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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Delta Dental Provides a Boost for Wisconsin's Seal-A-Smile Program

Stevens Point, Wis., February 21, 2014 – Delta Dental of Wisconsin recently announced two grant awards related to Wisconsin's highly effective and successful Seal-A-Smile program. The state-wide program, which is collaboratively administered by Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) and Children's Health Alliance, helps prevent tooth decay and promote good oral health by providing an oral exam and when needed, fluoride varnish and sealants to children at no cost to the parents or caregivers. Dental sealants are a well-accepted clinical intervention shown to prevent 60 percent of decay and reduce cavities.

Delta Dental approved an additional \$100,000 to the state to assist with expansion efforts of the sealant program in schools. Marshfield Clinic also received a grant from Delta Dental of Wisconsin to redesign the data collection program currently used by the 41 organizations across the state participating in Seal-A-Smile. The new model will improve accuracy, reduce data entry expenses for health departments and other organizations that provide screenings, and deliver robust information about oral health conditions among Wisconsin's youth.

For the past five years, Delta Dental of Wisconsin has been partnering with the State to jointly fund the sealant program, providing more than \$1.3 million to the program and more importantly, providing critical oral health education annually to 48,000 students and placing sealants on more than 25,000 children each year.

As the program continues to expand, additional funding was needed to continue the distinguished program. "This extra boost in funding from Delta Dental of Wisconsin will allow the program to reach even more school-aged children," stated Dr. Jeffrey Chaffin, State Dental Director, "and provide sealants to children who may not otherwise have access to the treatment."

Oral health is critical to overall health and well-being. Dental sealants create a physical barrier against bacteria and food and can play a key role in preventing tooth decay, along with community water fluoridation, a healthy diet, and brushing with fluoride toothpaste. The Seal-A-Smile program targets schools where at least 35 percent of students are eligible to receive free or reduced-price meals.

“Seal-A-Smile has been tremendously successful at improving oral health of the State’s most vulnerable children,” stated Dennis Peterson, Executive Vice President of Delta Dental of Wisconsin, “and we are proud to partner with so many successful organizations and continue our commitment to this vital program.”

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Delta Dental of Wisconsin is a not-for-profit dental service corporation offering benefit services, claims processing, and plan administration to employers throughout Wisconsin since 1962. The company is headquartered in Stevens Point, with sales offices in Milwaukee and Madison, and provides benefits and services to more than 1.5 million subscribers and their family members. Delta Dental administers dental benefits for more Wisconsin companies than any other insurance carrier.

As a member of the nationwide Delta Dental Plans Association, the company is able to offer employees of Wisconsin-based companies the same dental benefits to wherever they are located in the United States. The Delta Dental Plans Association is the largest dental-benefits system in the nation. Its member companies provide benefits to more than 51 million people in 93,600 groups across the United States.