

Sonrisas Especiales: Changing the game for special care dentistry through service, community and hand-on treatment



Belmarí Méndez Santiago, BS, MPH, DMD; Yatnee Encarnación Ginés BS,DMD, GPR, GCC, IDLADA University of Puerto Rico, Medical Science Campus, School of Dental Medicine, General Practice Residency, San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Introduction

- Access to dental care for individuals with special needs in Puerto Rico is severely limited, creating significant barriers to essential oral health services (Marrero, 2024).
- Geographic disparities: most specialized dental care providers and facilities are concentrated in the
 metropolitan area, particularly in San Juan, leaving residents in rural and underserved regions with few
 options and in need of travelling long distances, endure extended wait times to be able to receive
 treatment (ASTDD, 2021).
- Most dental practices do not have the specialized equipment, tailored services and providers trained to
 address the unique medical and behavioral challenges that this patients presents. Without proper care,
 they are at a higher risk for severe oral health issues, which can negatively impact their overall well-being
 and quality of life (Oral Health of People With Disabilities, n.d.).
- This poster aims to encourage general dentists to provide dental treatment to the special need's
 population, addressing misconceptions and reducing apprehension among peers. Furthermore,
 Sonrisas especiales initiative aims to provide free dental preventive services to patients with specials
 need and train future dentist the actual management techniques to treat these patients.











Methodology



The Sonrisas Especiales initiative is held annually on September since 2023 at the Dental Clinic of Dr. Federico Trilla Hospital by General Practice Residency Program cost free.



Patients with special needs were invited to participate by phone call from pool of patients from the Dental Clinic of Dr. Federico Trilla Hospital, Carolina, Puerto Rico.



Equipment: 9 <mark>dental chair units</mark> (5 equipped with Dalsy or Papoose boards) fully equipped with dental material for needed treatments.

Teams: 9 teams with at least 1 Dental faculty member, 1 resident, 1 dental assistance and 1 volunteer. Administrative staff.





Results





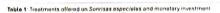






Results

Procedures	Quantity		Cost	Total
	Sept/7/2023	Sept/12/2024	The state of the s	
Evaluations	18	32	\$25	\$1,100
Papoose board/Dalsy	9	11	\$20	\$400
Prophylaxis	18	32	\$30	\$1,500
PA X Roys	6	1	\$9	\$63
Panoramic X Rays	0	1	\$45	\$45
Fluoride varnish	18	25	\$20	\$860
Silver Diamine	10	27	\$25	\$925
Sedation IV	1	0	\$200	\$200
Special care	18	32	\$25	\$1,250
management				
Oral Hygiene	18	32	\$15	\$750
Instructions				
Toothbrush	18	32	\$10	\$500
Mouth Opener	18	32	\$6	\$300
Digital Impression	1	1	\$30	\$60
Dental extractions	0	1	\$60	\$60
Restorations	0	2	\$70	\$140
Total	153	197		\$8,153
	350			









Collage 1: Photos of the event on September 12, 2024

Conclusion

- 100% of assistance: The event successfully delivered 350 dental care procedures to 50 special needs
 patients.
- Importance of extending dental services to this underserved populations was highlighted.
- This initiative demonstrates a scalable model for improving dental care access for this community and fostering inclusivity in the profession.
- Future.aims: Sonrisas Especiales open the opportunity to a Rotation for 4th year students of the Dental Medicine Doctorate of the UPR to a hands-on special care treatment experience.

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Acknowledgements











