

Season 2 Episode 4: Oral Health Part 1

*[intro music Sun Through Shade]*

Hannah: Imagine it is 1213 BCE and you are an all powerful pharaoh of Ancient Egypt. Your name is Ramseses II, and you have built monuments that will last a thousand years, conquered cities from foes, and will come to be known as the “Pharaoh of Exodus.” But you’ve been noticing a toothache lately, and it won’t go away.

Abby: It turns out many Ancient Egyptian Pharaohs suffered from poor dental hygiene. Radiographic findings indicate that one of the most famous pharaohs, Ramseses II, likely died from dental disease, also known as periodontal disease. Dental health has been important to humans from ancient times to modern times.

Hannah: In modern times, even though we have made advances in detecting, diagnosing, and treating dental disease, not everyone has access to these services. So let’s learn a little more about it. Before we get started, though, here’s a quick quiz question. We will reveal the answer to this question at the end of the episode.

*[quiz bell]*

Abby: Hey Hannah, there were 4,438 dental health professional shortage areas in 2012. What percentage of them were in non-metropolitan areas?

Hannah: Hmm...

Abby: In these two episodes, we wanted to learn more about oral health. We spoke with Community Dental Care and the Dental Therapy Student Organization at the University of Minnesota to learn more about this important public health topic. First, we will hear from Karen Kleinhans, CEO, and Dr. Katherine Sievert, Dental Director, at Community Dental Care to learn more about community-based approaches to oral health. In our next oral health episode, we hear from Phonsuda Chanthavisouk, President of the Dental Therapy Student Organization at the University of Minnesota, to learn about the emerging field of Dental Therapy and its role in making oral health accessible and affordable for all. We hope you enjoy our interviews with these incredible, dedicated oral health professionals.

*[intro music Sun Through Shade]*

3

00:00:10,049 --> 00:00:11,790

Katherine: I'm Katherine Sievert.

4

00:00:11,790 --> 00:00:13,440

Katherine: I'm a dentist at

community dental care

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00:00:13,440 --> 00:00:15,555

Katherine: and I'm also our dental director here.

6

00:00:15,555 --> 00:00:17,789

Karen: And I am Karen Kleinhans.

7

00:00:17,789 --> 00:00:19,725

Karen: I am the CEO.

8

00:00:19,725 --> 00:00:22,379

Karen: And that's my role here to make

9

00:00:22,379 --> 00:00:26,099

Karen: sure the organization sustains itself.

10

00:00:26,500 --> 00:00:30,889

Hannah: So how did you become interested in your work?

11

00:00:30,889 --> 00:00:33,785

Katherine: Yeah. The reason I became a dentist

12

00:00:33,785 --> 00:00:36,889

Katherine: is I wanted to I wanted to go as far as

13

00:00:36,889 --> 00:00:38,450

Katherine: I could with the privilege that I

14

00:00:38,450 --> 00:00:40,624  
Katherine: had in education and develop

15  
00:00:40,624 --> 00:00:43,250  
Katherine: a practical MY practical  
skills gives me that

16  
00:00:43,250 --> 00:00:46,310  
Katherine: met a need of the world.

17  
00:00:46,310 --> 00:00:50,989  
Katherine: And so dentistry ended up  
being, being that place.

18  
00:00:50,989 --> 00:00:52,865  
Katherine: I knew in dental school  
that I wanted to

19  
00:00:52,865 --> 00:00:54,784  
Katherine: work in a community  
health setting.

20  
00:00:54,784 --> 00:00:59,359  
Katherine: I did some... looked at a  
couple different clinics

21  
00:00:59,359 --> 00:01:00,499  
Katherine: and I really fell in love with

22  
00:01:00,499 --> 00:01:02,300  
Katherine: community dental care and  
with what we do here.

23  
00:01:02,300 --> 00:01:05,029  
Katherine: So I've been here for

almost eight years.

24

00:01:05,029 --> 00:01:08,359

Katherine: Yeah.

Karen: And I went into administration.

25

00:01:08,359 --> 00:01:09,770

Karen: I got my Masters at the School of

26

00:01:09,770 --> 00:01:11,780

Karen: Public Health at  
University of Minnesota.

27

00:01:11,780 --> 00:01:13,970

Karen: And the reason I went into  
healthcare administration is I

28

00:01:13,970 --> 00:01:15,920

Karen: really believe  
healthcare is a right

29

00:01:15,920 --> 00:01:17,929

Karen: and everyone should  
have access to

30

00:01:17,929 --> 00:01:20,360

Karen: the highest quality  
that everyone else has.

31

00:01:20,360 --> 00:01:21,920

Karen: It's a social equity issue.

32

00:01:21,920 --> 00:01:24,110

Karen: And being a systems thinker

33

00:01:24,110 --> 00:01:26,479

Karen: and someone who likes to solve problems.

34

00:01:26,479 --> 00:01:30,589

Karen: I felt that working in public health

35

00:01:30,589 --> 00:01:32,240

Karen: is a better choice

36

00:01:32,240 --> 00:01:34,759

Karen: because there are plenty of problems in getting access.

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00:01:34,759 --> 00:01:36,710

Karen: And I did spend a lot of my career

38

00:01:36,710 --> 00:01:39,214

Karen: working for hospitals and health systems.

39

00:01:39,214 --> 00:01:42,769

Karen: And I've brought that to this setting to try to help

40

00:01:42,769 --> 00:01:44,149

Karen: us make sure we fulfill

41

00:01:44,149 --> 00:01:47,165

Karen: our mission in a sustainable manner.

42

00:01:47,165 --> 00:01:50,120

Abby: Can we talk maybe a little  
bit about what community dental care

43

00:01:50,120 --> 00:01:52,759

does and all  
of the clinics? Do you mind going through that?

44

00:01:52,759 --> 00:01:55,790

Karen: Absolutely. So  
community dental care

45

00:01:55,790 --> 00:01:58,280

Karen: is a community-based  
not-for-profit.

46

00:01:58,280 --> 00:02:02,930

Karen: We, we serve about 50  
thousand unique patients

47

00:02:02,930 --> 00:02:04,520

Karen: a year in our four clinics,

48

00:02:04,520 --> 00:02:06,709

Karen: we have 260 employees,

49

00:02:06,709 --> 00:02:08,384

Karen: 45 of them are dentists.

50

00:02:08,384 --> 00:02:10,819

Karen: We have about 35 hygienists,

51

00:02:10,819 --> 00:02:14,120

Karen: and we have clinics in East St. Paul,

52

00:02:14,120 --> 00:02:16,579

Karen: Maplewood, Robbinsdale  
and Rochester.

53

00:02:16,579 --> 00:02:19,699

Karen: We also do a extensive  
community outreach

54

00:02:19,699 --> 00:02:21,829

Karen: and preventive  
education and services.

55

00:02:21,829 --> 00:02:23,629

Karen: We have a school-based  
sealant program

56

00:02:23,629 --> 00:02:25,579

Karen: we're in 15 schools.

57

00:02:25,579 --> 00:02:27,770

Karen: And we also are doing some of

58

00:02:27,770 --> 00:02:30,484

Karen: those very services  
in a medical clinic,

59

00:02:30,484 --> 00:02:32,660

Karen: screenings, fluoride, varnish, a

60

00:02:32,660 --> 00:02:33,800

Karen: particular medical clinic that's

61

00:02:33,800 --> 00:02:35,674

Karen: serving a lot of immigrants.

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00:02:35,674 --> 00:02:37,909

Karen: And I'm also the

Karen population.

63

00:02:37,909 --> 00:02:40,250

Karen: So we have staff here that speak

64

00:02:40,250 --> 00:02:43,669

Karen: 26 different languages we're  
from all parts of the world,

65

00:02:43,669 --> 00:02:45,334

Karen: as are our patients.

66

00:02:45,334 --> 00:02:47,180

Karen: And so we are designed to

67

00:02:47,180 --> 00:02:50,644

Karen: serve people in a very  
culturally sensitive manner,

68

00:02:50,644 --> 00:02:53,089

Karen: people of all ages  
and all abilities.

69

00:02:53,089 --> 00:02:56,180

Karen: And we provide as comprehensive  
dental home as we can

70

00:02:56,180 --> 00:02:57,860

Karen: possibly provide given

71



00:02:57,860 --> 00:03:00,750  
Karen: the wonderful providers  
that we have.

72  
00:03:02,020 --> 00:03:05,899  
Hannah: Can you tell me  
just about

73  
00:03:05,899 --> 00:03:09,379  
how community dental was founded?

74, 75  
00:03:12,094 --> 00:03:14,599  
Karen: Absolutely. So our founder,

76  
00:03:14,599 --> 00:03:16,385  
Karen: Dr. Vacharee Peterson,

77  
00:03:16,385 --> 00:03:18,829  
Karen: was an immigrant and is an  
immigrant from Thailand.

78  
00:03:18,829 --> 00:03:21,199  
Karen: She moved to the US  
when she was 17.

79  
00:03:21,199 --> 00:03:24,080  
Karen: She went to college  
and then Dental School

80  
00:03:24,080 --> 00:03:27,499  
Karen: here in the state and  
started her own practice.

81  
00:03:27,499 --> 00:03:29,300  
Karen: And really had a heart for

82

00:03:29,300 --> 00:03:32,914

Karen: serving those in poverty and especially new immigrants.

83

00:03:32,914 --> 00:03:34,310

Karen: We opened a clinic in St.

84

00:03:34,310 --> 00:03:36,529

Karen: Paul and did that for many years.

85

00:03:36,529 --> 00:03:39,305

Karen: And when she was getting ready to retire,

86

00:03:39,305 --> 00:03:41,690

Karen: she was worried that no one would take

87

00:03:41,690 --> 00:03:44,404

Karen: on the mantle of her, her passion.

88

00:03:44,404 --> 00:03:47,519

Karen: And so..., and also found it a little bit difficult

89

00:03:47,519 --> 00:03:50,689

Karen: to cover costs with just the basic public programs,

90

00:03:50,689 --> 00:03:53,270

Karen: reimbursement rates, and got advice that she

91

00:03:53,270 --> 00:03:54,529

Karen: could become a not-for-profit

92

00:03:54,529 --> 00:03:55,970

Karen: given the population she served.

93

00:03:55,970 --> 00:03:57,965

Karen: So she did that in 2005.

94

00:03:57,965 --> 00:04:01,474

Karen: And then with that,  
not-for-profit status,

95

00:04:01,474 --> 00:04:04,159

Karen: was eligible for a  
very important program

96

00:04:04,159 --> 00:04:06,080

Karen: called Critical  
Access Dental Care.

97

00:04:06,080 --> 00:04:09,259

Karen: It gives those providing  
care predominantly

98

00:04:09,259 --> 00:04:13,309

Karen: to the underserved to  
public programs enrollees,

99

00:04:13,309 --> 00:04:15,124

Karen: a little bit more reimbursement

100

00:04:15,124 --> 00:04:16,970

Karen: that helps us cover our costs.

101

00:04:16,970 --> 00:04:18,919

Karen: And then was an eligible for

102

00:04:18,919 --> 00:04:21,590

Karen: foundation dollars which  
she used to expand

103

00:04:21,590 --> 00:04:23,419

Karen: the organization from  
that one clinic of

104

00:04:23,419 --> 00:04:25,310

Karen: five dentists to what is now

105

00:04:25,310 --> 00:04:27,365

Karen: four clinics and 45 dentists.

106

00:04:27,365 --> 00:04:29,480

Karen: So that's a tremendous legacy

107

00:04:29,480 --> 00:04:31,759

Karen: that she has left and has done

108

00:04:31,759 --> 00:04:33,920

Karen: tremendous work for the  
people of the state of Minnesota.

110

00:04:37,970 --> 00:04:41,975

Abby: So we'd really love  
to hear some stories.

111

00:04:41,975 --> 00:04:44,750

Abby: So could you tell a story about

112

00:04:44,750 --> 00:04:47,269

Abby: how your work has impacted  
the community members?

113

00:04:47,269 --> 00:04:48,830

Katherine: Sure, one of,

114

00:04:48,830 --> 00:04:50,719

Katherine: one of my favorite stories,

115

00:04:50,719 --> 00:04:52,099

Katherine: one of the ones that  
sticks in my mind is

116

00:04:52,099 --> 00:04:53,749

Katherine: actually a he's probably,

117

00:04:53,749 --> 00:04:56,269

Katherine: an older, middle aged gentleman.

118

00:04:56,269 --> 00:04:58,010

Katherine: We were going through the process

119

00:04:58,010 --> 00:04:59,000

Katherine: of making him a denture.

120

00:04:59,000 --> 00:05:01,790

Katherine: So a whole brand new set  
of teeth, brand new, smile.

121

00:05:01,790 --> 00:05:04,969

Katherine: He had, he was going  
through the process of

122

00:05:04,969 --> 00:05:07,970

Katherine: getting moving from homelessness.

123

00:05:07,970 --> 00:05:09,875

Katherine: He'd been in a halfway house for a while.

124

00:05:09,875 --> 00:05:12,950

Katherine: And his next step was gonna get to have an apartment.

125

00:05:12,950 --> 00:05:15,410

Katherine: So he was getting some extra funding for this day for

126

00:05:15,410 --> 00:05:18,680

Katherine: his first apartment and he was so excited.

127

00:05:18,680 --> 00:05:20,930

Katherine: The nice thing with denture appointments is

128

00:05:20,930 --> 00:05:22,670

Katherine: that most of the work happens

129

00:05:22,670 --> 00:05:23,780

Katherine: outside of the mouth so we can have

130

00:05:23,780 --> 00:05:26,269

Katherine: really good conversations with our patients.

131

00:05:26,269 --> 00:05:28,175

Katherine: And so through the  
through this process,

132

00:05:28,175 --> 00:05:29,780

Katherine: it became apparent to me how much

133

00:05:29,780 --> 00:05:31,340

Katherine: he then working internally,

134

00:05:31,340 --> 00:05:33,125

Katherine: how much even working on himself.

135

00:05:33,125 --> 00:05:35,465

Katherine: And so the day I was able  
to give him his teeth,

136

00:05:35,465 --> 00:05:37,669

Katherine: there was like an outward  
manifestation of

137

00:05:37,669 --> 00:05:40,295

Katherine: his inward work and it was,

138

00:05:40,295 --> 00:05:42,214

Katherine: oh, he's just, he  
was just beaming.

139

00:05:42,214 --> 00:05:44,149

Katherine: Here's taking those  
teeth that I gave in and

140

00:05:44,149 --> 00:05:46,849

Katherine: just infusing it  
with his own spirit,

141

00:05:46,849 --> 00:05:48,680

Katherine: he was really, really wonderful.

142

00:05:48,680 --> 00:05:50,840

Katherine: So I wish, wish him the best, I

143

00:05:50,840 --> 00:05:51,920

Katherine: haven't seen him since that.

144

00:05:51,920 --> 00:05:53,224

Katherine: I really wish him the best.

145

00:05:53,224 --> 00:05:55,370

Katherine: That's one of my  
favorite stories.

146

00:05:55,370 --> 00:05:57,439

Karen: Can we just add one of the things

147

00:05:57,439 --> 00:05:59,180

Karen: that's really important when

148

00:05:59,180 --> 00:06:00,920

Karen: someone's going from  
homelessness to

149

00:06:00,920 --> 00:06:03,184

Karen: being an independent  
person is having a job.

150

00:06:03,184 --> 00:06:06,200

Karen: And it's really hard  
to get hired if you



151

00:06:06,200 --> 00:06:09,529

Karen: don't have a basically healthy looking mouth, right?

152

00:06:09,529 --> 00:06:14,345

Karen: And dentures are a great way to kind of recover

153

00:06:14,345 --> 00:06:17,659

Karen: from a chapter of life

154

00:06:17,659 --> 00:06:20,400

Karen: or even a lifetime of poor oral health.

155

00:06:20,400 --> 00:06:22,869

Karen: And you can then put those new teeth

156

00:06:22,869 --> 00:06:25,660

Karen: then have a healthy smile and you are much more

157

00:06:25,660 --> 00:06:29,529

Karen: confident and basically desirable

158

00:06:29,529 --> 00:06:32,979

Karen: to employers because of that cosmetic thing.

159

00:06:32,979 --> 00:06:35,800

Karen: And frankly, is there an easier health experience

160

00:06:35,800 --> 00:06:37,360

Karen: as well from dentures?

161

00:06:37,360 --> 00:06:40,509

Katherine: Yeah, eat... better to eat and absolutely can.

162

00:06:40,509 --> 00:06:43,764

Katherine: Many of our patients are very complex.

163

00:06:43,764 --> 00:06:45,459

Katherine: They are very complex medical histories.

164

00:06:45,459 --> 00:06:48,834

Katherine: And so if we're able to give them a bit there or

165

00:06:48,834 --> 00:06:52,795

Katherine: improve their ability to eat food and stay,

166

00:06:52,795 --> 00:06:55,389

Katherine: stay healthy, and then get back to being healthy.

167

00:06:55,389 --> 00:06:57,219

Katherine: That's a huge motivator for them.

168

00:06:57,219 --> 00:06:59,410

Karen: And dental health, I think this is one

169

00:06:59,410 --> 00:07:03,025  
Karen: of the surprising unknowns.

170  
00:07:03,025 --> 00:07:05,259  
Karen: It was surprising to me  
that it was not broadly

171  
00:07:05,259 --> 00:07:07,720  
Karen: known that access  
to dental care is

172  
00:07:07,720 --> 00:07:10,104  
Karen: really difficult to to have

173  
00:07:10,104 --> 00:07:13,075  
Karen: if you don't have  
money in your pocket.

174  
00:07:13,075 --> 00:07:16,180  
Karen: Because unlike  
medical emergencies,

175  
00:07:16,180 --> 00:07:18,549  
Karen: where you can go to  
the emergency room

176  
00:07:18,549 --> 00:07:20,424  
Karen: and get addressed for  
your medical needs,

177  
00:07:20,424 --> 00:07:22,239  
Karen: but they don't provide  
dental care in

178  
00:07:22,239 --> 00:07:24,114

Karen: hospitals and in emergency rooms.

179

00:07:24,114 --> 00:07:26,080

Karen: And so you really need  
clinics like ours.

180

00:07:26,080 --> 00:07:27,460

Karen: And there are a  
handful of others,

181

00:07:27,460 --> 00:07:28,975

Karen: of course, that do this work.

182

00:07:28,975 --> 00:07:31,540

Karen: But they're not  
very many compared

183

00:07:31,540 --> 00:07:34,930

Karen: to the number of  
people who need us.

184

00:07:34,930 --> 00:07:37,810

Karen: So we never have a  
shortage of patients.

185

00:07:37,810 --> 00:07:41,935

Karen: We operate this clinic  
from 7:30 AM to 9:30 PM,

186

00:07:41,935 --> 00:07:44,729

Karen: five days a week,  
two shifts a day.

187

00:07:44,729 --> 00:07:46,940

Karen: And that is how we and

188

00:07:46,940 --> 00:07:48,649

Karen: we're we always have people waiting.

189

00:07:48,649 --> 00:07:51,410

Karen: We take walk-ins and we take emergencies.

190

00:07:51,410 --> 00:07:55,220

Karen: We have we're full on appointments months ahead of time.

191

00:07:55,220 --> 00:07:56,810

Karen: And it's just a

192

00:07:56,810 --> 00:08:00,589

Karen: very significant need of our community.

193

00:08:00,589 --> 00:08:04,055

Karen: Absolutely. I'll, I'll tell a story.

194

00:08:04,055 --> 00:08:06,275

Karen: So I mentioned we have outreach programs

195

00:08:06,275 --> 00:08:08,120

Karen: and we go to 15 schools and

196

00:08:08,120 --> 00:08:12,664

Karen: we met a child actually in one of our outreach events.

197

00:08:12,664 --> 00:08:15,109

Karen: Who, was...

198

00:08:15,109 --> 00:08:17,314

Karen: I'll call her Cynthia. A a sweet,

199

00:08:17,314 --> 00:08:19,084

Karen: shy Hmong girl with

200

00:08:19,084 --> 00:08:22,685

Karen: long beautiful black hair and she was in serious pain.

201

00:08:22,685 --> 00:08:25,189

Karen: And I'm her mother had brought her to this event

202

00:08:25,189 --> 00:08:27,529

Karen: and wanted her to get looked at

203

00:08:27,529 --> 00:08:29,960

Karen: because this was an  
opportunity for that

204

00:08:29,960 --> 00:08:31,370

Karen: doesn't present itself very often

205

00:08:31,370 --> 00:08:33,034

Karen: in this mothers and child's life.

206

00:08:33,034 --> 00:08:34,490

Karen: So we, we get

207

00:08:34,490 --> 00:08:36,470

Karen: our dental hygienists  
could see she had very,

208

00:08:36,470 --> 00:08:40,115

Karen: very serious cavities  
in her four molars.

209

00:08:40,115 --> 00:08:42,245

Karen: They were just shells of teeth.

210

00:08:42,245 --> 00:08:46,670

Karen: Then you could see very deep towards the root.

211

00:08:46,670 --> 00:08:49,505

Karen: And that's why it was so painful for this child.

212

00:08:49,505 --> 00:08:51,154

Karen: And the mother knew of this,

213

00:08:51,154 --> 00:08:55,984

Karen: but didn't have the money to get it repaired.

214

00:08:55,984 --> 00:08:57,889

Karen: And she was quoted

215

00:08:57,889 --> 00:09:00,289

Karen: \$4 thousand to get her child treatment.

216

00:09:00,289 --> 00:09:02,675

Karen: She just did not have that, those resources.

217

00:09:02,675 --> 00:09:04,699

Karen: So we of course said, well,

218

00:09:04,699 --> 00:09:07,294

Karen: why don't we make an appointment  
for you at our clinic?

219

00:09:07,294 --> 00:09:10,070

Karen: And we have something we call mini grants.

220

00:09:10,070 --> 00:09:12,200

Karen: So people who don't have any insurance at

221

00:09:12,200 --> 00:09:15,139

Karen: all are eligible for grants.

222

00:09:15,139 --> 00:09:16,369

Karen: And we take donations

223

00:09:16,369 --> 00:09:18,259

Karen: from anyone who'd like to give them to us.

224

00:09:18,259 --> 00:09:20,719

Karen: And we reserve them to give as grants

225

00:09:20,719 --> 00:09:23,569

Karen: for, for care for people just like Cynthia.

226

00:09:23,569 --> 00:09:25,309

Karen: And so she was able to come in and get

227

00:09:25,309 --> 00:09:27,619

Karen: her treatment and it was free for her.

228

00:09:27,619 --> 00:09:30,170

Karen: And her mother was elaborately



229

00:09:30,170 --> 00:09:33,815

Karen: grateful and we are so blessed to be able to do that.

230

00:09:33,815 --> 00:09:37,040

Katherine: Absolutely. Yeah. One thing that we see a little

231

00:09:37,040 --> 00:09:40,055

Katherine: bit more in the community health setting is the,

232

00:09:40,055 --> 00:09:43,445

Katherine: is this pretty severe early childhood caries.

233

00:09:43,445 --> 00:09:45,409

Katherine: And so I'm sure and also

234

00:09:45,409 --> 00:09:48,049

Katherine: is prevalent or not, maybe not prevalent,

235

00:09:48,049 --> 00:09:51,620

Katherine: but I'm sure that it also is present in private practice,

236

00:09:51,620 --> 00:09:54,020

Katherine: but the amount of little kiddos that come into

237

00:09:54,020 --> 00:09:55,369

Katherine: our clinic that just

238

00:09:55,369 --> 00:09:58,009

Katherine: have cavities on every single one of their teeth.

239

00:09:58,009 --> 00:09:59,855

Katherine: It's pretty sad. I've seen

240

00:09:59,855 --> 00:10:01,759

Katherine: cavities on kids teeth before

241

00:10:01,759 --> 00:10:03,155

Katherine: they're one years old.

242

00:10:03,155 --> 00:10:04,760

Katherine: Thankfully, not too many of them,

243

00:10:04,760 --> 00:10:07,220

Katherine: but that's a that's a sad day when you see

244

00:10:07,220 --> 00:10:10,274

Katherine: a kid or that needs some work done and they're so young.

245

00:10:10,274 --> 00:10:12,620

Karen: It's the most common chronic disease

246

00:10:12,620 --> 00:10:14,629

Karen: in childhood dental disease.

247

00:10:14,629 --> 00:10:16,984

Karen: And it's 100% preventable.

248

00:10:16,984 --> 00:10:20,089

Karen: And so we invest a lot of our resources,

249

00:10:20,089 --> 00:10:22,865

Karen: limited resources in preventive education.

250

00:10:22,865 --> 00:10:24,139

Karen: So we have something called

251

00:10:24,139 --> 00:10:26,569

Karen: the Program to Improve Community Oral Health.

252

00:10:26,569 --> 00:10:27,980

Karen: The acronym is PICO.

253

00:10:27,980 --> 00:10:29,869

Karen: And we've been doing that for many years.

254

00:10:29,869 --> 00:10:31,925

Karen: We use motivational interviewing.

255

00:10:31,925 --> 00:10:33,979

Karen: And teaching tools to impress

256

00:10:33,979 --> 00:10:36,470

Karen: upon people in all different languages,

257

00:10:36,470 --> 00:10:38,989

Karen: what are some good, healthy habits.

258

00:10:38,989 --> 00:10:42,200

Karen: Don't put your child to bed with a bottle,

259

00:10:42,200 --> 00:10:43,954

Karen: with anything other than water.

260

00:10:43,954 --> 00:10:45,829

Karen: Make sure you brush their teeth as

261

00:10:45,829 --> 00:10:48,094

Karen: soon as they emerge from the gum.

262

00:10:48,094 --> 00:10:51,080

Karen: You know, make sure  
you're not letting

263

00:10:51,080 --> 00:10:54,230

Karen: your child snack all day long  
on high sweetened foods,

264

00:10:54,230 --> 00:10:56,419

Karen: even crackers can cause

265

00:10:56,419 --> 00:10:58,429

Karen: dental damage and make sure you have

266

00:10:58,429 --> 00:11:02,360

Karen: enough water as a regular rinsing tool

267

00:11:02,360 --> 00:11:04,175

Karen: and put your children to bed.

268

00:11:04,175 --> 00:11:05,690

Karen: having brushed their teeth.

269

00:11:05,690 --> 00:11:08,255

Karen: And parents need to brush their children's teeth.

270

00:11:08,255 --> 00:11:10,459

Karen: Because little children are not able to do that.

271

00:11:10,459 --> 00:11:12,259

Karen: They don't have the manual dexterity.

272

00:11:12,259 --> 00:11:14,059

Karen: And doing so regularly,

273

00:11:14,059 --> 00:11:16,700

Karen: it develops a habit for everyone in the family

274

00:11:16,700 --> 00:11:19,895

Karen: and teaching a mother or father to,

275

00:11:19,895 --> 00:11:22,700

Karen: to do this for their one child really teaches

276

00:11:22,700 --> 00:11:25,775

Karen: the whole family because it ideally becomes a habit.

277

00:11:25,775 --> 00:11:27,590

Karen: We do a lot of follow-up calls with

278

00:11:27,590 --> 00:11:28,880

Karen: the children and families that are

279

00:11:28,880 --> 00:11:30,229

Karen: involved in our PICO program.

280

00:11:30,229 --> 00:11:32,330

Karen: We enroll them in the program and we

281

00:11:32,330 --> 00:11:34,610

Karen: call and call them back every three to

282

00:11:34,610 --> 00:11:36,619

Karen: six months to check in on how they're doing

283

00:11:36,619 --> 00:11:38,690

Karen: and encouraged them to

284

00:11:38,690 --> 00:11:40,700

Karen: set goals on changing their health habits.

285

00:11:40,700 --> 00:11:42,980

Karen: So we know it's a very effective program there's

286

00:11:42,980 --> 00:11:45,589

Karen: 62% reduction in cavities

287

00:11:45,589 --> 00:11:48,035

Karen: risk for those enrolled  
in our program.

288

00:11:48,035 --> 00:11:50,854

Katherine: It's nationally recognized as well,

289

00:11:50,854 --> 00:11:53,300

Katherine: is an award-winning program  
so we're very proud of it.

290

00:11:53,300 --> 00:11:56,990

Hannah: Yeah. How did that develop?

291

00:11:56,990 --> 00:11:58,849

Hannah: Did you talk with other clinics about like

292

00:11:58,849 --> 00:12:00,830

Hannah: a curriculum or did

293

00:12:00,830 --> 00:12:03,305

Hannah: you develop like in-house here?

294,295

Karen: Um actually,

296

00:12:10,220 --> 00:12:14,029

Karen: the United Way recognized this as a problem

297

00:12:14,029 --> 00:12:16,115

Karen: I'd say about 12 years ago

298

00:12:16,115 --> 00:12:19,325

Karen: maybe 15 even 15 years ago.

299

00:12:19,325 --> 00:12:23,599

Karen: And they had all of the safety net dental providers

300

00:12:23,599 --> 00:12:25,279

Karen: kind of come together and create

301

00:12:25,279 --> 00:12:28,025

Karen: this program together and,

302

00:12:28,025 --> 00:12:30,620

Karen: and funded the development of the program,

303

00:12:30,620 --> 00:12:32,240

Karen: the motivational interviewing in

304

00:12:32,240 --> 00:12:35,600

Karen: the teaching tools and goal setting.

305

00:12:35,600 --> 00:12:38,165

Karen: And then we all proceeded to do it.

306

00:12:38,165 --> 00:12:41,510

Karen: And we're actually... Community Dental Care is the only

307

00:12:41,510 --> 00:12:45,814

Karen: one from that original group that still do this program.

308

00:12:45,814 --> 00:12:48,289

Karen: And, uh, probably a lot of

309

00:12:48,289 --> 00:12:50,629

Karen: reason why is this is not funded,

310

00:12:50,629 --> 00:12:54,185

Karen: nothing about our PICO program is reimbursable.

311



00:12:54,185 --> 00:12:58,039

Karen: So we only funded through  
Foundation grants,

312

00:12:58,039 --> 00:13:01,309

Karen: donations, and from our  
own operating revenues.

313

00:13:01,309 --> 00:13:02,720

Karen: And we believe it's

314

00:13:02,720 --> 00:13:05,794

Karen: a really good investment  
prevention is the best medicine.

315

00:13:05,794 --> 00:13:08,465

Karen: And so we, we will,

316

00:13:08,465 --> 00:13:09,979

Karen: do everything we can to maintain

317

00:13:09,979 --> 00:13:13,489

Karen: our PICO program because  
it is really effective,

318

00:13:13,489 --> 00:13:17,464

Karen: cost effective as a  
public health program.

319

00:13:17,464 --> 00:13:19,729

Abby: And for listeners who are looking

320

00:13:19,729 --> 00:13:21,139

Abby: to learn more about the program,

321

00:13:21,139 --> 00:13:23,780

Abby: or I might be interested  
in making a donation, where would they go to find that information?

322

00:13:23,780 --> 00:13:28,325

Karen: Well, they should go  
to [cdentc.org](http://cdentc.org),

323

00:13:28,325 --> 00:13:31,639

Karen: [cdentc.org](http://cdentc.org).

324

00:13:31,639 --> 00:13:33,919

Karen: And that's our website.

325

00:13:33,919 --> 00:13:36,260

Karen: And we would love  
everyone to visit

326

00:13:36,260 --> 00:13:38,885

Karen: and learn all about us  
and the people we serve.

327

00:13:38,885 --> 00:13:40,610

Karen: And there's a lot  
of patient stories

328

00:13:40,610 --> 00:13:42,199

Karen: and donor stories on the site.

329

00:13:42,199 --> 00:13:44,959

Karen: And you can donate  
directly on the site.

330

00:13:44,959 --> 00:13:46,460

Karen: And we'd be happy to come talk to

331

00:13:46,460 --> 00:13:48,934

Karen: any community group  
you'd like us to,

332

00:13:48,934 --> 00:13:51,720

Karen: and they should always  
feel free to reach out.

333, 334, 335

00:13:52,390 --> 00:13:54,589

Hannah: What has been the biggest  
surprise or surprises.

336-344

00:14:00,214 --> 00:14:05,040

Hannah: in your work with  
oral health, oral disparities?

345

00:14:20,810 --> 00:14:24,290

Karen: Having come from the  
medical side of things,

346

00:14:24,290 --> 00:14:26,779

Karen: a hospital side of things  
and medical clinics.

347

00:14:26,779 --> 00:14:29,689

Karen: I - and I've spent my whole  
career in healthcare.

348

00:14:29,689 --> 00:14:34,054

Karen: I had no idea that this  
access problem was so severe.

349

00:14:34,054 --> 00:14:39,275

Karen: I had no idea a dental disease can be fatal.

350

00:14:39,275 --> 00:14:41,374

Karen: I had no idea that

351

00:14:41,374 --> 00:14:44,165

Karen: dental disease or gum disease can exacerbate

352

00:14:44,165 --> 00:14:46,730

Karen: every other inflammatory disease in your body

353

00:14:46,730 --> 00:14:50,689

Karen: that contributes to bad outcomes and chronic conditions.

354

00:14:50,689 --> 00:14:53,720

Karen: So that's really surprising

355

00:14:53,720 --> 00:14:54,890

Karen: that I've spent my whole career in

356

00:14:54,890 --> 00:14:57,604

Karen: health care and I had no idea.

357

00:14:57,604 --> 00:14:59,764

Karen: Its just not taught.

358

00:14:59,764 --> 00:15:01,925

Karen: We have a program for nurses.

359

00:15:01,925 --> 00:15:05,044

Karen: Nursing programs don't teach a lot about oral health.

360

00:15:05,044 --> 00:15:07,895

Karen: But some groups realize we were,

361

00:15:07,895 --> 00:15:09,890

Karen: we teach students in all kinds of ways.

362

00:15:09,890 --> 00:15:11,734

Karen: And so we actually host

363

00:15:11,734 --> 00:15:14,944

Karen: many nursing students each year

364

00:15:14,944 --> 00:15:17,029

Karen: for I think two to four hours,

365

00:15:17,029 --> 00:15:18,725

Karen: just to expose them.

366

00:15:18,725 --> 00:15:20,450

Karen: Here's how you, here's

367

00:15:20,450 --> 00:15:21,919

Karen: what's important about knowing, you know,

368

00:15:21,919 --> 00:15:23,510

Karen: here's what's important to know about

369

00:15:23,510 --> 00:15:24,920

Karen: oral health care and

370

00:15:24,920 --> 00:15:27,245

Karen: good oral hygiene and dental disease.

371

00:15:27,245 --> 00:15:29,434

Karen: And here's how you can recognize it.

372

00:15:29,434 --> 00:15:32,390

Karen: And here's some important things

373

00:15:32,390 --> 00:15:34,340

Karen: about making sure your patients are

374

00:15:34,340 --> 00:15:36,680

Karen: practicing good oral hygiene because that's

375

00:15:36,680 --> 00:15:40,099

Karen: a neglected thing in many settings.

376

00:15:40,099 --> 00:15:44,074

Karen: And so we're trying to reverse that trend.

377

00:15:44,074 --> 00:15:46,174

Hannah: Given that it's such a big problem,

379

00:15:47,690 --> 00:15:49,340

Hannah: why do you think that it's been left out of nursing curriculums or other

381

00:15:51,050 --> 00:15:54,785

Hannah: like healthcare training programs?

382

00:15:54,785 --> 00:15:59,869  
Katherine: Well, so medicine used to kind of include

383  
00:15:59,869 --> 00:16:02,389  
Katherine: dentistry but I don't

384  
00:16:02,389 --> 00:16:04,639  
Katherine: know how far back it started to separate,

385  
00:16:04,639 --> 00:16:06,020  
Katherine: but the dentists really wanted to

386  
00:16:06,020 --> 00:16:07,804  
Katherine: be carved out as their own,

387  
00:16:07,804 --> 00:16:10,850  
Katherine: as their own, their own thing.

388  
00:16:10,850 --> 00:16:12,635  
Katherine: And the way that dental practices

389  
00:16:12,635 --> 00:16:14,300  
Katherine: work and medical practices

390  
00:16:14,300 --> 00:16:16,595  
Katherine: work are just a  
little bit different.

391  
00:16:16,595 --> 00:16:19,849  
Katherine: Dentistry is more  
fee-for-service and

392  
00:16:19,849 --> 00:16:21,415  
Katherine: medical's a little bit more appointment-

393

00:16:21,415 --> 00:16:23,540

Katherine: based for reimbursement.

394

00:16:23,540 --> 00:16:25,159

Katherine: And so I think the dentists

395

00:16:25,159 --> 00:16:26,644

Katherine: probably started the process of

396

00:16:26,644 --> 00:16:28,160

Katherine: of sequestering themselves

397

00:16:28,160 --> 00:16:29,989

Katherine: from the rest of the medical field.

398

00:16:29,989 --> 00:16:32,104

Katherine: But yeah, I mean, that's true of

399

00:16:32,104 --> 00:16:34,670

Katherine: of medical training and they don't get a lot.

400

00:16:34,670 --> 00:16:37,775

Katherine: They, they learn about everything except for the mouth.

401

00:16:37,775 --> 00:16:40,819

Katherine: And so that is that is an area

402

00:16:40,819 --> 00:16:44,029

Katherine: that just isn't taught very well, yeah.

403

00:16:44,029 --> 00:16:46,850

Karen: One of the enlightening things for me and I'd recommend your



404

00:16:46,850 --> 00:16:51,110

Karen: listeners pursue reading this book called Teeth.

405

00:16:51,110 --> 00:16:52,820

Karen: It's by Mary Otto.

406

00:16:52,820 --> 00:16:56,000

Karen: And it was an assignment for me when I took this job,

407

00:16:56,000 --> 00:16:57,709

Karen: I read this book and it will give you

408

00:16:57,709 --> 00:17:00,830

Karen: the history on why medical and dental

409

00:17:00,830 --> 00:17:02,390

Karen: as separate and why we have

410

00:17:02,390 --> 00:17:06,124

Karen: such a serious dental access problem in this country.

411

00:17:06,124 --> 00:17:08,540

Karen: And some of the things I remember,

412

00:17:08,540 --> 00:17:10,519

Karen: if I'm remembering correctly, is,

413

00:17:10,519 --> 00:17:13,610

Karen: you know, think about the Wild West long ago,

414

00:17:13,610 --> 00:17:15,935

Karen: dentists were kind of like barbers.

415

00:17:15,935 --> 00:17:18,769

Karen: They go in, they pull out your tooth.

416

00:17:18,769 --> 00:17:20,989

Karen: If they give you some moonshine

417

00:17:20,989 --> 00:17:23,255

Karen: or something and then you go on your way.

418

00:17:23,255 --> 00:17:28,430

Karen: And they initially weren't really well-respected as a,

419

00:17:28,430 --> 00:17:32,000

Karen: as a medical science because they kind of weren't.

420

00:17:32,000 --> 00:17:34,580

Karen: And then as we learned

421

00:17:34,580 --> 00:17:36,650

Karen: more and science progress

422

00:17:36,650 --> 00:17:40,969

Karen: and bacteria was  
understood or whatever.

423

00:17:40,969 --> 00:17:43,309

Karen: Dentistry became more of

424

00:17:43,309 --> 00:17:45,230

Karen: a science and more of a training.

425

00:17:45,230 --> 00:17:47,300

Karen: And they create a training programs that were

426

00:17:47,300 --> 00:17:49,880

Karen: very similar to medical training programs.

427

00:17:49,880 --> 00:17:51,110

Karen: And and then it was like,

428

00:17:51,110 --> 00:17:52,850

Karen: well, let's be together.

429

00:17:52,850 --> 00:17:55,850

Karen: But one or the other party wasn't interested at the time.

430

00:17:55,850 --> 00:17:57,139

Karen: Occasionally the medical part, wanted the dentals in

431

00:17:57,139 --> 00:17:58,594

Karen: and then some...

432

00:17:58,594 --> 00:18:00,500

Karen: and when they did, the dentals didn't want to be in.

433

00:18:00,500 --> 00:18:02,990

Karen: And so it's just evolved in

434

00:18:02,990 --> 00:18:06,304

Karen: this unfortunately separate, parallel.

435

00:18:06,304 --> 00:18:10,504

Karen: And medicine is highly

436

00:18:10,504 --> 00:18:14,149

Karen: regulated in and organized  
and reimbursed.

437

00:18:14,149 --> 00:18:17,105

Karen: And dental isn't as much.

438

00:18:17,105 --> 00:18:20,209

Karen: And of course, we are regulated and we are reimbursed.

439

00:18:20,209 --> 00:18:23,749

Karen: But it's a very tough thing because it's not the same.

440

00:18:23,749 --> 00:18:25,759

Karen: So it's like a specialty unto

441

00:18:25,759 --> 00:18:28,040

Karen: itself when it really should be under

442

00:18:28,040 --> 00:18:29,600

Karen: the same umbrella in my opinion

443

00:18:29,600 --> 00:18:31,250

Karen: of of the medicine because

444

00:18:31,250 --> 00:18:32,780

Karen: it's just another part of your body just like

445

00:18:32,780 --> 00:18:34,850

Karen: orthopedics focus not just on your bones.

446

00:18:34,850 --> 00:18:38,880

Karen: Dentists focus on your teeth and mouth and gums.

447

00:18:41,590 --> 00:18:44,540

Abby: For listeners who  
may not be may not

448

00:18:44,540 --> 00:18:46,790

Abby: be familiar with dental disease.

449

00:18:46,790 --> 00:18:48,455

Abby: Could you explain a little bit?

450

00:18:48,455 --> 00:18:49,925

Abby: What are the symptoms?

451

00:18:49,925 --> 00:18:53,570

Katherine: Sure. Yeah. So there's

452

00:18:53,570 --> 00:18:54,950

Katherine: two different types  
of dental disease.

453

00:18:54,950 --> 00:18:58,174

Katherine: One is cavities and then the  
other one is gum disease.

454

00:18:58,174 --> 00:19:02,105

Katherine: And so cavities, it's  
actually a bacterial process.

455

00:19:02,105 --> 00:19:05,659

Katherine: There are some bacteria  
that produce acid

456

00:19:05,659 --> 00:19:09,334

Katherine: whenever they metabolize sugar.

457

00:19:09,334 --> 00:19:11,629

Katherine: And so as they digest the sugar,

458

00:19:11,629 --> 00:19:13,129

Katherine: they produce an acid which

459

00:19:13,129 --> 00:19:15,395

Katherine: actually dissolves the tooth little by little.

460

00:19:15,395 --> 00:19:17,959

And if this process happens long enough.

461

00:19:17,959 --> 00:19:19,459

Katherine: It creates a hole in the tooth

462

00:19:19,459 --> 00:19:20,990

Katherine: which is home for the bacteria.

463

00:19:20,990 --> 00:19:23,299

Katherine: And that eventually can

464

00:19:23,299 --> 00:19:25,249

Katherine: work its way into  
the inner part of

465

00:19:25,249 --> 00:19:27,829

Katherine: the tooth so that it needs to be

466

00:19:27,829 --> 00:19:29,120

Katherine: fixed into the dentin

467

00:19:29,120 --> 00:19:30,949

Katherine: or into the very  
center of the tooth,

468

00:19:30,949 --> 00:19:33,079

Katherine: which is where the nerve  
and the blood vessels are.

469

00:19:33,079 --> 00:19:35,690

Katherine: That can become pretty- that  
can become very serious if,

470

00:19:35,690 --> 00:19:37,159

Katherine: if left to its own devices.

471

00:19:37,159 --> 00:19:39,200

Katherine: But when it gets

472

00:19:39,200 --> 00:19:40,309

Katherine: to the nerve and the blood

473

00:19:40,309 --> 00:19:41,509

Katherine: vessel in the center  
of the tooth,

474

00:19:41,509 --> 00:19:44,449

Katherine: that's, it really is a  
highway to the bone.

475

00:19:44,449 --> 00:19:46,970

Katherine: And so that can become very painful.

476

00:19:46,970 --> 00:19:50,089

Katherine: Somebody maybe needs a root canal or extraction.

477

00:19:50,089 --> 00:19:54,350

Katherine: And you can get a pretty big abscess or infection to

478

00:19:54,350 --> 00:19:56,120

Katherine: see if there's a toothache and someone has

479

00:19:56,120 --> 00:19:57,979

Katherine: a big swelling on their teeth,

480

00:19:57,979 --> 00:19:59,779

Katherine: that's because the infection or

481

00:19:59,779 --> 00:20:01,009

Katherine: a bacterial infection has

482

00:20:01,009 --> 00:20:02,419

Katherine: gotten to the inner  
part of the tooth,

483

00:20:02,419 --> 00:20:05,900

Katherine: which is then moved to the  
bone and cause some problems.

484

00:20:05,900 --> 00:20:08,390

Katherine: The other thing is gum disease,

485

00:20:08,390 --> 00:20:11,285

Katherine: also a bacterial process,  
different type of bacteria.

486

00:20:11,285 --> 00:20:13,790

Katherine: This is an inflammatory process.

487



00:20:13,790 --> 00:20:16,955  
Katherine: So the, the bacteria gets,

488  
00:20:16,955 --> 00:20:18,859  
gets stuck between the tooth and

489  
00:20:18,859 --> 00:20:22,294  
Katherine: the gum tissue and create  
some inflammation.

490  
00:20:22,294 --> 00:20:25,159  
Katherine: The body actually  
moves the bone out of

491  
00:20:25,159 --> 00:20:28,175  
Katherine: the way so they can fight  
off the problem better.

492  
00:20:28,175 --> 00:20:31,099  
Katherine: But that process of moving  
the bone out of the way

493  
00:20:31,099 --> 00:20:34,610  
Katherine: creates a bigger space, or a bigger...

494-5  
00:20:34,610 --> 00:20:36,829  
Katherine: the gum tissue where it touches the tooth,

496  
00:20:38,645 --> 00:20:41,659  
Katherine: becomes a bigger... it's  
like.... we call it a pocket.

497  
00:20:41,659 --> 00:20:43,654  
Katherine: So little bigger pocket  
around your tooth.

498

00:20:43,654 --> 00:20:45,814

Katherine: And then more bacteria gets in there.

499

00:20:45,814 --> 00:20:48,079

Katherine: And then the inflammatory process happens again and

500

00:20:48,079 --> 00:20:49,220

Katherine: moves a bone out of the way

501

00:20:49,220 --> 00:20:51,004

Katherine: which makes a pocket even bigger.

502

00:20:51,004 --> 00:20:54,050

Katherine: So people can have some pretty significant bone loss.

503

00:20:54,050 --> 00:20:55,220

Katherine: Worst-case scenario

504

00:20:55,220 --> 00:20:57,875

Katherine: in situation is they would lose their teeth.

505

00:20:57,875 --> 00:21:00,005

Katherine: Every... all of the teeth will be quite loose.

506

00:21:00,005 --> 00:21:03,725

Katherine: Which we, which we do see many of our immigrants,

507

00:21:03,725 --> 00:21:07,459

Katherine: some have never seen any dentists before.

508

00:21:07,459 --> 00:21:10,549

Katherine: So some over immigrants Come in that are Karen,

509

00:21:10,549 --> 00:21:13,550

Katherine: some of them have pretty severe bone loss,

510

00:21:13,550 --> 00:21:16,219

Katherine: extensive periodontal disease, and some of

511

00:21:16,219 --> 00:21:19,169

Katherine: the patients that we see that our emigrating over from,

512

00:21:19,169 --> 00:21:21,429

Katherine: I'm East Africa do as well.

513

00:21:21,429 --> 00:21:24,685

Hannah: So when people don't have any dental care,

514

00:21:24,685 --> 00:21:27,144

Hannah: but they they need to take care of their teeth,

515

00:21:27,144 --> 00:21:29,710

Hannah: what have you seen people doing that kind

516

00:21:29,710 --> 00:21:33,070  
Hannah: of address that gap?

517  
00:21:33,070 --> 00:21:36,700  
Katherine: Yeah, so well,

518  
00:21:36,700 --> 00:21:39,219  
Katherine: so people who are  
immigrating to our country,

519  
00:21:39,219 --> 00:21:40,569  
Katherine: they, it's interesting,  
they often

520  
00:21:40,569 --> 00:21:42,280  
Katherine: don't have many cavities.

521  
00:21:42,280 --> 00:21:44,380  
Katherine: It's because there...  
the diet that we

522  
00:21:44,380 --> 00:21:46,255  
Katherine: have here in the  
United States

523  
00:21:46,255 --> 00:21:48,820  
Katherine: is so sugar, high,

524  
00:21:48,820 --> 00:21:53,050  
Katherine: sugar and everything, and  
simple carbohydrates.

525  
00:21:53,050 --> 00:21:56,290  
Katherine: So we often find patients  
that are coming from

526

00:21:56,290 --> 00:21:57,429

Katherine: other countries that haven't had

527

00:21:57,429 --> 00:21:59,635

Katherine: dental care there just  
have a different diet.

528

00:21:59,635 --> 00:22:02,270

Katherine: And so thankfully, There's

529

00:22:02,270 --> 00:22:05,404

Katherine: not very many cavities  
which is good to see.

530

00:22:05,404 --> 00:22:07,310

Katherine: You often see that their,

531

00:22:07,310 --> 00:22:09,485

Katherine: their next generation of kids,

532

00:22:09,485 --> 00:22:10,849

Katherine: of that, the first,

533

00:22:10,849 --> 00:22:13,459

Katherine: second generation sometimes,  
because there are

534

00:22:13,459 --> 00:22:16,804

Katherine: so many sugar high  
foods that they,

535

00:22:16,804 --> 00:22:18,259

Katherine: that they get a lot of cavities.

536

00:22:18,259 --> 00:22:19,850

Katherine: Not all the time, that's a generalization,

537

00:22:19,850 --> 00:22:21,960

Katherine: but we do often find that.

538

00:22:22,510 --> 00:22:26,690

Katherine: So if you're asking with what a patient who has

539

00:22:26,690 --> 00:22:29,480

Katherine: been born here and

540

00:22:29,480 --> 00:22:32,510

Katherine: if they don't have access to dental care...

541

00:22:32,510 --> 00:22:35,105

Katherine: we thankfully will take anyone

542

00:22:35,105 --> 00:22:36,620

Katherine: people can come through our door.

543

00:22:36,620 --> 00:22:37,850

Katherine: We can we'll see we'll see

544

00:22:37,850 --> 00:22:39,770

Katherine: everyone if they don't have insurance I mean,

545

00:22:39,770 --> 00:22:41,420

Katherine: usually they're qualify for

546

00:22:41,420 --> 00:22:43,865

Katherine: a state insurance program  
and we take them.

547

00:22:43,865 --> 00:22:47,525

Katherine: About 85% of our patients  
are on state insurance plans.

548

00:22:47,525 --> 00:22:50,299

Katherine: But we do have mini grants  
that they don't have it,

549

00:22:50,299 --> 00:22:51,529

Katherine: they don't have anything.

550

00:22:51,529 --> 00:22:54,109

Katherine: There is a kind of a  
middle group of patients

551

00:22:54,109 --> 00:22:56,450

Katherine: who, who work enough

552

00:22:56,450 --> 00:22:58,730

Katherine: that they don't qualify  
for state insurance plans,

553

00:22:58,730 --> 00:23:00,379

Katherine: but they don't have  
enough money to pay

554

00:23:00,379 --> 00:23:04,819

Katherine: the fees associated with  
their insurance or maybe.

555

00:23:04,819 --> 00:23:06,380

Katherine: They don't have any dental insurance at all.

556

00:23:06,380 --> 00:23:08,629

Katherine: So that's kind of a tricky place to be.

557

00:23:08,629 --> 00:23:11,149

Katherine: Goodness. They tell me a little bit of

558

00:23:11,149 --> 00:23:12,170

Katherine: everything that they try for

559

00:23:12,170 --> 00:23:14,104

Katherine: their dental for their dental care.

560

00:23:14,104 --> 00:23:15,829

Katherine: I have even heard of patients trying to

561

00:23:15,829 --> 00:23:17,704

Katherine: take out their own teeth are my patients.

562

00:23:17,704 --> 00:23:19,550

Katherine: My patients have tried to take out their own teeth,

563

00:23:19,550 --> 00:23:22,940

Katherine: which is unfortunate, varying degrees of success.



564

00:23:22,940 --> 00:23:24,230

Katherine: I usually have to finish off

565

00:23:24,230 --> 00:23:26,849

Katherine: the finish off the job for them.

566

00:23:27,040 --> 00:23:30,169

Karen: One thing I want to add is  
it's our goal to help

567

00:23:30,169 --> 00:23:33,379

Karen: people have healthy mouths  
and save all of their teeth.

568

00:23:33,379 --> 00:23:35,539

Karen: And unfortunately there are

569

00:23:35,539 --> 00:23:37,505

Karen: some people who their teeth are,

570

00:23:37,505 --> 00:23:41,600

Karen: are so...and their gums are so  
bad they can't save them.

571

00:23:41,600 --> 00:23:42,830

Karen: They have to be extracted.

572

00:23:42,830 --> 00:23:45,590

Karen: But there are some  
free clinics that

573

00:23:45,590 --> 00:23:48,634

Karen: that's primarily what  
they do is extractions.

574

00:23:48,634 --> 00:23:53,614

Karen: And we work hard to avoid that.

575

00:23:53,614 --> 00:23:56,539

Karen: And we're well prepared to give

576

00:23:56,539 --> 00:24:00,154

Karen: comprehensive care to avoid that.

577

00:24:00,154 --> 00:24:03,605

Karen: And I would say the only thing  
people really need to do

578

00:24:03,605 --> 00:24:08,615

Karen: to prevent or treat dental  
disease is brush their teeth.

579

00:24:08,615 --> 00:24:11,675

Karen: Floss their teeth  
multiple times a day,

580

00:24:11,675 --> 00:24:13,385

Karen: definitely before you go to bed.

581

00:24:13,385 --> 00:24:15,109

Karen: And if you have dental disease,

582

00:24:15,109 --> 00:24:17,179

Karen: you really need to be treated by

583

00:24:17,179 --> 00:24:19,370

Karen: a comprehensive  
dental provider that

584

00:24:19,370 --> 00:24:22,790

Karen: can restore your teeth  
where there are cavities,

585

00:24:22,790 --> 00:24:24,409

Karen: address your gum disease,

586

00:24:24,409 --> 00:24:26,615

Karen: and help get you  
to a better place.

587

00:24:26,615 --> 00:24:29,360

Katherine: Yeah, absolutely. And  
there are I mean,

588

00:24:29,360 --> 00:24:30,470

Katherine: there are resources out there,

589

00:24:30,470 --> 00:24:33,544

Katherine: so people take a little  
bit of effort maybe.

590

00:24:33,544 --> 00:24:35,839

Katherine: But there definitely  
are places for people

591

00:24:35,839 --> 00:24:37,970

Katherine: to go to get at least  
regular checkups.

592

00:24:37,970 --> 00:24:40,220

Karen: And we work hard to make people  
aware that we exist.

594

00:24:42,919 --> 00:24:46,999

Karen: We talk a county  
public health leaders

595

00:24:46,999 --> 00:24:50,150

Karen: and talk to schools  
and talk to... we're

596

00:24:50,150 --> 00:24:54,439

Karen: at to any events that we think  
are might attract a lot of

597

00:24:54,439 --> 00:24:56,600

Karen: people that would be

598

00:24:56,600 --> 00:24:59,284

Karen: eligible for our programs  
or would need our programs.

599

00:24:59,284 --> 00:25:01,489

Karen: So we do what we can,

600

00:25:01,489 --> 00:25:04,519

Karen: but not everyone who needs  
us know that we are here.

601

00:25:04,519 --> 00:25:06,664

Karen: So we're always looking  
for ways to make people

602

00:25:06,664 --> 00:25:11,810

Karen: aware

Abby: So, what are some  
of the major recent trends

604

00:25:13,819 --> 00:25:16,970

Abby: related to oral  
health disparities?

605

00:25:16,970 --> 00:25:21,814

Karen: And I would say a trend,

606

00:25:21,814 --> 00:25:24,799

Karen: I'm very in tune with

607

00:25:24,799 --> 00:25:28,774

Karen: legislative things because  
our majority payer,

608

00:25:28,774 --> 00:25:31,010

Karen: 85% of our patients  
are public programs.

609

00:25:31,010 --> 00:25:32,270

Karen: The payer is the state.

610

00:25:32,270 --> 00:25:35,869

Karen: So when the legislature makes laws

611

00:25:35,869 --> 00:25:37,850

Karen: that affect whether we're

612

00:25:37,850 --> 00:25:40,159

Karen: paid and what we're paid for  
and what we're not paid for.

613

00:25:40,159 --> 00:25:41,899

Karen: And I would say

614

00:25:41,899 --> 00:25:43,670

Karen: another surprising thing is how

615

00:25:43,670 --> 00:25:46,010

Karen: low the reimbursement is  
in the state of Minnesota,

616

00:25:46,010 --> 00:25:48,365

Karen: We've a reputation of  
being very progressive,

617

00:25:48,365 --> 00:25:50,624

Karen: especially with regard  
to health issues,

618

00:25:50,624 --> 00:25:51,890

Karen: education issues.

619

00:25:51,890 --> 00:25:59,329

Karen: And so I'm surprised that some  
people in the legislature,

620

00:25:59,329 --> 00:26:01,969

Karen: in the senate this past session

621

00:26:01,969 --> 00:26:06,439

Karen: forwarded a bill to eliminate  
all adult dental benefits.

622

00:26:06,439 --> 00:26:09,919

Karen: And currently only half of

623

00:26:09,919 --> 00:26:13,475

Karen: the things that adults  
need are covered.

624

00:26:13,475 --> 00:26:16,580

Karen: So what we were asking for is to

625

00:26:16,580 --> 00:26:20,794

Karen: restore adult dental benefits  
to where they were in 2009.

626

00:26:20,794 --> 00:26:23,255

Karen: Which basically is the things,

627

00:26:23,255 --> 00:26:24,950

Karen: basic things people need.

628

00:26:24,950 --> 00:26:27,830

Karen: Treatment for cavities and treatment for gum disease.

629

00:26:27,830 --> 00:26:29,810

Karen: Currently we only  
have treatment for,

630

00:26:29,810 --> 00:26:31,669

Karen: for cavities among adults

631

00:26:31,669 --> 00:26:33,755

Karen: so there's no treatment  
for gum disease at all.

632

00:26:33,755 --> 00:26:35,900

Karen: And as you've just heard  
Dr. Sievert describe,

633

00:26:35,900 --> 00:26:38,479

Karen: it's a very serious and progressive disease.

634

00:26:38,479 --> 00:26:40,265

Karen: Going untreated, it is

635

00:26:40,265 --> 00:26:42,139

Karen: exacerbates other kind of conditions.

636

00:26:42,139 --> 00:26:44,000

Karen: So a trend that I see that is

637

00:26:44,000 --> 00:26:48,200

Karen: disturbing is the legislature

638

00:26:48,200 --> 00:26:49,910

Karen: doesn't seem to recognize this as

639

00:26:49,910 --> 00:26:51,919

Karen: a fundamentally important thing for

640

00:26:51,919 --> 00:26:54,394

Karen: the health of our communities.

641

00:26:54,394 --> 00:26:55,955

Karen: And I don't mean just

642

00:26:55,955 --> 00:26:58,429

Karen: physical wellbeing of our committees.

643



00:26:58,429 --> 00:27:00,739

Karen: I mean the economic well-being of our communities.

644

00:27:00,739 --> 00:27:03,140

Karen: It's a good investment to cover

645

00:27:03,140 --> 00:27:07,475

Karen: dental benefits because it enables people to have happy,

646

00:27:07,475 --> 00:27:09,394

Karen: healthy, productive lives and

647

00:27:09,394 --> 00:27:12,094

Karen: avoids them not being able to work.

648

00:27:12,094 --> 00:27:15,769

Karen: That it's meant to create an environment,

649

00:27:15,769 --> 00:27:17,584

Karen: a society that works together.

650

00:27:17,584 --> 00:27:20,975

Karen: And so that's a disturbing trend.

651

00:27:20,975 --> 00:27:23,390

Karen: And there's another trend that they

652

00:27:23,390 --> 00:27:25,310

Karen: seem to want to eliminate some of them,

653

00:27:25,310 --> 00:27:27,409

Karen: the critical access  
dental program,

654

00:27:27,409 --> 00:27:29,360

Karen: which is in fact how we survive.

655

00:27:29,360 --> 00:27:32,180

Karen: It's about 20 to 30% of our,

656

00:27:32,180 --> 00:27:35,284

Karen: of our revenue is critical  
access dollar and we,

657

00:27:35,284 --> 00:27:38,090

Karen: we, we would go bankrupt  
like overnight.

658

00:27:38,090 --> 00:27:40,385

Karen: If we didn't have  
this money and it's

659

00:27:40,385 --> 00:27:42,680

Karen: genuinely up for...

660

00:27:42,680 --> 00:27:44,450

Karen: People are debating it.

661

00:27:44,450 --> 00:27:46,849

Karen: That they might eliminate  
that program and,

662

00:27:46,849 --> 00:27:49,040

Karen: and we would not be able to survive.

663

00:27:49,040 --> 00:27:51,544

Karen: So that's a very disturbing trend.

664

00:27:51,544 --> 00:27:55,115

Karen: So yeah, I don't know if you know, if you have other things?

665

00:27:55,115 --> 00:27:58,400

Katherine: That had come to mind to, just kind of the threats from government funding.

666

00:27:58,400 --> 00:28:01,580

Katherine: We, we we run a tight ship. We're a non-profit.

667

00:28:01,580 --> 00:28:02,659

Katherine: We do good, good,

668

00:28:02,659 --> 00:28:03,994

Katherine: good work for our patients.

669

00:28:03,994 --> 00:28:06,154

Katherine: We've got a really compassionate staff.

670

00:28:06,154 --> 00:28:11,344

Katherine: And if, if our if our funding foundation is shaken,

671

00:28:11,344 --> 00:28:15,035

Katherine: that will be hard. That would be a hard storm to weather.

672

00:28:15,035 --> 00:28:19,730

Karen: Yes. So we just keep keep it on.

673

00:28:19,730 --> 00:28:22,685

Karen: And do everything  
as efficiently

674

00:28:22,685 --> 00:28:26,179

Karen: and as high-quality and  
effectively as we possibly can.

675

00:28:26,179 --> 00:28:28,280

Karen: Because everyone  
here is passionate

676

00:28:28,280 --> 00:28:30,559

Karen: about our mission and  
it's an awesome feeling.

677

00:28:30,559 --> 00:28:32,479

Karen: So I think anyone who's  
going into public health,

678

00:28:32,479 --> 00:28:33,995

Karen: there's plenty of opportunity.

679

00:28:33,995 --> 00:28:37,609

Karen: And it's a good feeling to  
be working in public health

680

00:28:37,609 --> 00:28:39,590

Karen: because you're  
making a fundamental

681

00:28:39,590 --> 00:28:41,315

Karen: difference in people's lives.

682-3

00:28:44,590 --> 00:28:49,624

Hannah: So I guess the last question is, how can people,

684

00:28:49,624 --> 00:28:52,804

Hannah: listeners who are interested in oral health disparities

685

00:28:52,804 --> 00:28:54,080

Hannah: or oral health in general,

686

00:28:54,080 --> 00:28:57,724

Hannah: like be involved in efforts to support

687

00:28:57,724 --> 00:29:00,480

Hannah: oral health in our communities.

696

00:29:23,735 --> 00:29:25,460

Karen: So we've been working

697

00:29:25,460 --> 00:29:30,634

Karen: on building or base of individual donors.

698

00:29:30,634 --> 00:29:33,050

Karen: So the Minnesota Department of Health and

699

00:29:33,050 --> 00:29:34,310

Karen: Department Health

and Human Services

700

00:29:34,310 --> 00:29:36,140

Karen: actually are our biggest payer

701

00:29:36,140 --> 00:29:37,340

Karen: for the services we provide,

702

00:29:37,340 --> 00:29:38,999

Karen: but we also provide about \$1.5

703

00:29:38,999 --> 00:29:41,389

Karen: million a year charity care.

704

00:29:41,389 --> 00:29:45,260

Karen: And we fund that  
primarily through

705

00:29:45,260 --> 00:29:50,675

Karen: our... basically eating the  
costs, but also donations.

706

00:29:50,675 --> 00:29:53,329

Karen: And donations are  
really important.

707

00:29:53,329 --> 00:29:55,719

Karen: I'd love to say we get \$1.5

708

00:29:55,719 --> 00:29:58,954

Karen: million in donations. We don't.

709

00:29:58,954 --> 00:30:01,579

Karen: And so we're working

really hard to

710

00:30:01,579 --> 00:30:04,295

Karen: grow that population of donors.

711

00:30:04,295 --> 00:30:06,634

Karen: And any little bit helps.

712

00:30:06,634 --> 00:30:10,385

Karen: We have many people just giving us \$25.

713

00:30:10,385 --> 00:30:12,919

Karen: Some people give us \$50, some people a \$100.

714

00:30:12,919 --> 00:30:15,199

Karen: But we have some people who will give us \$1000 or

715

00:30:15,199 --> 00:30:17,660

Karen: more and they're part of our Smile Circle.

716

00:30:17,660 --> 00:30:20,480

Karen: And our Smile Circle are these special donors that

717

00:30:20,480 --> 00:30:23,270

Karen: That we are very, we're grateful to everyone

718

00:30:23,270 --> 00:30:24,469

Karen: but they are, they come to

719

00:30:24,469 --> 00:30:26,149  
Karen: special events and  
they are the people

720  
00:30:26,149 --> 00:30:30,019  
Karen: we ask to really  
advocate for us as well.

721  
00:30:30,019 --> 00:30:33,050  
Karen: But frankly, we'd ask  
anyone to advocate for us.

722  
00:30:33,050 --> 00:30:35,570  
Karen: So another thing, In  
addition to donations,

723  
00:30:35,570 --> 00:30:37,879  
Karen: we would really benefit  
from people reaching out

724  
00:30:37,879 --> 00:30:40,444  
Karen: to their elected officials  
and saying, "Do you know,

725  
00:30:40,444 --> 00:30:42,440  
Karen: dental care is  
really important to

726  
00:30:42,440 --> 00:30:44,389  
Karen: us and we think  
the state needs to

727  
00:30:44,389 --> 00:30:47,750  
Karen: invest more dollars in  
providing dental care and



728

00:30:47,750 --> 00:30:50,029

Karen: the safety net providers or

729

00:30:50,029 --> 00:30:52,970

Karen: the people they really  
need to help sustain.”

730

00:30:52,970 --> 00:30:55,219

Karen: Because our costs keep going up.

731

00:30:55,219 --> 00:30:57,754

Karen: Our compensation  
for employees, our

732

00:30:57,754 --> 00:31:01,339

Karen: vendor, our supplies costs,  
our rent, our utilities.

733

00:31:01,339 --> 00:31:02,720

Karen: Everything costs more but we

734

00:31:02,720 --> 00:31:04,955

Karen: never get any more  
and reimbursement.

735

00:31:04,955 --> 00:31:06,980

Karen: We don't get increases from

736

00:31:06,980 --> 00:31:09,274

Karen: the state in terms  
of of reimbursement.

737

00:31:09,274 --> 00:31:11,870

Karen: And sometimes we we

have things cut.

738

00:31:11,870 --> 00:31:16,399

Karen: So that would be a great message for everyone to send.

*[outro music Night Air]*

Hannah: Thank you so much, Karen and Dr. Sievert, for taking the time to speak with us. We hope that providing a community perspective on oral health has helped our listeners better understand the topic of oral health.

Abby: Please join us for our next episode on oral health, where we will hear from Phonsuda, the president of the Dental Therapy Student Organization at the University of Minnesota. We will also reveal the answer to our quiz question. Thanks for listening.

*[outro music Night Air]*

Resources:

Community Dental Care - <https://www.cdentc.org/>

Book Review of Teeth by Mary Otto -

<https://www.kirkusreviews.com/book-reviews/mary-otto/teeth-beauty/>

Short Interview with Dr. Vacharee Peterson -

<https://recuperatery.com/article/community-dental-health-with-dr-vacharee-peterson-and-pa-129>

[49](#)

Program to Improve Community Oral Health -

<https://www.cdentc.org/program-to-improve-community-oral-health-picoh>

Overview on Oral Health Bills in Minnesota -

<https://whatsnew.dentaquest.com/oral-health-legislation-2019-recap-and-refocus/>