ORAL HEALTH DISPARITIES IN WOMEN WITHIN RURAL EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA

Bertie, Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Hertford, Hyde, Martin, Northampton, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell, and Washington Counties (Region 9)

Siani Antoine
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
WomenNC
CSW64 / BEIJING + 25
Femtor: Dr. Margaret Gichane, RTI Global Gender Center
Research Objectives

- Identify oral health disparities in Eastern N.C.
- Identify the social determinants impacting a woman’s ability to care for her oral health (e.g., socioeconomic status, transportation, education, and access to healthcare services)
- Identify policy solutions to reduce oral health disparities among pregnant women
Poor oral health in pregnant women can predispose their children to similar complications:

- affecting future generations

Pregnancy Gingivitis increases in Region 9 due to barriers in healthcare
LITERATURE REVIEW

- Primary & Secondary Sources
- Focus: Region 9 Disparities
- Medicaid & Non-Medicaid Dental Offices → Transportation & Distance
- Number of Dentists → Provider to Patient Ratios
- Public Fluoridated Water Supply → Environmental Barriers
- Fluoride Mouth Rinse Programs → Access to Oral Health Education

Source: http://www.carolinayellow.com/nc-county-map.html
Findings

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE OF MEDICAID DENTISTS

15-MINUTE TRAVEL TIME TO MEDICAID OFFICE

Region 9

Findings

- Of the Region 9 population served by public water systems, **87%** do not receive fluoridated water.
- Of qualified Region 9 schools, **96%** do not participate in a Fluoride Mouth Rinse Program.
Policy Recommendations

1. Develop a **Fluoride Mouth Rinse Program for pregnant women** at their OB/GYN office in Region 9, Eastern North Carolina.

   *When:* At a woman’s first prenatal visit, a medical provider instructs, demonstrates, and guides a woman in practicing a fluoride rinse.

2. Conduct **regional educational programming and training for women and medical professionals** (OB/GYNs) to become knowledgeable about oral health during pregnancy.