

# DENTAL THERAPY

Expanding Access to Oral Health Care

## What is a Dental Therapist?

- Dental therapists are highly trained dental care professionals equipped to perform routine and preventive services.
- Dental therapists work as part of the dental care team, similar to the role of a physician assistant in medicine.

## How do Dental Therapists Fit into the Dental Care Team?

- Dental therapists work under the supervision of a dentist and the care they provide complements dental hygienists and dental assistants, including oral health education and common dental procedures such as performing exams and filling cavities.
- Dental therapists bring new capacity and flexibility to the dental care team. By focusing on preventive and routine services, they free up dentists to provide more complex care and services to their patients.

## Dental Therapists Make a Difference

- Dental therapists fill a local gap by making dental care more accessible for underserved populations. More than 58 million Americans are unable to receive dental care in the communities in which they live.
- Dental therapists increase access to care by working in underserved community settings such as schools, senior centers and rural community clinics under the off-site supervision of a dentist.
- Dental therapy leads to job creation and business growth. Dental therapists are highly trained professionals who earn competitive annual salaries, and hiring them is a cost-effective way to expand the reach of the dental care team.

## Dental Therapy Achieves Results

- Dental therapists have been successfully working in the United States as part of the dental care team for over 15 years.
- Dental therapy is currently authorized in 12 states with statewide legislation being considered in 8 additional states and more than 20 states actively exploring the profession.
- Dental therapists provide routine preventive and restorative care in more than 50 countries worldwide.