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Colorado Coalition for the Homeless Now Offering Dental Care for Patients During Regular Medical Visits at its Stout Street Health Center

DENVER – November 11, 2015 – The Colorado Coalition for the Homeless is now offering a variety of preventive dental health services during regular patient medical visits at its Stout Street Health Center in Denver (2130 Stout Street).

Under the direction of three registered dental hygienists, the Coalition is offering oral health education for children and adults, exams, cleanings, x-rays and fluoride varnishes. Services are available for patients of all ages, with a special focus on reaching children under 18. Patients who need more extensive care are referred to the Coalition's dedicated dental clinic also located in the Stout Street Health Center.

Integrating dental care into regular medical visits allows Coalition hygienists to work in collaboration with the medical team to immediately assess children's oral health during well-child checkups or provide education to pregnant women during prenatal visits. Coalition hygienists also assist the medical and behavioral health team in developing care plans for patients.

With a singular purpose to end homelessness, the Coalition served 15,993 adults and children last year. The 53,000 square-foot Stout Street Health Center opened in September 2014. It offers patient-centered, integrated health care services including medical and behavioral health care, substance treatment services, dental and vision care, social services and supportive housing.

Current estimates indicate that more than 11,000 individuals and families in metro Denver experience homelessness each night. Access to dental care is a significant issue for Colorado's homeless community, especially homeless children. A 2012 report from the Institute for Children, Poverty & Homelessness found that only 76 percent of homeless children had received dental checkups by age 5, compared to 82 percent of children at-risk for homelessness and 86 percent of those with stable housing.

The Coalition is able to integrate dental care with the medical care offered at its Stout Street Health Center through funding it received from Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation's (DDCOF) Colorado Medical-Dental Integration (CO MDI) initiative. The first initiative of its kind in the U.S., CO MDI will integrate dental hygienists in 16 Colorado primary care clinics over five years in an effort to increase access to preventive dental health services.

"While the Coalition has provided dental care for a number of years, being able to integrate and deliver that care during regular medical visits allows us to more fully address the needs of our patients," said Carol Niforatos, DDS, dental director for the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless. "The unfortunate reality is that Denver's homeless population is rapidly increasing. Through CO MDI, the Coalition now has the tools we need to offer immediate and essential dental care to our patients living in crisis."

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, tooth decay is the most common chronic disease among U.S. children ages 6 to 11. CO MDI is designed to improve the dental health of Colorado's youngest residents and reach families who have limited access to dental care due to geographic barriers, lack of insurance or transportation difficulties. DDCOF has awarded approximately $1.95 million in funding to the number of CO MDI clinics to hire hygienists, purchase equipment and deliver care.

To learn more about the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, please visit www.coloradocoalition.org. For a complete list of the CO MDI clinics as well as more information on the initiative, visit www.deltadentalcofoundation.org/initiatives.

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About the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless
The mission of the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless is to work collaboratively toward the prevention of homelessness and the creation of lasting solutions for homeless and at-risk families, children, and individuals throughout Colorado. The Coalition advocates for and provides a continuum of housing and a variety of services to improve the health, well-being and stability of those it serves. Visit www.coloradocoalition.org to learn more.

About Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation
Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation's mission is to improve the state's oral health by eradicating childhood tooth decay. Over the past 15 years, the Foundation has been solely funded by Delta Dental of Colorado. Its initiatives have included educational programs targeting low-income, high-risk families; support of dental health education for medical and dental students as well as providers; and opportunities to teach good dental habits and cavity prevention among pregnant women and children. As a 501(c)(3) organization, the Foundation works to make good dental health a community priority. A core belief is that, because dental disease is almost 100 percent preventable, efforts to improve oral health will result in a healthier Colorado overall. To learn more about the Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation, please visit www.deltadentalcofoundation.org.