



Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health Department

DATE: February 27, 2024

FROM: Renae Moch, Director

ITEM: Letter of Support

REQUEST:

Approve letter of support from Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health for the development and implementation of dental hygiene and dental assisting programs at Bismarck State College.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Bismarck State College requested a letter of support from Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health for the development and implementation of dental hygiene and dental assisting programs at their institution. Their primary objective for the addition of these programs is to fortify the dental healthcare workforce while addressing the healthcare needs of underserved communities in North Dakota who lack access to preventive dental health services. This initiative is in response to pressing concerns identified by community partners regarding the shortage of oral health professionals in the central and western regions of North Dakota.

RECOMMENDED CITY COMMISSION ACTION:

Approve letter of support from Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health for the development and implementation of dental hygiene and dental assisting programs at Bismarck State College.

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION:

Renae Moch, Director, 701-355-1541, rmoch@bismarcknd.gov

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Letter of Support BSC Dental 2024



February 20, 2024

Dr. Douglas Jensen, President
Bismarck State College
PO Box 5587
Bismarck, ND 58506-5587

Dear Dr. Jensen:

I am writing this letter of support for the development and implementation of dental assisting and dental hygiene programs at Bismarck State College. The need for dental hygienists and dental assistants is significant and widespread. The addition of these programs would be a valuable resource to address the dental public health workforce needs in this region.

We have witnessed first-hand the lack of access to preventive dental health care in the clients we serve at Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health. We consistently encounter individuals and families who lack access to preventive dental health care, leading to increased risks of oral health issues and poor oral health outcomes.

Access to oral health care is essential to promoting and maintaining overall health and well-being, yet data reflects that North Dakotans of all ages are not accessing preventive dental care. According to the ND Department of Health and Human Services Oral Health Program, only 1 in 4 children had a preventive dental care visit in the last 12 months. Nearly 1 in 3 adults reported no dental visit in the past five or more years.

The proposed solution presented by Bismarck State College to focus on delivering dental health prevention and education services to underserved populations through the implementation of dental assisting and dental hygiene programs holds immense promise. By training a new generation of dental health professionals who are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and compassion to serve communities in need, Bismarck State College has the potential to make a significant impact in building a sustainable workforce for dental health care professionals in our region.

As the Public Health Director for Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health, I strongly support Bismarck State College in their efforts to expand its degree offerings to include dental assisting, dental hygiene, and other public health related programs.

Sincerely,

Renae Moch, MBA, FACMPE
Public Health Director, Bismarck-Burleigh Public Health

