# Missed Pediatric Dental Visit Rates in Missouri: A Quality Improvement Project

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# INTRODUCTION

Prior research has shown that missed appointments in a clinic impacts patient care, resource utilization, and overall clinic efficiency.<sup>1, 2, 3, 4, 5</sup> Problems with access to care in many locations can be linked to a lack of providers available in the region.<sup>2, 3, 6</sup>

Addressing this issue is also essential for enhancing patient satisfaction, as frequent missed appointments can lead to longer delays in treatment.<sup>6, 7, 8, 9</sup>

By identifying and addressing the root causes of missed appointments through a QI initiative, the clinic can implement targeted strategies to improve patient attendance, optimize resource utilization, and ultimately improve the overall quality of care for patients.

# PURPOSE

• The purpose of this study is to utilize the Institute for Healthcare Improvement – Quality Improvement Essentials Toolkit to identify interventions for improving the missed appointment rate (MAR) for pediatric dental appointments at a FQHC (Columbia, MO)

# METHOD

This study is designed based on the Institute of healthcare Improvement "Model for Improvement", which involves testing changes using Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles. The subjects included pediatric patients ages 0-17 years old with basic operative appointments and recare appointments at a FQHC in Columbia, MO. The project team identified potential causes for missed appointments, and an intervention was developed and implemented. Preintervention and post-intervention data was collected and analyzed with control charts.



# RESULTS

- Tools were used to identify causes of missed appointment rates is not confirmed was selected (Fig. 1)
- For recare appointments, the average pre-intervention missed appointment rates was 34%. The average post-intervention missed appointment rates was 37% (Fig. 2)
- appointment rates was 33%. The average post-intervention missed appointment rates was 40% (Fig. 3)

# CONCLUSIONS

•There were no improvements in missed appointment rates after implementation of intervention

•Missed appointments rates are multifactorial, and more research will be needed to analyze trends to determine other causes and solutions

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and potential interventions. Implementation of text reminders five days prior to appointment with follow-up reminders if appointment

For operative appointments, the average pre-intervention missed