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**Oral Health Education for the Uninsured and Low-income
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This study focused on evaluating the effectiveness of short oral health education classes given to patients at a free health clinic from September to November 2017. The classes were conducted by three University of Utah undergraduate students: Clayton Booth, primary class instructor and a pre-dental student, Mitch Johansen, field notes recorder and pre-medical student, and Uriel Morales, Spanish interpreter and pre-medical student. Lea Erickson, DDS, M.S.P.H, faculty at the University of Utah School of Dentistry served as oral health expert, proof reader, and supervisor of oral health instructional material. Jeanie Ashby, Maliheh Free Clinic executive director, helped design the study and over saw its implementation at the clinic. Akiko Kamimura, PhD, MSW, MA. Department of Sociology at the University of Utah was the principle investigator and the faculty mentor. The study and results were published on December 11, 2017 in the Journal, *Diversity and Equality in Health and Care* [1].

As the Spanish interpreter my role included helping to recruit Spanish speaking patients to participate in the oral health classes as well as interpret the oral health material taught by the primary instructor and facilitate any questions, responses, and comments between English and Spanish speakers participating in each class session. This position allowed me the opportunity to gain experience working within a team to prepare materials for each class. In addition, I was able to collaborate with the English-speaking primary instructor to rehearse the instructional material and plan the best way to teach a multilanguage, Spanish and English, class simultaneously. The biggest difficulty we encountered during the oral health classes was maintaining a flow of instruction to keep the class engaged because it seemed like English speaking patients would be more attentive and engaging until we would pause and reteach the same material in Spanish and vice-versa. This personally showed me the importance of delivering health education in the patient's native language.

The direct patient contact provided a first-hand experience to hear patient's, from underserved populations, experiences with home oral healthcare, using dental healthcare clinics, and oral health questions. Many patients expressed difficulty establishing consistent oral healthcare treatment with a family dentist due to cost or not knowing where to find a dental clinic.

As an undergraduate student I was able to present this study, as a research poster, at the February 2018 Utah Conference on Undergraduate Research (UCUR) at Southern Utah University. Other students and guests at the conference were interested in the barriers that prevent underserved populations from accessing dental healthcare and how policy and funding efforts could address these barriers. Additionally, there was a strong interest in knowing what type of oral health information patients found most beneficial. Further interactions with fellow students and guests at the UCUR conference showed me that there is a lack of awareness of the barriers underserved populations face in accessing oral healthcare and education resources. As a future physician I

plan to use this experience in teaching oral health classes to help improve community health through preventative measures such as health education classes.

References

1. **Kamimura, A.**, Booth, C., Johansen, M., Morales, U, Ashby, J, & Erickson, L. (2017). Home dental care education for uninsured free clinic patients in the United States. Diversity and Equality in Health and Care, *14*(6), 296-301.