22; severe chronic disability attributable to a mental or physical impairment, or combination. Examples: autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, and Down syndrome.

# Who are Texas Advocates?

- Largest statewide self-advocacy organization for Texans with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD)
- **Run by and for adults with IDD**
- 300 plus members
- 14 chapters across the state
  - All chapters have representation on the board



*“People from all different walks of life who come together to make a difference for Texans with IDD.”*

# “Nothing about us without us”



*The only person who can speak to the perspective of a person with a disability is a person with a disability.*

# What is Self-Advocacy?

<b>Self Advocacy is:</b>	<b>Self Advocacy is NOT:</b>
A civil rights movement	A program
Speaking up for yourself	Only for people who can talk
Making your own choices	Other people making decisions FOR you
Something everyone can do	Keeping everything the same
Learning where to get information	Putting yourself down
Asking for help/support when you need it	Being embarrassed to ask for help
Trying new things	Not taking risks
Knowing your strengths	Staying home
Learning from mistakes	Sitting around complaining

# What is Ableism?



Attitudes and actions that devalue someone based on their disability.



Tokenism

**POLL: Are you familiar with  
the word ableism?**

**Have you ever felt uncomfortable or unsure of how to communicate with someone with a disability? If you feel comfortable sharing in the chat, please do.**

# Avoiding Ableism

- It is okay to be nervous or unsure.
- Be honest and genuine.
- See if it's okay to ask questions.
- Have equal expectations.



# Avoiding Ableism

- Do not let your nerves dictate your actions!
- Talking down to someone
- Offering unwanted assistance
- Ignoring the person completely

# Partnering in the Real World: Practical Tips

- Slow Down
- Give prompts and let people know what is coming up
- Preparation is key
- No one size fits all: Be flexible/pivot
- Pay for expert advice
- Just ask!

# Texas Advocates and Coalition of Texans with Disabilities Take on Dental Services

- Survey for Texas Advocate members
- Personal Stories
  - Capitol visits
  - Testimony
- Education at Annual Conference



# Connect in Your State

- Self Advocates Becoming Empowered (SABE)
- Local Arc Chapters
- Developmental Disability Councils (DD Councils)
- GiGi's Playhouses
- Special Olympics
- Find a Self Advocacy Group by State:  
<https://selfadvocacyonline.org/find/>

**Are there stakeholders with lived experience (patients or local groups, for example) that you might engage in your dental advocacy work? Share in the chat!**

# **Legislative champions**

What do they do and why are they important for policy change?

# Legislative champions

Factors to consider when selecting a legislator to support your cause

- Party affiliation
- Committees and chairs
- Seniority
- Relationships with other members and state leaders
- Approaching legislators in both houses

**What are or might be some key characteristics of a legislative champion for a Medicaid dental benefit in your state? Share in the chat!**



# **Legislative champions**

Tips for approaching a legislator  
about supporting your cause

# **Legislative champions**

Tips for building and maintaining a good relationship with your legislative champion

# Next Steps

1. CEUs are available for today's session. **The survey link will show up in your browser immediately after the session.**
2. Recording and resources from today's session will be emailed to you.
3. Review, share, and evaluate the toolkit!
4. Register for the next training on **September 25th: Storytelling to Engage Audiences in Medicaid Disability Advocacy**