

## SASH Introduces On-site Dental Cleaning Clinics

SASH piloted on-site dental clinics at SASH supported congregate housing locations across Vermont with a goal to enhance access to essential dental care for Medicaid enrolled SASH participants and housing residents, reducing barriers to oral health care.

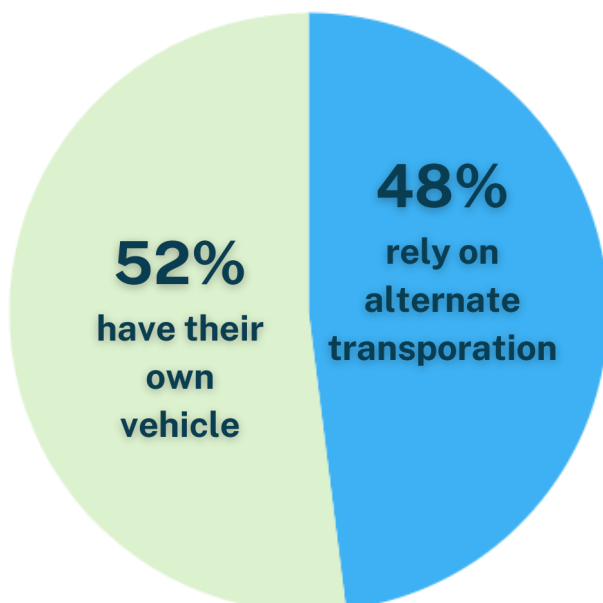
July to September 2024, twelve dental clinics were hosted at SASH sites in Washington, Rutland, Brattleboro and Chittenden counties by SASH community health workers, wellness nurses, and a registered dental hygienist. This collaborative care team made these clinics possible to community residents.



Dental cleaning clinic at Cathedral Square's Grand Way Common housing site in South Burlington, VT.  
*Pictured here: Dental hygienist Michael Messina and a SASH participant.*

### SASH Participant Transportation Access

*Data as of March 2024*



## Social Drivers of Health Effects Health Access

A review conducted in March 2024 highlighted potential barriers to health access among SASH participants. Data revealed that transportation was the most prevalent social driver of health (SDoH) risk among SASH participants screened, posing significant challenges for participants who struggled to attend crucial medical and dental appointments due to limited access to reliable transportation.

By providing access to on-site dental clinics, SASH addressed SDoH risks such as eliminating a transportation barrier, SASH aimed to improve dental care access and improve oral health outcomes for participants, particularly those with chronic conditions such as high blood pressure and diabetes.

# Serving Vermont's Community Population Through Person-Centered Care

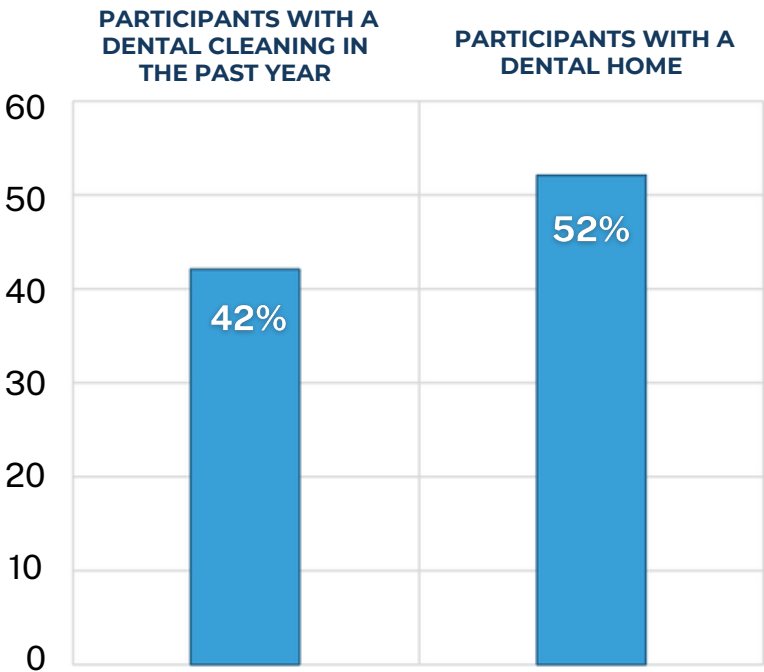
## Community Health Wellness Nurses Enhance Oral Health Awareness

SASH wellness nurses are the connection from participants homes to health care homes, delivering oral health education and assisting participants in navigating access to essential dental and health care services.

SASH's annual nursing assessment screens participants for dental access. As of July 2023, only 52% of SASH participants had access to a dental provider and only 42% of participants had had a dental visit in the past year. SASH wellness nurses are a vital connection to help participants access to oral health services and provide oral health education.

This gap in oral health care and SDoH prompted the connection between Vermont Department of Health Dental Division, SASH, and registered dental hygienist, Michael Messina, to coordinate on-site dental clinics.

### Dental Access of SASH Participants as of July 2023



As of July 2023, SASH had 4,691 participants enrolled in SASH.

### On-Site SASH Dental Clinic Successes

**102** Dental cleanings



**42** Referrals to a dental home.

**93** Blood pressure checks



# On-Site SASH Dental Clinics Support Participants Where They Live



**“** I had one SASH participant who had not seen a dentist in years due to transportation, anxiety, and fear it was going to hurt. This participant is praying Michael returns so he can clean her teeth again. **HUGE SUCCESS.** **”**  
- Debbie Boyce, SASH Coordinator, CHW, Barre Housing

## How is SASH supporting oral health?

### 1 Annual Oral Health Screening Questions

SASH wellness nurses annually assess participants for access to a dental provider, access to a oral health exam and cleaning in the past year, oral health pain, and denture status.

### 2 Interventions & Referrals

Interventions and education are provided to SASH participants as outlined in the SASH Dental Protocol. Community health workers and wellness nurses support participants in accessing dental care through referrals to dental homes, referral to an on-site dental clinic, and provide assistance in completing new patient paperwork for dental home access.

### 3 Ongoing Support & Education

SASH staff work with participants to set health goals for ongoing oral hygiene and dental access, support nutrition needs, and assist with arranging and coordinating transportation to medical and dental health care appointments.

### 4 Host On-site Dental Clinics

SASH is advancing access to care in the community setting by creating a sustainable oral health service in collaboration with approved Medicaid dental hygienist providers to provide on-site dental cleanings. In addition, SASH staff are supporting participants with blood pressure checks and nutrition education at dental clinics.



Dental clinic pilot was made possible by a grant from the Vermont Department of Health and the CDC.



To learn more about SASH and enroll, visit:  
[www.SASHvt.org](http://www.SASHvt.org)



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