

Director of the Division of Oral Health

Gina Thornton-Evans, DDS, MPH

National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

Dr. Thornton-Evans leads the Division of Oral Health, where she directs programmatic and scientific efforts, as well as policy, partnerships, and communication strategies, to promote oral health equity and fulfill the division's mission.



Role at CDC

Dr. Thornton-Evans is the director of the [Division of Oral Health](#) (DOH) in CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, where she directs programmatic and scientific efforts, as well as policy, partnerships, and communication strategies, to promote oral health equity and fulfill the division's mission.

Previous experience

Previously, Dr. Thornton-Evans led DOH's Surveillance, Investigations, and Research Team and is the director of CDC's Dental Public Health Residency Program. She leads several key activities to monitor the oral health of the US population and directs a training program for dental public health professionals. She also oversees the division's Healthy People 2030 activities, CDC's oral health topic area, and all efforts related to highlighting oral health as a leading health indicator.

Dr. Thornton-Evans has represented DOH on committees and workgroups related to health disparities, health equity, social determinants of health, periodontitis, diabetes, and maternal and child health. In 2019, she received the US Public Health Service (USPHS) Herschel S. Horowitz Oral Health Research and Policy Award for her leadership in advancing the surveillance of periodontal disease and monitoring the progress toward national oral health objectives over several decades. In 2021, she was appointed as a Santa Fe Group Senior Scholar for her work in advancing oral health research.

More recently, she was the recipient of the 2024 Surgeon General David Satcher Keynote Lecture Award during the USPHS Scientific Training and Symposium in recognition of outstanding contributions to public health and oral health practice.

Education

Dr. Thornton-Evans received her DDS from the University of Michigan School of Dentistry and MPH from the University of Michigan School of Public Health. She is a diplomate of the American Board of Dental Public Health. Dental public health is one of the 12 specialties recognized by the American Dental Association.

August 7, 2024

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