

310

GREETINGS  
from







# Oral health equity for thriving families and empowered communities



# ARCORA

The Foundation of Delta Dental of Washington

## OUR MISSION

Bending the arc of oral  
health toward equity

## OUR VISION

All people enjoy good  
oral and overall health  
with no one left behind



# Delta Dental of Washington

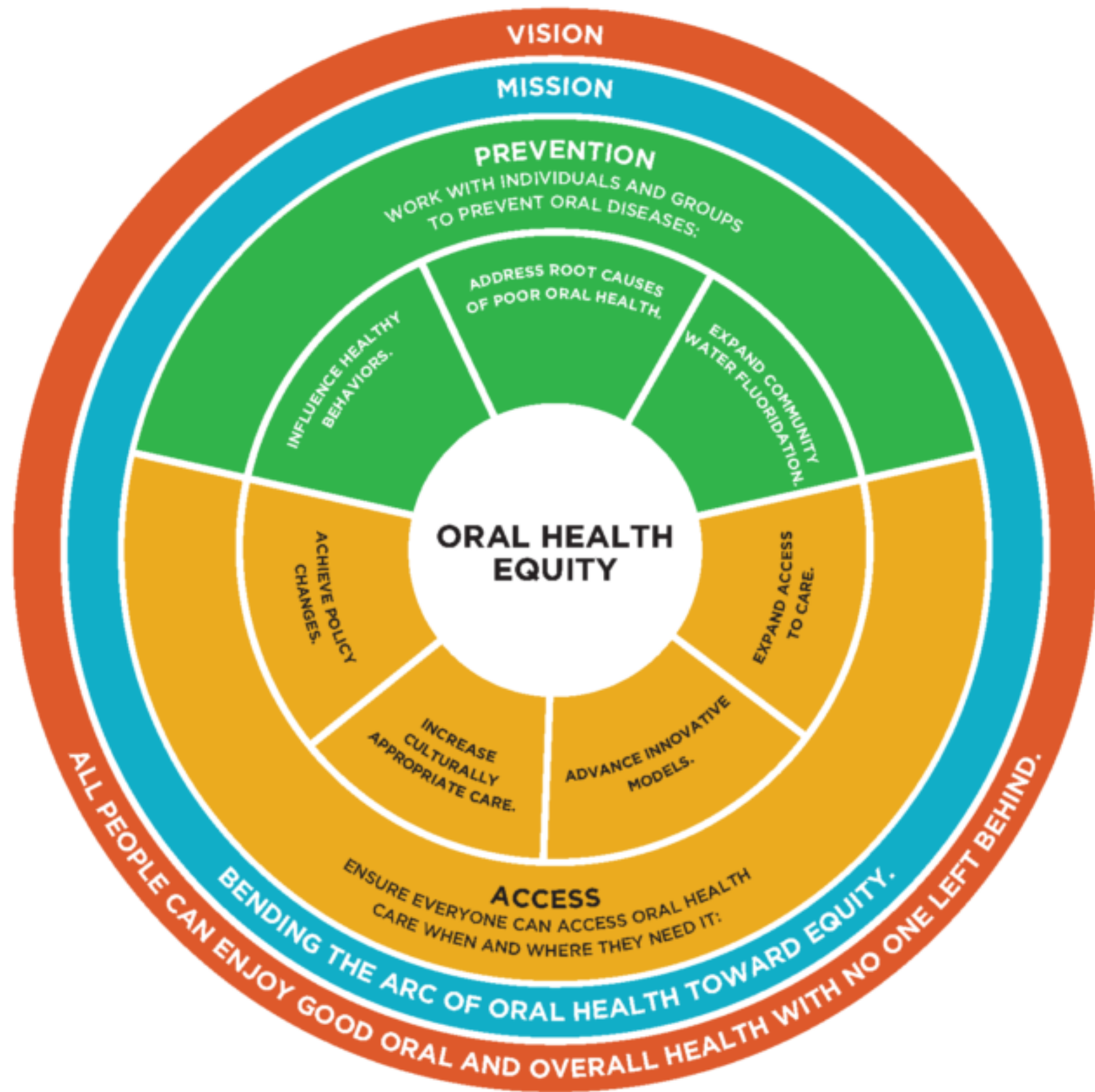
- > Arcora Foundation - founded and funded by nonprofit [Delta Dental of Washington](#), the state's largest dental benefits company, we work towards a shared vision: All people enjoy good oral and overall health, with no one left behind.





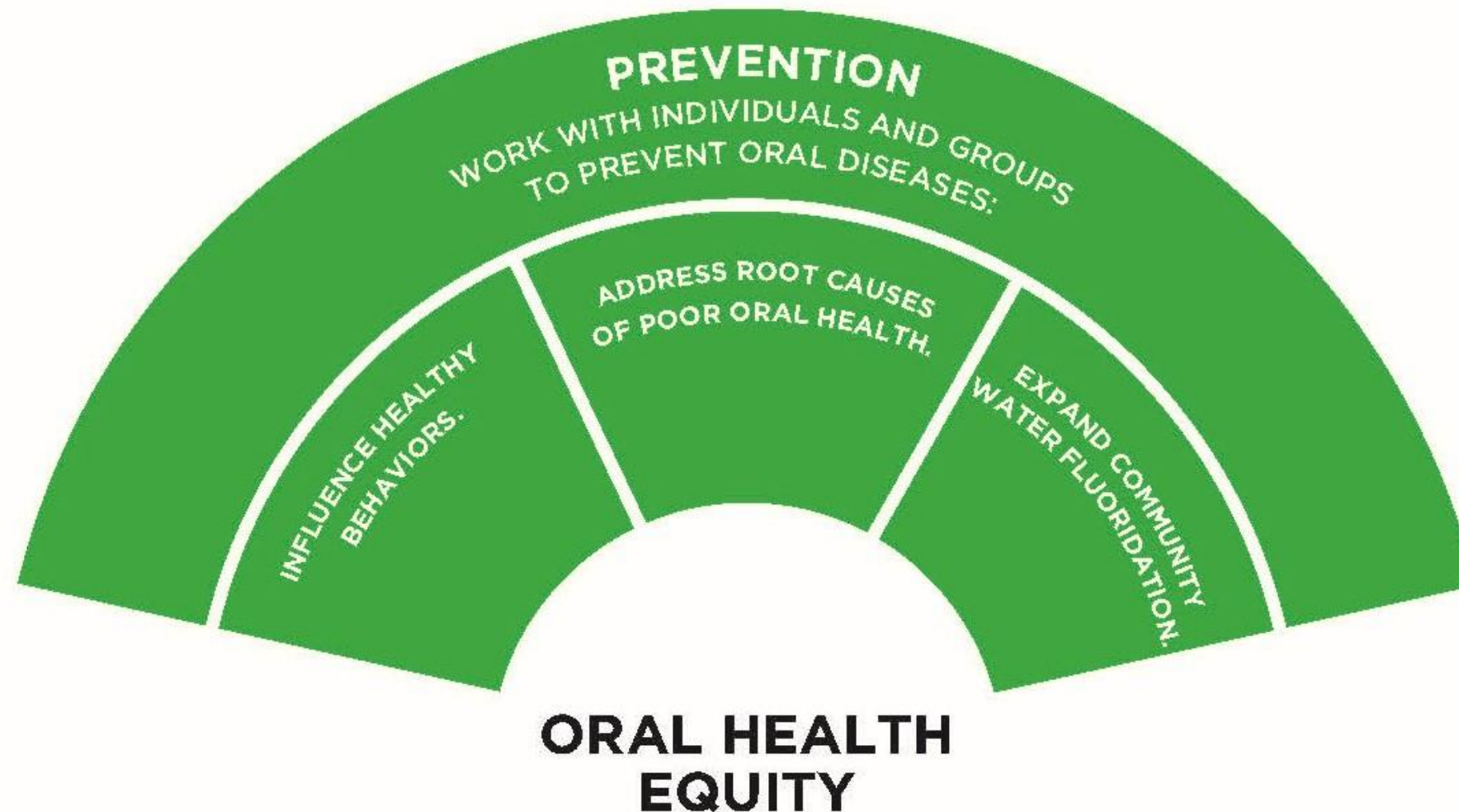
## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND GOALS FOR 2022 - 2024

We're focusing on prevention and access in underserved communities where disparities are significant—specifically Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC).



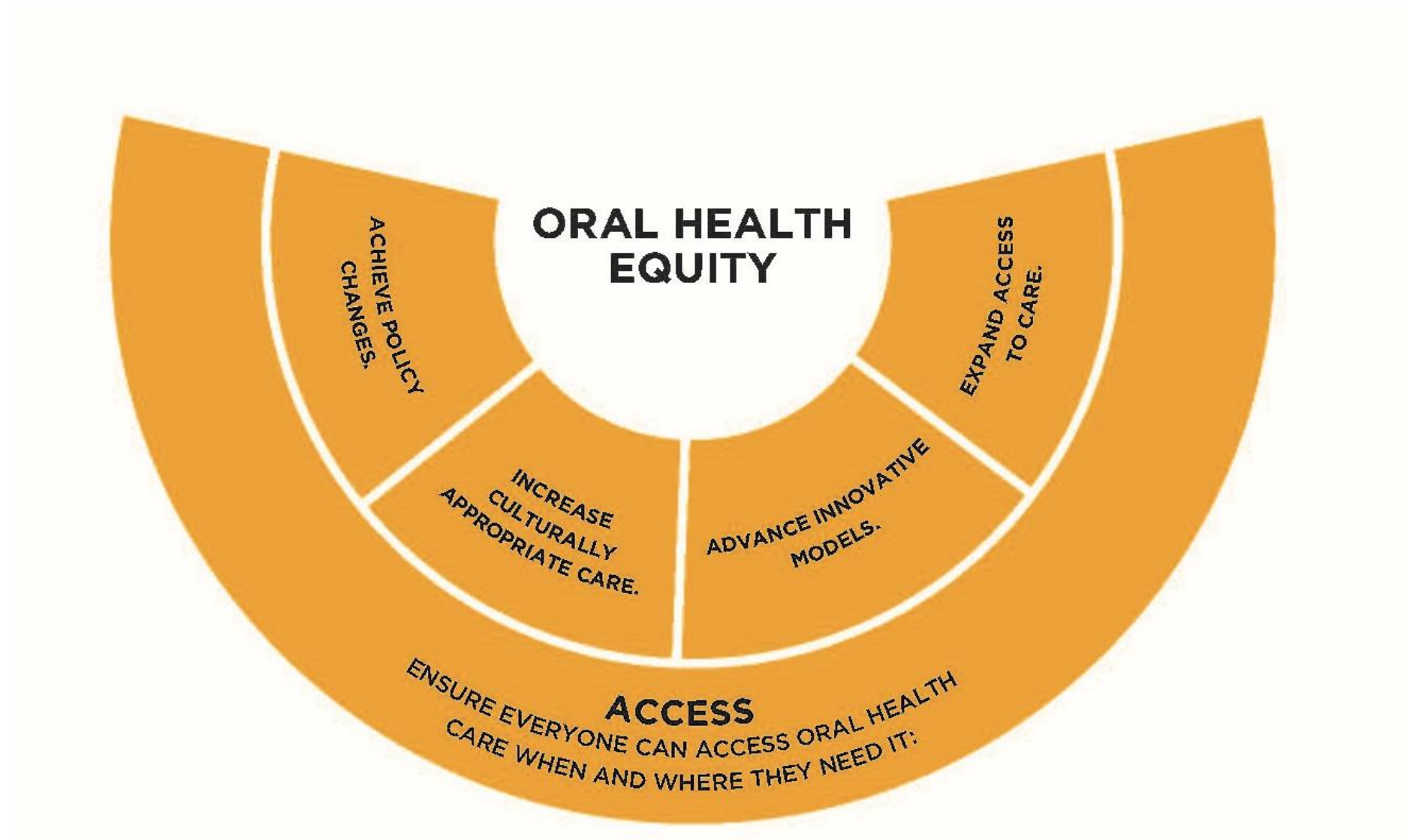
# Strategic Priority: Prevention

## Community-focused interventions



# Strategic Priority: Access

## Clinic-focused interventions



# Placing Health Equity at the Center

By leading with equity, we aim to:



**Assure high standards  
of health exist for  
everyone.**



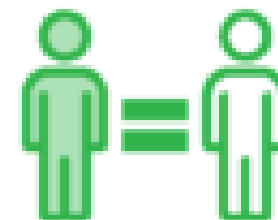
**Reallocate power  
and resources.**



**Dismantle oppressive  
systems.**



**Heal harm from  
system imbalances.**



**Eliminate racism and  
discrimination as predictive  
factors of life expectancy  
and health outcomes.**







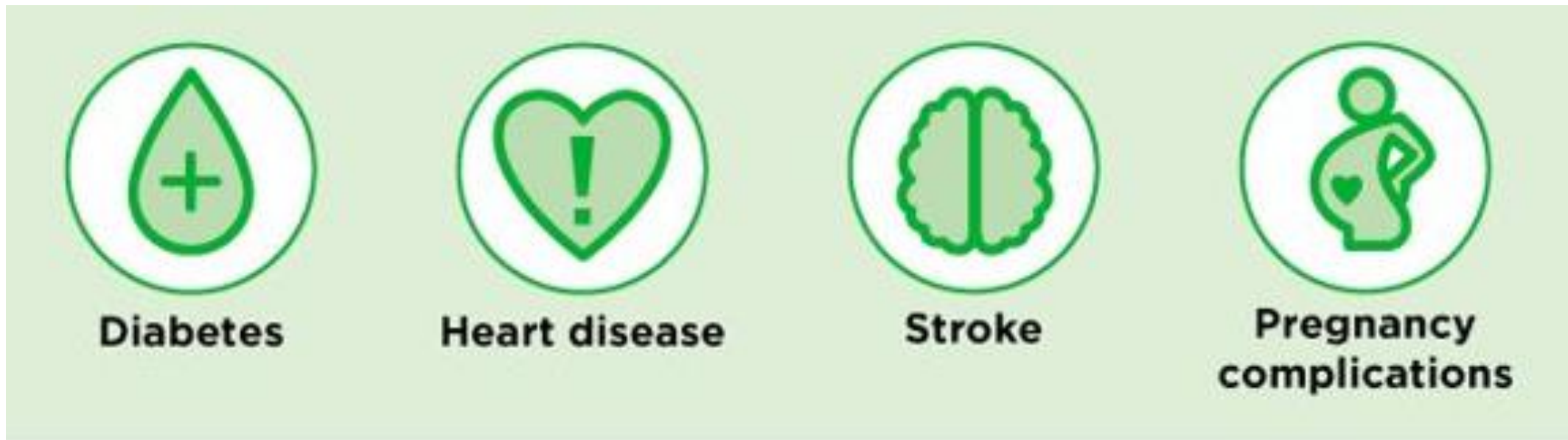
Why is oral  
health  
important?





# Oral Health and Overall Health

Oral disease is mostly preventable. And the health of your smile affects your overall health. Research shows links between poor oral health and conditions like:



# Poor oral health impacts kids

- > Trouble sleeping
- > Trouble eating healthy foods
- > Behavior issues
- > Self-confidence



# Poor oral health impacts adults and seniors too

- > Low-income adults are more likely to say the condition of their teeth has impacted their ability to interview for a job.
- > >Seniors and elders without teeth are impaired in getting the nutrition they need.



# Oral health in WA



# Smile Survey Results (2005-2016)

## Decay Experience

**Improved but remains high.** More than half of 3rd graders have experienced preventable tooth decay.

## Untreated Decay

Washington State results are far **better than the national average**. 17% vs 25% for low-income preschoolers and 12% vs. 17% for third graders.

## Sealants

**Over half of 3rd grade children have dental sealants**, far exceeding the national average. **Rates more than doubled** among Kindergarten kids since 2010.

- > On any given day, **144,300** seven, eight, and nine-year-olds in Washington are affected by **decay**.
- > Nearly **38%** of children start **Kindergarten** with **tooth decay**; almost **13%** have **rampant decay**.
- > Nearly **one in six** 3rd graders (7 or more decayed/filled teeth) suffers from **rampant decay**.
- > **Native American** and other racial and ethnic minority children have the **highest rates of tooth decay**.
- > **Twice as many** children from **low-income** families suffer from the effects of **rampant tooth decay** than did children from **higher-income** households.

Source: Washington State Department of Health. Smile Survey 2015-2016: The Oral Health of Washington's Children. Olympia, WA, 2017. Available from: <https://www.astdd.org/www/docs/wa-smile-survey-report-2016.pdf>  
Smile Survey Dashboard Link: <https://arcorafoundation.org/oral-health-status-dashboard/>

# Smile Survey Results: Progress Made

## BIG DROPS IN UNTREATED DECAY

HEAD START PRESCHOOLERS

**DOWN 35%**



3RD GRADERS

**DOWN 37%**



(Compared to 2005)

**FEWER LOW-INCOME PRESCHOOLERS IN WASHINGTON HAVE UNTREATED DECAY COMPARED TO THE REST OF THE NATION**

## DECAY DECREASED AMONG EVERY MAJOR RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUP SINCE 2005\*

White

American Indian/  
Alaskan Native

Black

Hispanic

**↓ 18%**

**↓ 13%**

**↓ 15%**

**↓ 2%**



(All race/ethnicity comparisons use 2nd & 3rd grade data.)

\*Some decreases were not statistically significant.



VS



**17%**

**25%**

## UPTICK IN PREVENTION:

Dental sealants have **doubled** for kindergarteners and remained steady for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders, **where it already exceeds national goals.**



# Smile Survey Results: Challenges Remain

**WE CAN DO (EVEN)  
BETTER.**

DESPITE PROGRESS, TOO MANY WASHINGTON KIDS ARE STILL DEALING WITH **PREVENTABLE** ORAL HEALTH ISSUES.

## HEALTH DISPARITIES ARE WIDESPREAD



**50%** HIGHER

Hispanic and American Indian/Alaskan Native children have a **50% higher rate of decay.\***

*\*Compared to White children*

**2X**

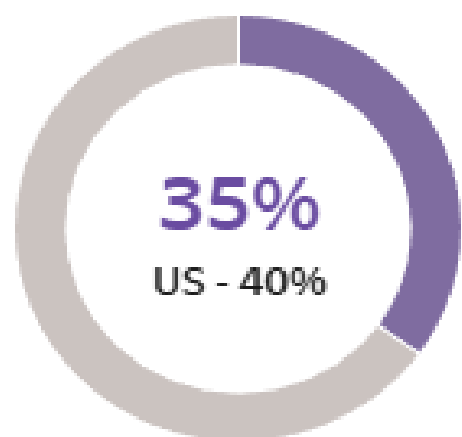
Third grade children from low-income households suffer from rampant decay at twice the rate of children from higher-income households.

## CHILDREN OF COLOR HAVE HIGHER RATES OF UNTREATED DECAY.



# Adults Oral Health Status

Percent Who Had Any  
Permanent Teeth Extracted  
18 and Older



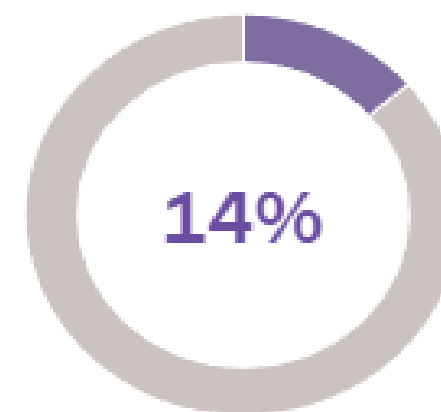
- > **Almost 4 out of 10** adults in Washington state in 2020 have lost at least one tooth because of oral disease.
- > Compared to the general US population, the percent of adults with **tooth loss is lower** in Washington state.

Percent Who Had All  
Permanent Teeth Extracted  
65 and Older



- > **About 1 out of 10 adults** in Washington State **age 65 and older** have lost all their teeth because of oral disease.
- > Compared to the general US population, the percent of adults with **tooth loss is lower** in Washington state.

Percent Experienced Pain  
Anywhere in the Mouth  
18 and Older



- > **Almost 2 out of 10** adults in Washington State report having painful aching in the mouth very often or occasionally.



# Oral Health Income Disparities Among Adults

- > **Lower income** adults are **less likely** to have a **dental visit**. In 2020, 55% of adults (age 18+) with an annual income less than \$50,000 had a dental visit compared to 79% of adults earning more than \$50,000.
- > **Low-income** adults (age 18+) are **more likely** to experience **pain in the mouth** (20% versus 10%) and have permanent teeth extracted (49% versus 27%) than higher income adults.
- > **Low-income** older adults (age 65+) are **more likely** to have had **all permanent teeth extracted** (16% vs 4%) than higher income adults.

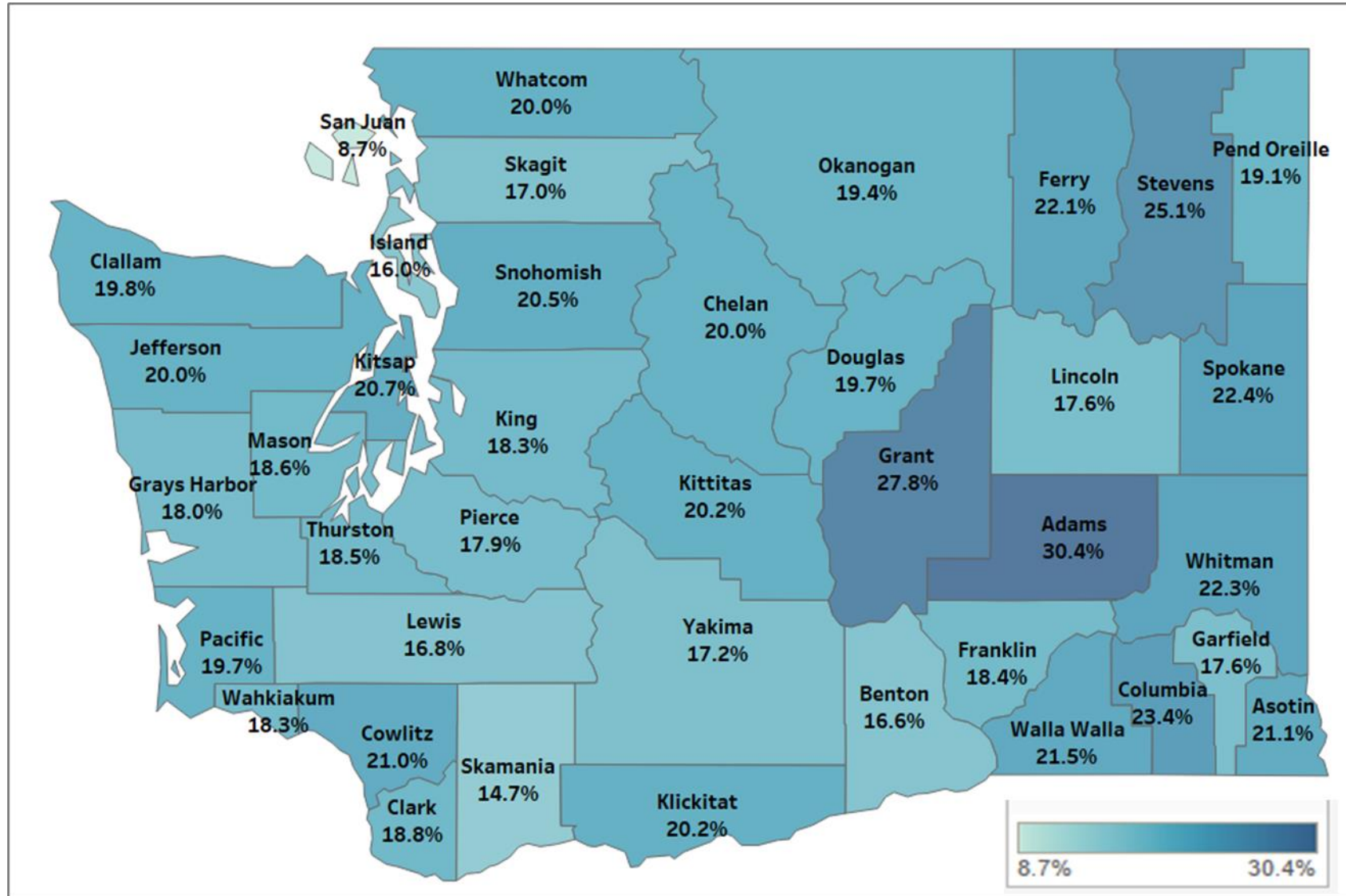
# Oral Health Racial Disparities Among Adults

Black, Indigenous and People of Color populations have the poorest oral health of any racial and ethnic groups in Washington state:

- > **American Indian/Alaska Native** adults are 50% more likely to have had a **tooth extracted** and **experience pain** in the mouth than **White** populations.
- > **Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander** adults are 50% more likely to have had a **tooth extracted** than **White** populations.
- > Three times as many **Black** older adults aged 65 and over have had **all permanent teeth extracted** than **White** older adults (33% versus 10%).



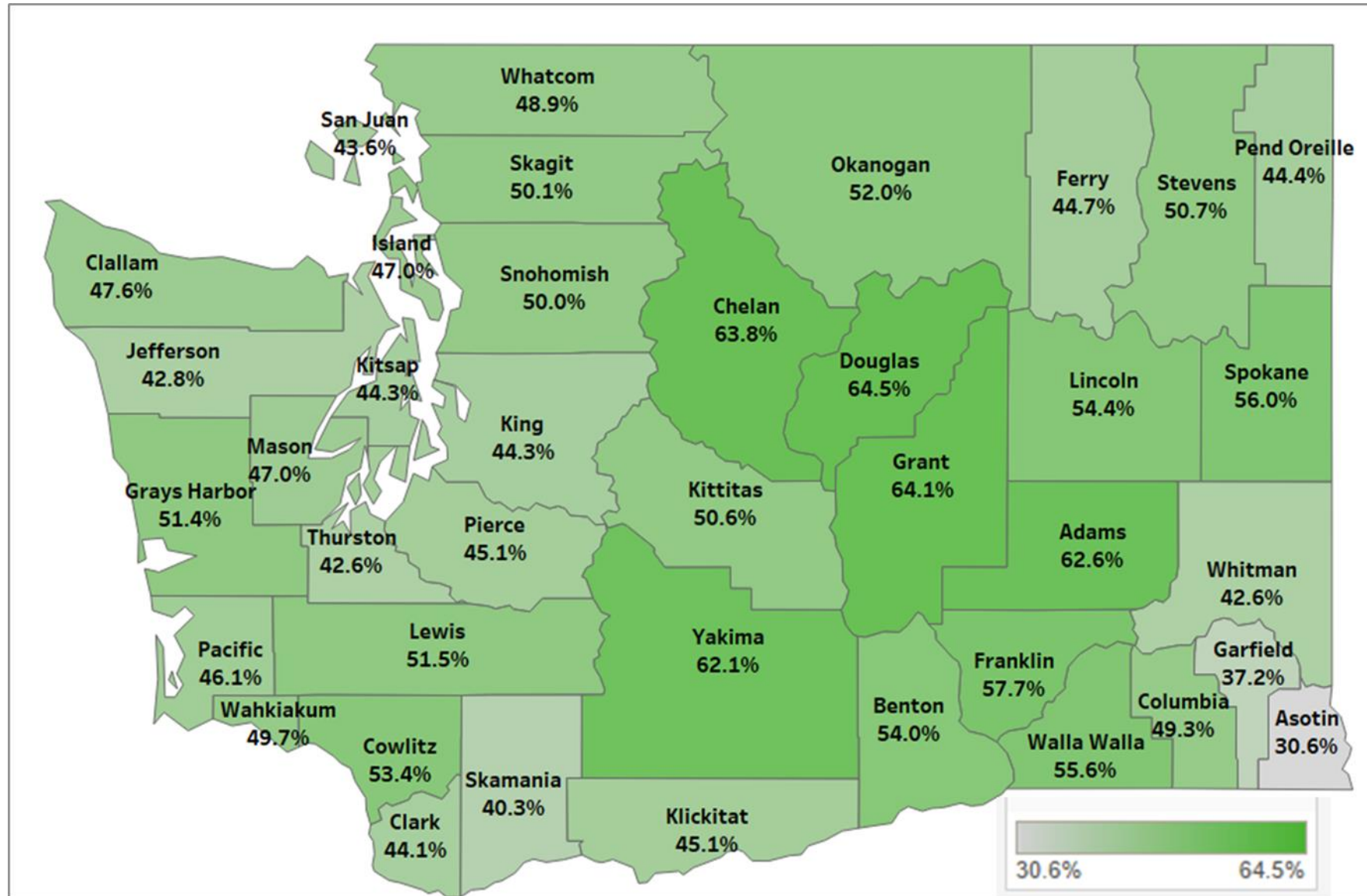
# Medicaid Adults Age 21 and Over Dental Utilization by County (FY 2021)



- > Adult utilization across the state ranged from 9% to 30%.
- > Adams County had the largest percentage of Medicaid-insured adults receiving dental services in FY 2021, 30% (indicated by darker shading), while San Juan County had the lowest at 9% (indicated by lighter shading).

**Statewide Medicaid Dental Utilization Total 20%**

# Medicaid Children Age 20 and under Dental Utilization by County (FY 2021)

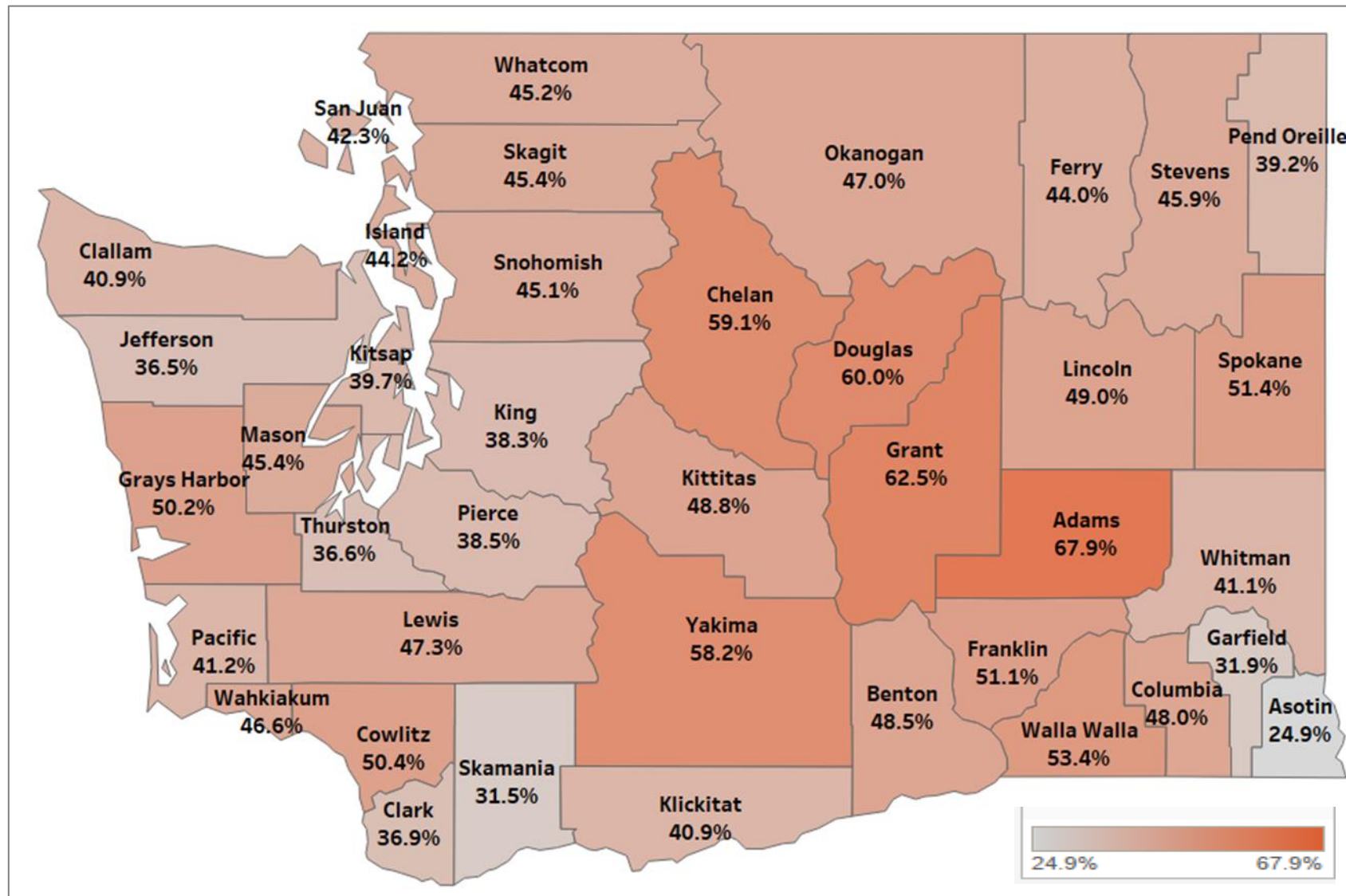


**Statewide Utilization Total 51%**

- > Children utilization across the state ranged from 31% to 65%.
- > Douglas had the largest percentage of children receiving dental services in FY 2021 (65%, indicated by darker shading), while Asotin County had the lowest (31% indicated by lighter shading).



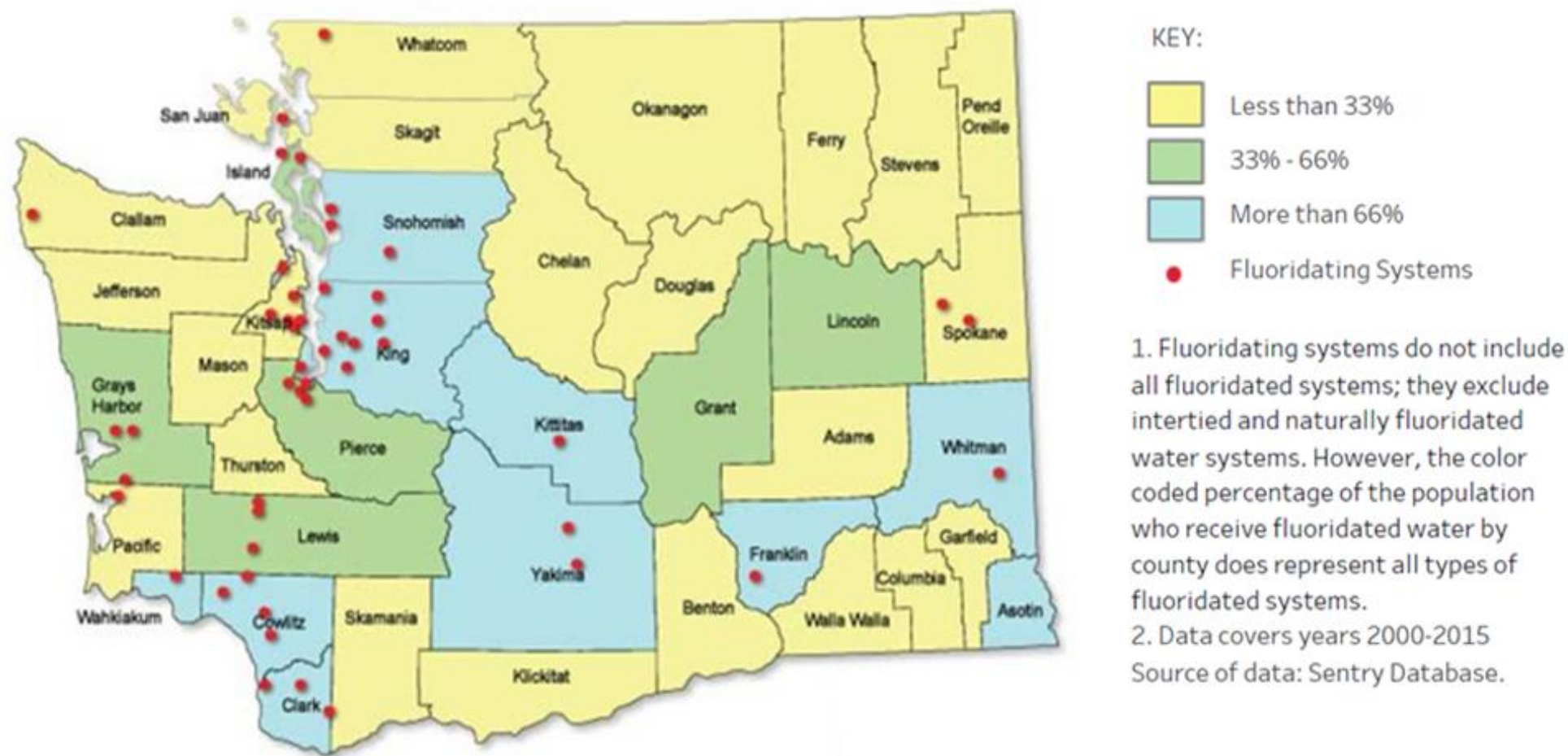
# FY 2021 Medicaid Dental Utilization by County: Children under Age 6



- > Statewide utilization in FY 2021 was 45.9%.
- > Utilization rates decreased by 5.5% since FY 2020 (from 48.6% to 45.9%).
- > Adams County had the highest utilization: 68%.
- > Asotin County had the lowest utilization: 25%.

# Fluoridation: An Upstream Prevention Strategy

## Public Water System Population Receiving Dentally Significant Fluoride Levels (0.6 - 2.0 mg/L)



> There are 50 water systems in Washington state that provide community water fluoridation to all their customers. Despite this, **only 56%** of residents on public water systems have access to water with enough **fluoride to prevent tooth decay**.





Questions?



Here's the good news,  
“cavities are preventable  
and prevention saves you  
money. It's better to  
prevent cavities before  
they become painful and  
difficult to treat.”

**Ben Danielson, MD**  
*Clinical Professor of Pediatrics, UW*



# Discussion



# Questions for discussion:

- What oral health challenges do you see in your community?
- What would help improve oral health in your community?
- How do you find out/learn about resources (financial and other) that are available from the state and private funders?



# Resources for improving oral health



# Arcora programs



Access to  
Baby & Child  
Dentistry™

# MouthMatters

Integrating Oral Health into Medical Care





# DentistLink

**Get connected to a Washington state dentist for the dental care you need to be healthy**



**Search for a dentist near me.**

**Search Directory**

Provide basic information, and find a list of dental providers in your area.



**Call or text the DentistLink team.**

**844-888-5465**

Tell us what you need, we'll connect you to a dentist in your area.

Available Monday – Friday  
8am – 5pm



**Have DentistLink contact me.**

**Complete Form**

Answer a few questions, and we'll connect you with a dental provider that matches your needs.



# DentistLink

POWERED BY ARCORA FOUNDATION

# Expanding access to dental care

- > Arcora Foundation's Capital Clinic Access grants





# Opportunities for partnership

- > Reducing consumption of sugary beverages
- > Community water fluoridation

# What is fluoride?

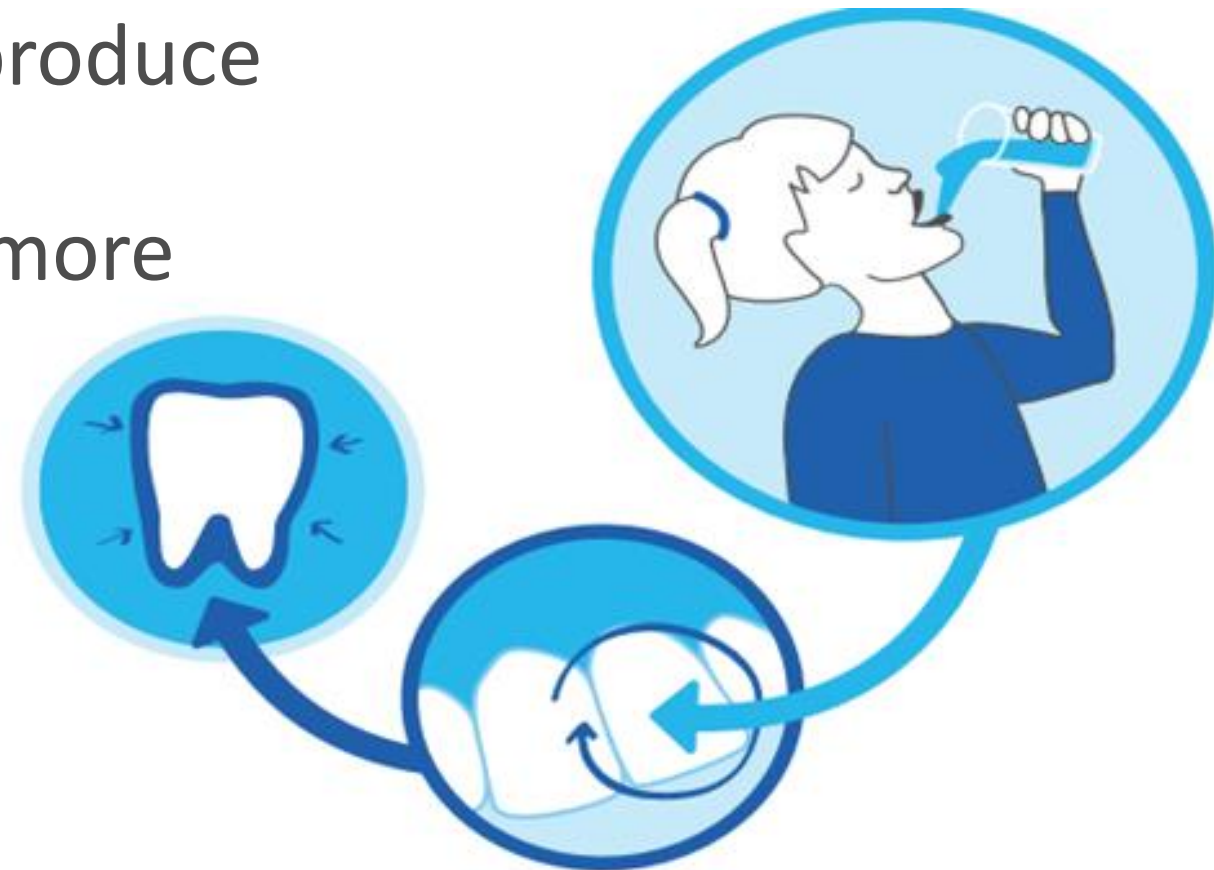
- Fluoride is a mineral that occurs naturally in water
- Fluoride helps prevent cavities in people of all races, ages and income levels





# How fluoride works

- > Fluoride strengthens teeth as they form below the gums.
- > When we eat food or drink sugary beverages, the bacteria in our mouths produce acid that weakens our enamel, fluoride in our saliva rebuilds the tooth structure after we eat.
- > Fluoride slows down bacteria's ability to produce acid
- > Strengthens tooth enamel, making teeth more resistant to decay.



# Sources of fluoride

## Topical:

- > Fluoride varnish
- > Fluoride toothpaste
- > Fluoride mouth rinse

## Topical and systemic:

- > Fluoridated water

## Systemic:

- > Fluoride supplements (tablets or drops)





## What is community water fluoridation?

- > Community water fluoridation is the process of balancing the amount of fluoride in drinking water to a level recommended for preventing tooth decay

# What is community water fluoridation?





# Questions?







# Discussion





Thank you!

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