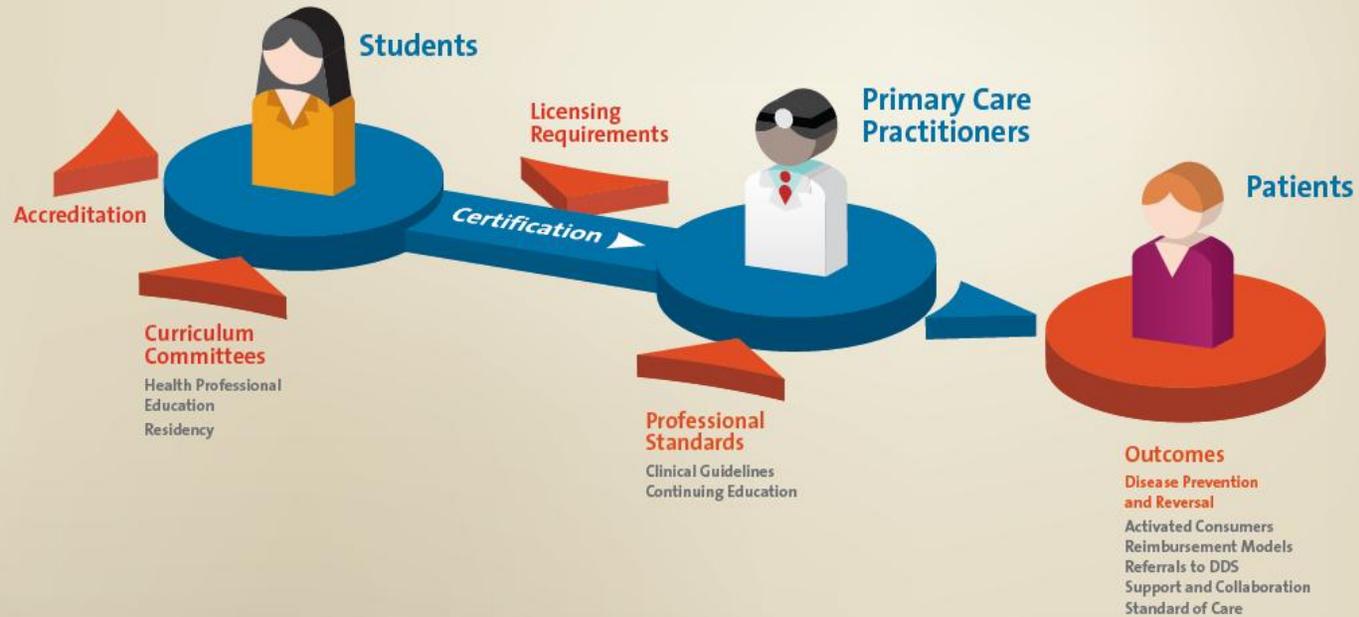


# Theory of Change UPSTREAM MODEL

National *Interprofessional Initiative*  
on Oral Health engaging clinicians,  
eradicating dental disease



Activities of the National Interprofessional Initiative on Oral Health are made possible as a result of funding from the DentaQuest Foundation, the Washington Dental Service Foundation, and the Connecticut Health Foundation.



The *National Interprofessional Initiative on Oral Health* (NIIOH) is a consortium of funders and health professionals whose vision is that dental disease can be eradicated. The mission of the NIIOH is to engage primary care clinicians to be:

- alert to their patients' oral health needs
- ready and willing to deliver oral health preventive services to patients of all ages and to
- partner effectively with dental specialists

NIIOH participants are motivated by the knowledge that dental disease

- impacts overall health,
- results in avoidable pain and expense (\$60 billion annually), and
- can be prevented by interventions that work.

The NIIOH is a systems change initiative focused on the education and training systems that support primary care clinicians from disciplines including,

- Family Medicine
- Pediatrics
- Nursing
- Physician Assisting
- Ob/Gyn
- Internal Medicine

The theory of change underpinning the activities of NIIOH is that if primary care clinicians learn about how to protect and promote oral health and prevent dental disease as part of their medical education and training experience, they would, as practitioners, be in a position to: counsel patients about their role in protecting their oral health, spot the early signs of disease, reverse and/or arrest the disease process and refer patients needing dental treatment to a dentist. To this end, the *National Interprofessional Initiative on Oral Health* invests in:

- development of common oral health curriculum and maintenance of a central website: [www.smilesforlifeoralhealth.org](http://www.smilesforlifeoralhealth.org)
- development of a network of oral health champions who work to integrate oral health into professional education programs of their professions and their educational institutions
- efforts to broaden the systems that impact health professional education and practice to incorporate oral health including,
  - academic program accreditation
  - professional licensing
  - provider reimbursement
  - continuing education

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