

Certificate in Pediatric Dentistry and Master of Public Health (MPH) Degree

Most dental public health programs in the state of Florida are focused primarily on the provision of clinical dental care for children. However, few county or local dental public health programs have staff dentists who have completed specialty training in pediatric dentistry. The absence of board-eligible or board-certified pediatric dentists within health departments restricts the scope of services that might be provided and therefore reduces access to care for children. This is particularly true for very young children, those who require hospital-based care, and those with special needs. In addition, many dental public health programs are administered by dentists who have had no advanced education in public health principles, program management, or policy development. This shortcoming limits the ability of dental public health programs to effectively conduct the core dental public health functions, apply public health approaches to disease prevention and control, or incorporate evidence-based approaches to program operations.

The Departments of Pediatric Dentistry and Community Dentistry & Behavioral Science, College of Dentistry, and the College of Public Health and Health Professions are in the process of developing a new residency position option in the discipline of Pediatric Dentistry at the University of Florida. This new option will graduate a dental professional with a Certificate in Pediatric Dentistry and with a Master of Public Health Degree in Public Health Management and Policy.

This collaborative 3-year program is designed to prepare pediatric dental residents for future leadership positions at dental public health facilities in the State of Florida or elsewhere. In addition to the courses in the specialty of pediatric dentistry, residents in this program will take courses leading to the MPH degree in the College of Public Health and Health Professions at the University of Florida. During the 3rd year of the residency program, residents will practice in a public health facility in Duval County and conduct a field or community-based research project.

Please check this website in the near future for an update on the status of this exciting program!