



## **Dental Lifeline Network Reaches \$250 Million Milestone In Donated Services to People In Need**

**Denver, Colo. – January 20, 2014.** Dental Lifeline Network, a national dental charity, reached a significant milestone in 2013: more than \$250 million in dental services donated to people with disabilities or who are elderly or medically fragile and have no other way to get help.

Through its flagship Donated Dental Services (DDS) program, volunteer dentists and laboratories of Dental Lifeline and its partner organizations in several states have provided life-sustaining, and even life-saving, dental treatment to 120,000 people. Founded in Colorado in 1985, DDS serves all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Dental Lifeline is a charitable affiliate of the American Dental Association.

DDS provides a national safety net to people with special needs who cannot afford care they desperately need. Donated by more than 15,000 dentists and 3,600 laboratories nationwide, treatment through DDS is comprehensive, unlike care provided through many other dental charities.

“Our success in making dental therapies accessible to people who critically need care is due to the overwhelming generosity of dentists who willingly contribute their services and staff time and the laboratories that support them,” noted Fred Leviton, DLN president. “For people who suffer daily with severe pain from fractured teeth, advanced periodontal disease and the inability to eat normally, dental treatment is life-transforming,” Leviton said.

More people who are medically fragile are being referred to DDS, because dental disease prevents people with chronic health problems from receiving lifesaving medical treatments. Dental health is a prerequisite for cancer patients who need chemotherapy, candidates for organ transplants or kidney dialysis, people with autoimmune diseases who require lifesaving medications, cardiac patients who cannot be treated surgically, and patients with crippling arthritis who need joint replacements. For these people, lack of dental therapies can result in progressive illness or premature death. Although some patients are eligible for Medicare, it does not cover dental treatment and, in most states, Medicaid provides little or no dental care for adults.

Since DLN began, it has grown through partnerships with state dental associations. Funding to support the volunteers comes from a variety of sources including state governments, foundations, dental organizations, and corporate and individual donors. Considerable support also comes from the dental trade industry including the Dental Trade Alliance and its member companies and the DTA Foundation through both financial contributions and donated materials such as teeth, alloy and dental supplies used by dentists and by volunteer laboratories for fabrications.

DLN is headquartered in Denver with DDS program coordinators located throughout the country who screen program applicants, match them with volunteer dentists, arrange for laboratory support and specialists as needed and provide logistical coordination between patients and providers. Patients are treated in the dentists' offices. The average value of treatment is more than \$3,000. Every dollar raised or contributed results in more than \$10 of professional services.

DLN was founded in 1974 by Larry Coffee, DDS, a graduate of Northwestern University Dental School. For information to become a volunteer dentist or laboratory or to make a donation, please visit [www.DentalLifeline.org](http://www.DentalLifeline.org) or call 888-471-6334.

**About Dental Lifeline Network.** DLN is a nonprofit humanitarian program providing access to comprehensive dental care for people with disabilities or who are elderly or medically fragile and cannot afford treatment. For more information, visit [www.DentalLifelineNetwork.org](http://www.DentalLifelineNetwork.org).

**Strategic Partners:** American Dental Association, Academy of General Dentistry, American Academy of Implant Dentistry, American Academy of Periodontology, American Association of Endodontists, , American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons, American Association of Orthodontists, American Association of Women Dentists, American College of Dentists, American College of Prosthodontists, American Dental Assistants Association, Hispanic Dental Association, National Association of Dental Laboratories, National Dental Association, The Pankey Institute

**DLN is recognized by:** American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists, American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons, American College of Cardiology Foundation, American College of Emergency Physicians, American College of Gastroenterology, American College of Physicians, American College of Rheumatology, American Diabetes Association, American Nurses Association, American Psychiatric Association, American Society of Clinical Oncology, American Society of Transplant Surgeons, Association of Oncology Social Work, Forum of End Stage Renal Disease Networks, Renal Physicians Association, Society for Transplant Social Workers, Society for Vascular Surgery

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