CAMBRA: From Research to Practice

Improving Oral Hygiene Compliance with a Smartphone App

Remembering Dr. Margaret Walsh

About the Cover: RDH volunteer, Andrea Giang, is shown performing an oral screening for the Child Care Health Program of the Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Division of the San Francisco Department of Public Health. Photograph courtesy of Americorp member, Chantal Berry.
“Brush Your Teeth, Read a Book, Go to Bed!” was the theme of the 8th Annual Give Kids a Smile Day at San Francisco General Hospital (SFGH). The event was co-sponsored by the SF Department of Public Health, (Maternal Child and Adolescent Health Section) and the SF component. Approximately 100 of the children enrolled in the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and the Family and Children’s Health Centers on the SFGH campus received dental screenings, fluoride varnish, a book, toy and fun home care products. All participants visited a series of educational tables with interactive activities to help promote preventive home care habits and regular dental visits. Screeners found that 34% of the children had visible decay, 9 of which had moderate to severe caries. All children will be case managed by the event co-coordinators, AmeriCorps, to ensure they are linked to local dental homes. Over 50 volunteers from the greater bay area participated in the program held during the 75th anniversary of National Children’s Dental Health Month. One of the many goals of the day was to educate the next generation of medical providers about the importance of oral health to overall health. In addition to dental hygienists, led by SF component members Michael Long, Lauren Umetani, Mecedes Keeney and Michael Laflamme, the volunteers included a pediatric dentist, students from the SF State University (SFSU) School of Nursing, AmeriCorps, and SFSU pre-dental students. The event also provided an opportunity for professional development. The volunteer hygienists received didactic training prior to the clinic while the nursing students received 3 hours of education and training prior to the event. At the end of the day, one of the nursing students shared her thoughts, “I will never again look at another patient without also examining the health of their teeth.” It was truly a successful event for everyone involved!