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Investing in Wisconsin's Oral Health

Delta Dental of Wisconsin Gives Back to State and Community Programs

Stevens Point, Wis. January 14, 2016 – Throughout Wisconsin schools, one in five children is currently experiencing an untreated decayed tooth, affecting his or her ability to learn, eat, play, or even speak.

In 2015, Delta Dental of Wisconsin increased its commitment to help fund the state's Seal-A-Smile program alongside the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. The program is administered by Children's Health Alliance and provides oral health screenings, fluoride varnish, and sealants when necessary to third-graders around the state at no cost to their family. The program targets schools where 35 percent or more children receive free or reduced meals. Seal-A-Smile visited more than 800 schools in 2015 and provided sealants to 27,000 children.

The six-year funding collaboration resulted in a significant expansion of this sealant-based program which is now provided in nearly every county in the state. This unique private/public partnership has been considered a successful model for sealant programs around the country. For the second year in a row, the Pew Charitable Trust awarded Wisconsin an "A" grade for our sealant program – one of only five states in the nation to receive this rating.

"Our support of the Seal-A-Smile program is making an impact now and will continue into the future," noted Fred Eichmiller, DDS, vice president and science officer at Delta Dental of Wisconsin. "We know that 75 percent of sealed teeth will remain cavity-free, compared to a third of teeth without sealants. Many of the oral disease and decay that is common today will become less of an issue as these children move into adulthood."

As part of Delta Dental of Wisconsin's commitment to oral health, the company awarded a number of oral health grants that focused on improving outcomes and access to care for some of the state's most vulnerable populations totaling \$803,000. The additional awardees included:

St. Mary's Hospital Medical Center, Green Bay

Saint Mary's Hospital in Green Bay provides pediatric dental services for children who have extensive decay or individuals with special needs who require hospitalized sedation in order to receive dental treatment. The grant provided additional dental equipment to help with a growing demand for these services.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Dental Clinic, Milwaukee

The grant provides urgent dental care services to uninsured individuals that fall below the poverty level in Milwaukee. Each year, approximately 2,000 individuals receive necessary treatment with this grant funding.

Community Dental Clinic, Ft. Atkinson

Community Dental Clinic has partnered with Fort HealthCare Hospital and local dentists to help provide oral health services for individuals with special needs who require sedation during dental treatment. A grant from Delta Dental will purchase the needed dental equipment for the hospital and add another dental operatory within the community clinic.

Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC), Green Bay

There were more than 900 individuals on a waiting list to receive care from dental hygiene students at NWTC. A request for funding was approved to equip four additional operatories at the college. Individuals, many of whom are elderly and veterans, receive care from students at greatly reduced fees for screenings and preventive services.

American Diabetes Association – Camp Marrakesh and Camp Lakota, Wisconsin

Delta Dental of Wisconsin has been providing grant support for the Wisconsin Chapter of the American Diabetes Association for camps that help children and their families cope with a new diagnosis. The camps recently added an oral health education component to provide awareness on the critical importance of good oral habits for individuals with diabetes in order to avoid infections in the mouth.

Open Arms Clinic, Elkhorn

The grant from Delta Dental helped expand the clinic's ability to provide dental services and assisted in adding a part time bilingual dental assistant. Volunteer dentists and hygienists provide oral healthcare to low-income patients.

Northlakes Community Clinic, Polk County

Northlakes Community Clinic is the sealant provider to sixteen counties in northern Wisconsin. The agency recently took over the school-based sealant programs in Polk and Barron counties. However, when children were found to have decay, it was difficult to find dental providers to provide restorative care in this rural area. A grant from Delta Dental of Wisconsin will allow the agency to re-open and modernize a dental clinic to help address the shortage of providers.

Bread of Healing, Milwaukee

The low-income patients served by the dental clinic at Bread of Healing have extensive dental care needs. A fund has been created through a grant from Delta Dental to assist with providing crowns, dentures, and other restorative expenses. Volunteer dentists and assistants provide the care at the dental clinic.

Church Health Services, Beaver Dam

In partnership with Marquette University, dental students will begin rotations at Church Health and the grant from Delta Dental will help add two operatories to provide dental services to individuals who have Medicaid insurance or are uninsured. In addition, the agency received a pilot project grant to provide care to Amish children in the region.

Special Olympics-Special Smiles, Statewide

Delta Dental has been the sole sponsor of the Healthy Athletes Special Smiles program of Special Olympics for the past 10 years. Dental screenings, oral health education, fluoride varnish, and when appropriate, a fitted mouth guard are provided at no charge to the athletes at four Special Olympic events across the state.

Wisconsin Dental Association Foundation's Donated Dental Services Program, Statewide

Delta Dental has supported Donated Dental for the past 13 years. The program provides dental care to Wisconsin residents who are unable to afford treatment because of permanent disability or advanced age (65 and older) and who do not have access to dental insurance through the state's Medical Assistance Program, Medicare, or private insurance.

Waukesha Community Dental Clinic, Waukesha

Since 2007, Waukesha Community Dental Clinic has been providing dental care to children in the county who are uninsured or have Medicaid insurance. A Delta Dental grant was provided to purchase equipment to be used in their hospital dentistry program at ProHealth Care Moreland Surgery Center to treat children and individuals with special needs who have excessive dental needs. Last year, WCCDC treated more than 2,670 youth and provided educational outreach to 1,200 additional children. The clinic also provides care to adults with urgent dental needs.

As the state's largest dental insurer, Delta Dental is committed to the oral health of all Wisconsin residents. The organization is accepting applications for 2016 oral health grants that focus on improving access to dental care, screenings, science/research projects, or oral health workforce scholarships. Eligibility requirements are available on the company's website, www.deltadentalwi.com/charitable-fund.

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About Delta Dental of Wisconsin

For more than 50 years, Delta Dental has been working to maintain healthy communities and healthy teeth. We provide dental benefits and services to more Wisconsin companies, subscribers, and their family members than any other insurance carrier. Our mission is to improve oral health and wellness by extending access to care, advancing science, and supporting an effective oral-health workforce. Through Delta Dental of Wisconsin's Charitable Fund, we are committed to *advancing solutions* for Wisconsin's oral health.