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Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation Launches Five-Year Initiative to Increase Access to Preventive Dental Care in Primary Care Settings

16 Colorado organizations receive funding through the Colorado Medical-Dental Integration Project to add dental hygienists to established patient care teams.

DENVER – March 13, 2015 - Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation, funded by Colorado's leading dental benefits company, Delta Dental of Colorado, today announced the launch of the Colorado Medical-Dental (CO MDI) Project. This five-year initiative involves the placement of dental hygienists in 16 Colorado primary care medical clinics in an expansive effort to increase access to preventive dental health services.

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, insurance status or transportation difficulties. Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation is funding the total budget of \$2.85 million. The project will roll out in two phases. The funded organizations include:

Phase 1

- Denver Health – School-Based Health Centers (Denver)
- Doctors Care (Littleton)
- Heart of the Rockies Regional Medical Center Foundation (Buena Vista/Salida)
- Inner City Health Center (Denver)
- Maria Mattias in partnership with Rocky Mountain Youth Clinic – Aurora Clinic (Aurora)
- Metro Community Provider Network – South Aurora Family Health Services Center (Aurora)
- Summit Community Care Clinic – School Based Health Centers (Summit and Lake counties)
- Worthmore Dental Clinic in partnership with Ardas Family Medicine (Aurora)

Phase II

- Centura Health – St. Anthony North (Westminster)
- Colorado Coalition for the Homeless (Denver)
- Denver Health – Eastside Connections for Kids Foster Care Clinic (Denver)
- Marillac Clinic – Mesa County Health Department Site (Grand Junction)
- Miramont Family Medicine – West Fort Collins Clinic (Fort Collins)
- Northwest Colorado Visiting Nurse Association (Steamboat Springs/Craig)
- Peak Family Medicine (Montrose)
- Valley-Wide Health Systems – La Junta Clinic (La Junta)



The CO MDI hygienists will provide preventive dental health services (screenings, education, cleanings, x-rays, fluoride varnish, sealants), coordinate preventive dental care with well-child checkups and collaborate with dentists in the communities being served to ensure comprehensive care. It is anticipated that the CO MDI Project will impact 18 communities throughout the state. Phase I is being implemented now and Phase II will roll out in fall 2015.

“One in seven Colorado kids have untreated cavities by the time they reach kindergarten,” said Allison Cusick, program officer, Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation. “Those cavities often lead to tooth pain, overall discomfort and shorter attention spans. For families who don’t have regular access to preventive dental care, the CO MDI Project will bridge the gap by integrating dental health services in a primary care environment that is familiar and convenient for families.”

The impact of CO MDI will be evaluated by Dr. Patricia Braun, with the University of Colorado’s ACCORDS – Adult and Child Center for Health Outcomes Research and Delivery Science. Specifically, the evaluation will analyze the impact of integrated dental services on children’s oral health outcomes; parent, provider and leadership characteristics and behaviors over time; and the financial sustainability of the practice model.

The launch of the CO MDI Project comes at a time when increased attention is being placed on childhood and adult oral health in Colorado. In 2011, oral health was listed as one of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment’s “10 winnable battles”. Several prevention-focused initiatives have launched since then including [Cavity Free at Three](#) and Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation’s [Cavities Get Around Campaign](#). Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation’s mission is to improve childhood oral health by eradicating childhood tooth decay.

For more information on the CO MDI Project, please visit www.deltadentalcofoundation.org/initiatives.

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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’s 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.