

# Addressing Barriers to Specialized Dental Care

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# Problem Statement

**Background:** At BWH Oral Medicine and Dentistry and MGH Orofacial Pain, our patient populations do not reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of our community.

Specifically,

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| At MGH Orofacial Pain:        | 81% White, 6% Hispanic, 6% Asian, and 3% Black    |
| At BWH Oral Medicine:         | 78% White, 7% Hispanic, 5% Asian, and 5% Black    |
| In Boston, the population is: | 53% White, 20% Hispanic, 10% Asian, and 25% Black |

**Aim:** Increase the proportion of Black and Hispanic patients at 2 MGB dental specialty clinics sites by 2% within one year of implementation.



# Year 1 Accomplishments - Overview

Fall 2021

- Educational outreach w/ lectures provided to Brookside Community Health Center & Southern Jamaica Plain Community Health Center

September 2021

- Implementation of eConsult order available in Epic for both BWH Oral Medicine and MGH Orofacial Pain

February 2022

- Establishment of a monthly clinic at Brookside Community Health Center



# eConsult service

- Available in Epic under “Orders” as of 9/2021
- BWH Oral Medicine
  - Options for consultation: oral mass, oral ulcers, oral pain, oral lesions, and other
- MGH Orofacial Pain
  - Options for consultation: jaw pain, facial pain, limited mouth opening, jaw clicking and locking

The screenshot shows the Epic Order Search interface. The search bar contains 'e-con oral'. The results are displayed in a table under the 'After Visit Procedures' section. The table has columns for Name, Type, Px Code, Resulting Agencies, Pref List, Code T..., and Cost t....

| Name  | Type      | Px Code   | Resulting Agencies | Pref List  | Code T... | Cost t... |
|---|-----------|-----------|--------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| Ambulatory BWH Oral Medicine E-Consult                            | E-Cons... | REF210178 |                    | PHS AMB... | Custom    |           |
| Ambulatory MGH OMFS Orofacial Pain E-Consult Pilot (aka ORAL MED) | E-Cons... | REF210174 |                    | PHS AMB... | Custom    |           |



# eConsult utilization (9/2021 – 10/2022)

## BWH Oral Medicine

37 eConsults (average: 3 per month)

15 eConsults (41%) from BWH CHCs

**Ethnicity:** 38% Hispanic  
57% non-Hispanic, 5% Unknown

**Race:** 5% Black  
68% White, 27% Unknown/ Other

## MGH Orofacial Pain

24 eConsults (average: 2 per month)

5 eConsults (21%) from MGH CHCs

**Ethnicity:** 8% Hispanic  
67% non-Hispanic, 25% Unknown

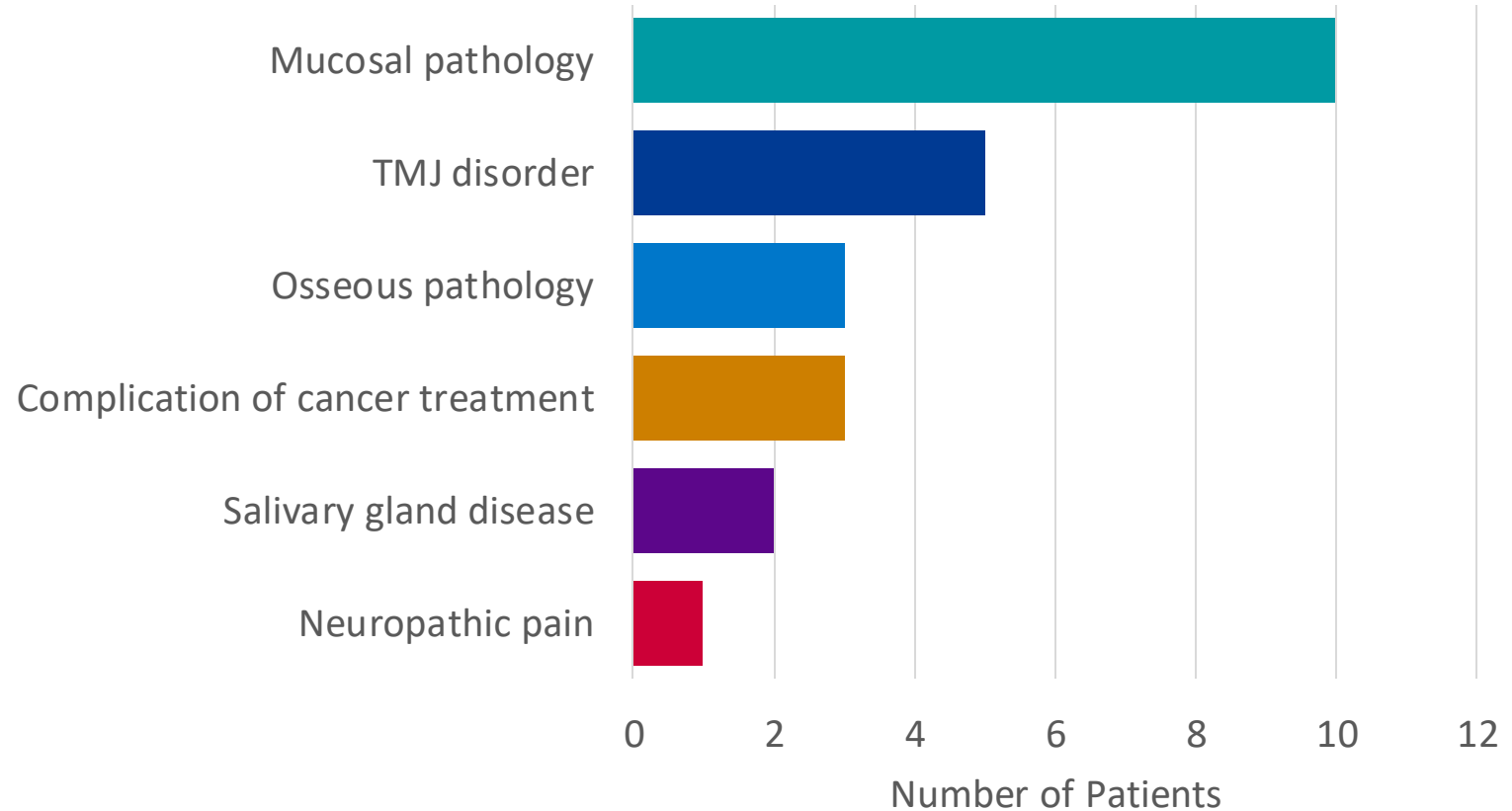
**Race:** 13% Black  
63% White, 25% Other/Unknown



# OM/OFP clinic at BCHC

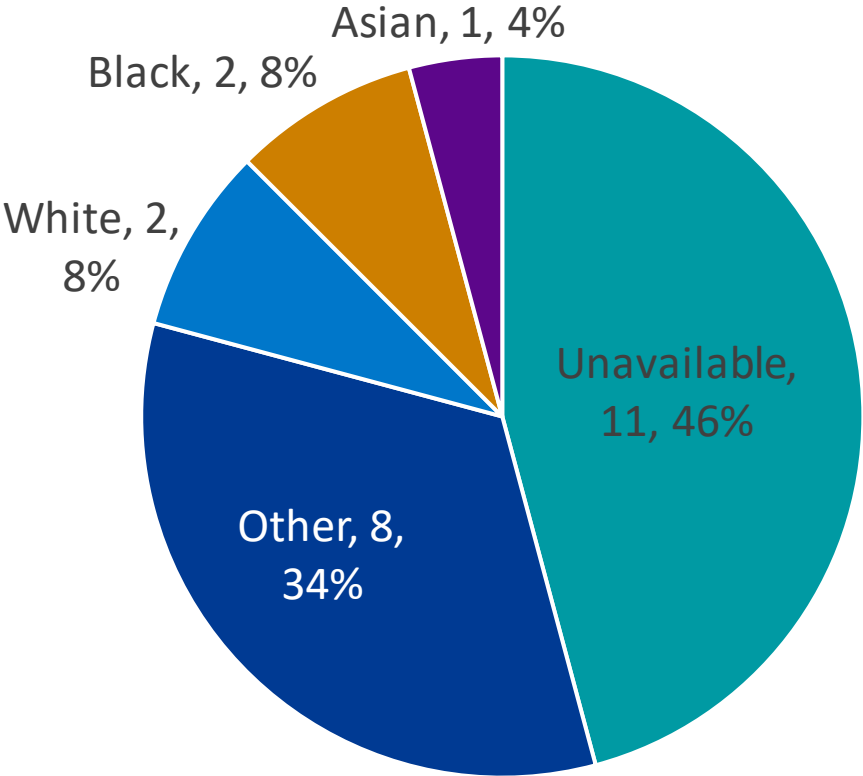
- Implemented in February 2022
- Supervised by attending, Dr. Piam Vacharotayangul and an OM or OFP resident
- Only internal referrals from Brookside
- 24 new patients seen over 7 dates
  - 19 oral medicine patients
  - 5 orofacial pain patients
- Procedures included biopsies (n=6), and injections (n=2)

Diagnoses of New Patient Consults

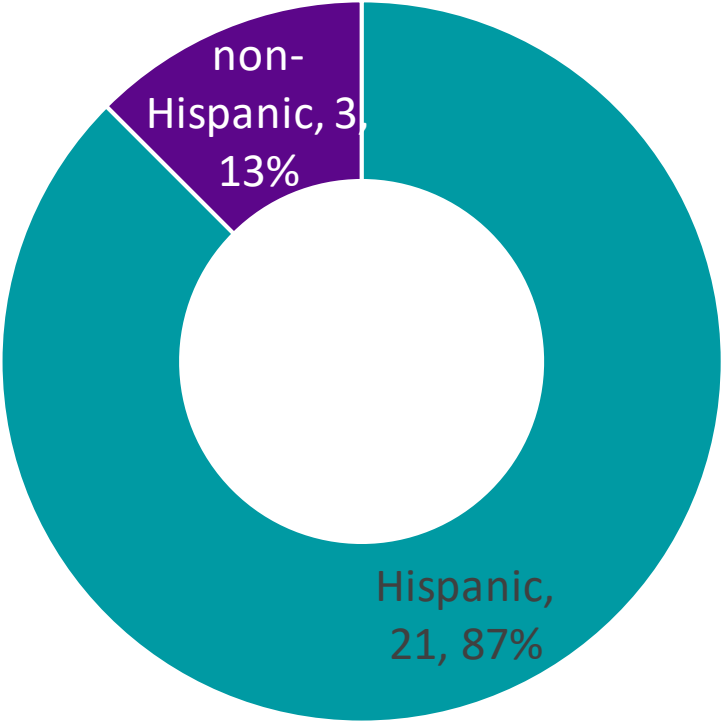


# Demographics at monthly clinic at BCHC

### Racial Demographics

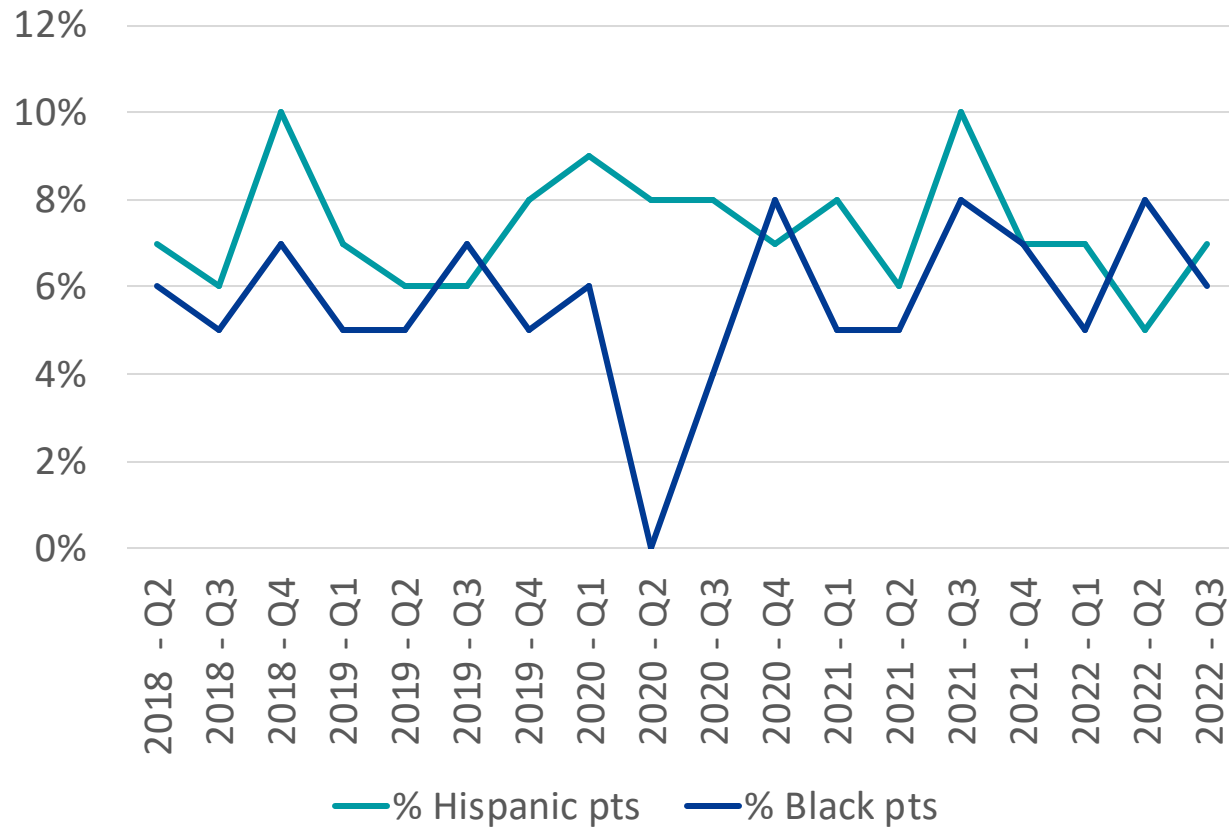


### Ethnic Demographics

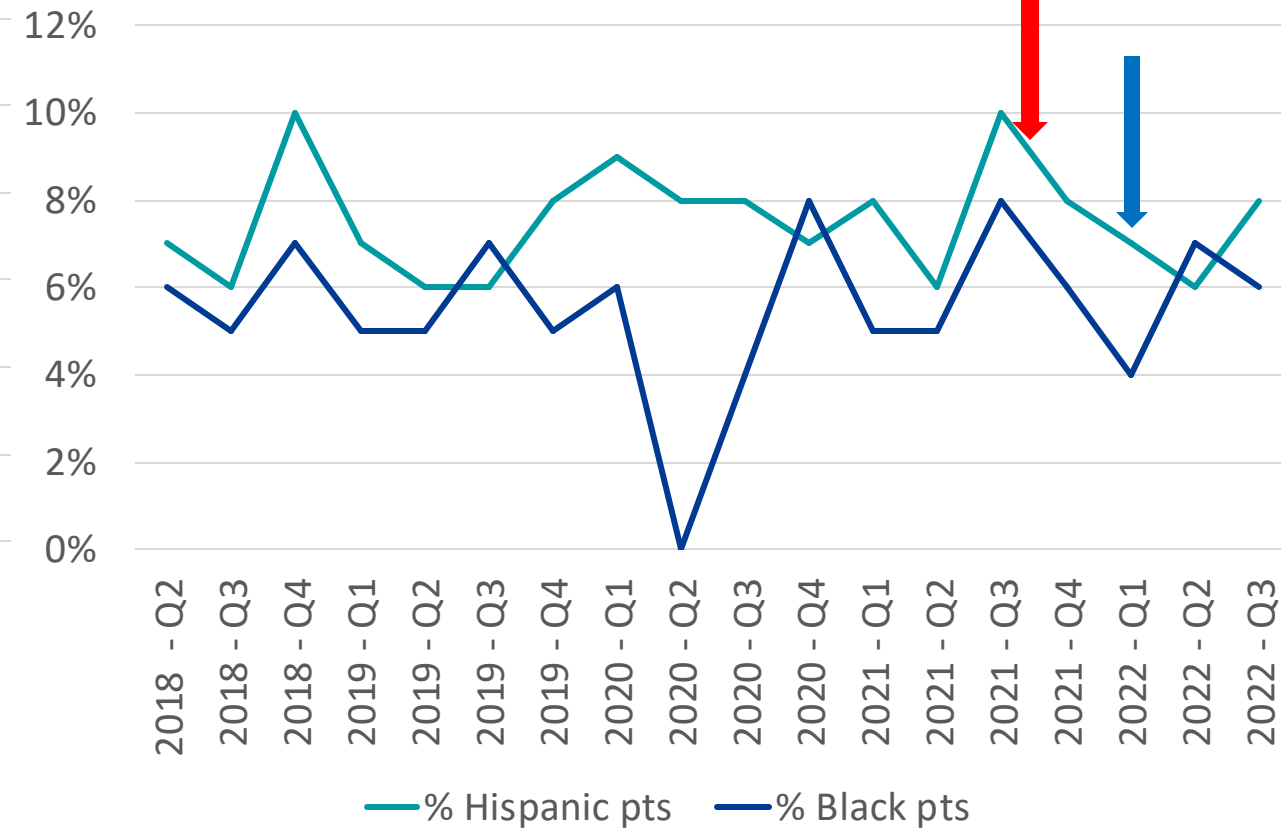


# Year 1 Accomplishments: clinical outcome at BWH Oral Medicine

Patient Demographics without Interventions



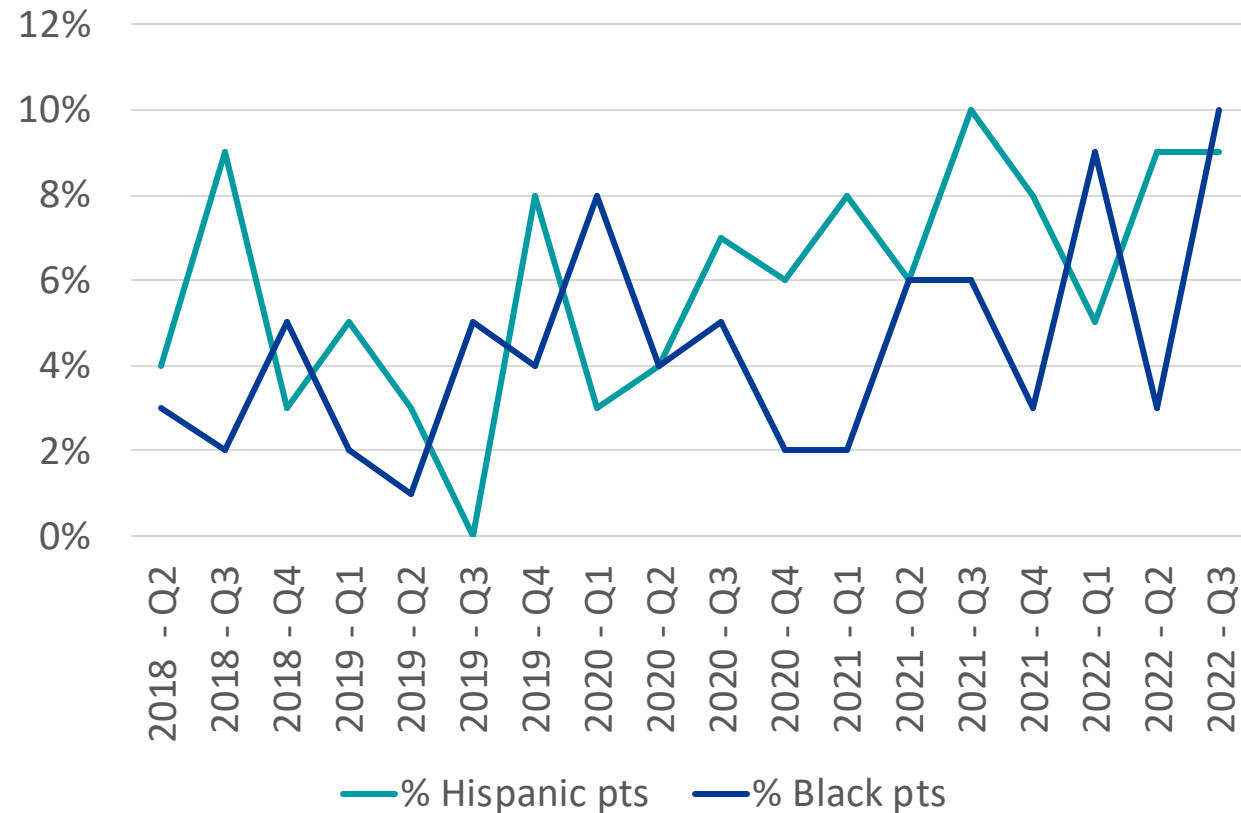
Patient Demographics with Interventions  
(eConsult, clinic at BCHC)



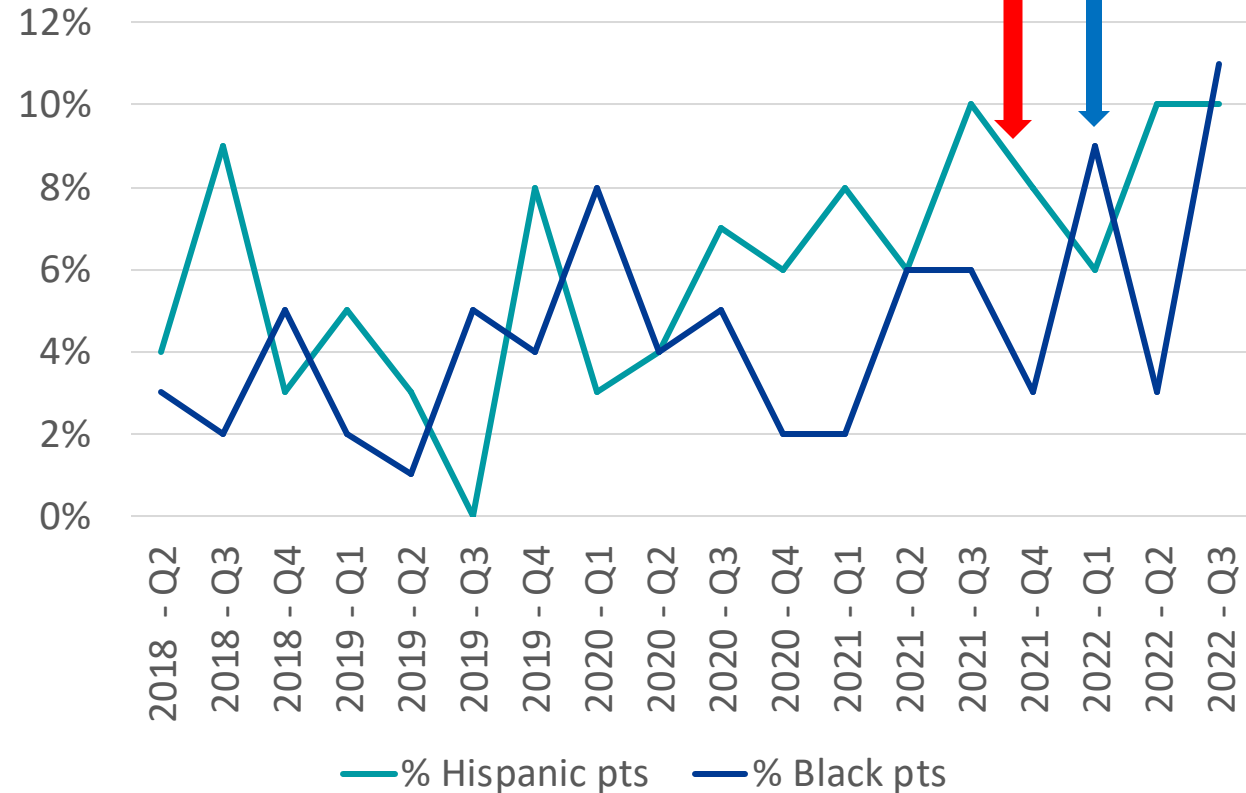


# Year 1 Accomplishments: clinical outcome at MGH Orofacial Pain

Patient Demographics without Interventions



Patient Demographics with Interventions  
(eConsult, clinic at BCHC)



# Summarizing year to date

|                       | Baseline Demographics<br>(4/2018 – 4/2021)   | Post-Intervention Demographics<br>(10/2021 – 10/2022)   |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| BWH Oral<br>Medicine  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 7% Hispanic (194/2629)</li><li>• 5% Black (144/2629)</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 8% Hispanic (114/1488) <b>(+1%)</b></li><li>• 6% Black (93/1488) <b>(+1%)</b></li></ul> |
| MGH<br>Orofacial Pain | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 6% Hispanic (64/1129)</li><li>• 3% Black (37/1129)</li></ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 8% Hispanic (55/654) <b>(+2%)</b></li><li>• 6% Black (38/654) <b>(+3%)</b></li></ul>    |



# Primary language

## Baseline (4/2018 – 4/2021)

### BWH

- English: 94% (2461/2629)
- Non-English: 5% (136/2629)
- Unknown: 1% (32/2629)

### MGH

- English: 95% (1106/1159)
- Non-English: 3% (29/1159)
- Unknown: 2% (24/1159)

## After (includes clinic + eConsults) (10/2021 – 10/2022)

### BWH

- English: 93% (1395/1493)
- Non-English: 6% (84/1493) **(+1%)**
- Unknown: 1% (14/1493)

### MGH

- English: 94% (617/651)
- Non-English: 3% (19/651)
- Unknown: 2% (15/651)



# Year 1 Challenges

## **Challenges encountered:**

- eConsults:
  - “Inappropriate” use by non-CHCs
  - Higher utilization of BWH Oral Medicine than MGH Orofacial Pain among CHCs
- Clinic at Brookside:
  - Limited to internal referrals
  - Cost of oral appliances (“night guards”)
  - Need for support for a permanent oral medicine/orofacial pain clinician to work at BCHC

## **What steps did you take to address those challenges?**

- eConsults – typically answered despite source; are continuing to gain traction
- Critically assessed personnel needs and role of appliance therapy (and other expenses to patient)

## **Did you have any lessons learned? What were they?**

- Power of relationships between CHC providers and patients

## **Did the aim statement or goals change throughout the year? How so?**

- Identified primary language as an additional demographic marker of interest



# Looking Ahead: Plans for Year 2

## **In response to your year 1 performance, how will you continue your project in year 2?**

- Distribute satisfaction surveys for patients and providers
- Determine how to help patients whose medical insurance may not be accepted (for oral appliances, medications)
- Find support for a permanent clinician to provide services at Brookside

## **What are some major goals in year 2?**

- Provide materials on diagnosis and management of oral medicine and orofacial pain conditions at other community health centers (North End, Cambridge Health Alliance, Charlestown, Chelsea, Revere) available in multiple languages
- Consider outreach to the broader community aside from patients who have their primary care at Brookside (e.g. Harvard School of Dental Medicine)



# Appendix



# Team Members

| Name                      | Credentials        | Role/Discipline (i.e. hospitalist, nurse manager, analyst, etc.) | Note 'yes' if a Resident | Note "yes" if MD/Clinician met participation requirements* |
|---------------------------|--------------------|--|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Project Leaders:</b>   |                    |  |                          |  |
| Piamkamon Vacharotayangul | DDS, PhD           | Program Director, Oral Medicine/BWH                              |                          | Yes  |
| Brittany Klein            | DDS                | Resident, Oral Medicine/BWH                                      | Yes                      | Yes  |
| Roxanne Bavarian          | DMD, DMSc          | Attending, Orofacial Pain/MGH                                    |                          | Yes  |
| <b>Team Members:</b>      |                    |  |                          |  |
| Margaret Jolliffe         | FNP, MPH           | Executive director, Brookside Community Health Center            |                          |  |
| Claudia Maria Morales     | DMD                | Dentist, Brookside Community Health Center                       |                          |  |
| Manuela Gonzalez          | MPA                | Dental Practice Manager, Brookside Community Health Center       |                          |  |
| Nathan Burke              | MBA                | Administrative Director, Division of Oral Medicine and Dentistry |                          |  |
| Rachel Harris             |                    | Dental student, Harvard School of Dental Medicine                |                          |  |
| Sylvia Read               |                    | Practice Supervisor, Division of Oral Medicine and Dentistry     |                          |  |
| Regina Cheers             |                    | Patient Care Coordinator, Orofacial Pain/MGH                     |                          |  |
| Shruti Handa              | DMD                | Attending, Orofacial Pain/MGH                                    |                          |  |
| David Keith               | DMD                | Attending, Orofacial Pain/MGH                                    |                          |  |
| Stephen Sonis             | DMD, DMSc          | Attending, Oral Medicine/BWH                                     |                          |  |
| <b>Project Sponsors:</b>  |                    |  |                          |  |
| Nathaniel S Treister      | DMD, DMSc          | Chief, Division of Oral Medicine and Dentistry/BWH               |                          |  |
| Jeffry Shaefer            | DDS, MS            | Program Director, Orofacial Pain/MGH                             |                          |  |
| <b>Coach:</b>             |                    |  |                          |  |
| Lynne Brady Wagner        | MA, CCC-SLP, HEC-C | Chief Learning Officer, Spaulding                                |                          |  |





**Mass General Brigham**