

Iowa Veterans Need Dental Care

Across the country, more than 75% of Veteran Health Administration (VHA) enrollees are not eligible for dental care coverage at the federal level due to strict eligibility guidelines set by Congress. Veterans are a vital part of Iowa's population, comprising nearly 9% of the state's adult residents, with approximately 177,000

veterans living across both urban and rural areas. Despite their community contributions and sacrifices, many Iowa veterans face significant challenges in accessing and affording oral healthcare as a result of a fragmented healthcare system, restrictive eligibility requirements set by the federal government, geographic and economic barriers, and an overstressed dental workforce. The cumulative impact of these systemic influences have created oral health disparities among Iowa veterans, particularly those living in rural areas or managing chronic conditions.

Oral Health Iowa established a working group focused on addressing poor oral health outcomes for Iowa veterans by improving access to dental care, increasing awareness for veteran oral health issues, and improving the dental care delivery infrastructure. Building on three years of data collection, community engagement, stakeholder momentum, and coalition development, Oral Health Iowa created the following goals for addressing veteran oral health:

- **GOAL #1:** Advance policy that improves access, utilization, and cost of care for Iowa veterans.
- **GOAL #2:** Eliminate data and knowledge gaps for veteran oral health in Iowa.
- **GOAL #3:** Address financial and geographic barriers to accessing dental care for Iowa veterans.
- **GOAL #4:** Strengthen whole-person healthcare delivery for Iowa veterans.
- **GOAL #5:** Build collaboration among state and local veteran oral health stakeholders.



ASK #1

Expand I-Smile Silver Statewide



ASK #2

Streamline the administration of the Iowa Veteran Trust Fund (IVTF)



ASK #3

Strengthen and Diversify IVTF Funding Streams for long term sustainability

Learn more about Iowa veterans here!

