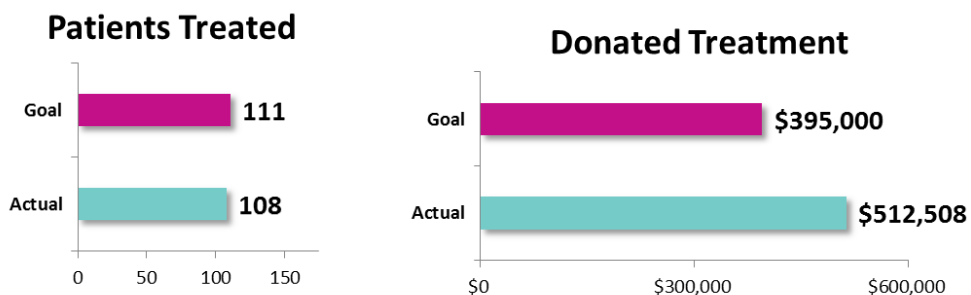


## NORTH CAROLINA DONATED DENTAL SERVICES (DDS) PROGRAM

### Annual Report

Activities from July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015

#### Performance Snapshot



#### Annual Highlights

- 108 patients accessed \$512,508 worth of care.
- \$16.83 worth of care donated for every \$1 spent supporting volunteers.
- 10 new dentists signed up to volunteer.

#### The DDS Program in Action

Forty-nine-year-old Mr. P. is a veteran who lives in Peachland. He suffers from schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and heart problems and takes medication to manage his mental and physical health. In addition, his oral health was terrible. Several decayed teeth made eating difficult and Mr. P. was ashamed to smile. He truly needed dental care, but sadly could not afford it.

In the Army National Guard, Mr. P. was trained to locate land mines, and he became a painter after his military service. Unfortunately, he can no longer work and relies on his veteran's benefits and Social Security Disability benefits to make ends meet. Due to his limited resources, he lives with a family member and shares bills. While he receives medical care and case management through the VA, he did not qualify for dental treatment because his dental problems were not service related. It seemed he had nowhere to turn for help.

Thankfully, Mr. P.'s family dentist volunteers for the DDS program and offered to help. First, a generous volunteer oral surgeon extracted 14 teeth. Then, Mr. P.'s dentist restored four other teeth and donated a full upper denture. A volunteer laboratory also helped by fabricating the denture at no charge. **Thanks to this kind team, Mr. P. received more than \$6,000 in donated treatment that restored his oral health and his smile!** His mother wrote to express their appreciation for this wonderful gift.

*"There are no words to tell you how much this program has helped. I cannot tell you the difference it has made. Mr. P. can smile and not be embarrassed, he smiles a lot! Thank you thank you for this program."*

#### Please Note:

You have a special relationship with Dental Lifeline Network! To ensure you receive our occasional email notifications, please click on the link below or type it into your browser to sign up. **Even if you currently receive this report by email**, an additional sign-up is necessary to receive e-Newsletters. It takes less than a minute!

<http://bit.ly/signupDLN>  
(case-sensitive)

## Program History

- Established in 2009 with the North Carolina Dental Society
- 793 total patients served
- \$3,708,587 in total care donated by volunteers
- Statewide Volunteer Network: 351 dentists and 108 labs

## Accomplishments

The DDS program exists to help individuals with disabilities or who are elderly or medically fragile and cannot afford or otherwise access treatment for severe dental conditions. North Carolina's DDS program is part of a national network of similar programs in 42 other states. Collectively these programs helped 7,456 individuals access nearly \$25.5 million in services during the fiscal year. Dental Lifeline Network first began providing limited services in North Carolina in 1997 through its DDS national safety-net initiative. Through June 2009, 64 patients received \$291,679 worth of free, comprehensive dental care from the safety-net program.

**Goal:** Help 111 people with disabilities or who are aged or medically fragile receive \$395,000 worth of comprehensive dental care during the fiscal year, including \$40,000 in laboratory fabrications.

**Results:** 108 patients received \$512,508 of treatment, including \$63,900 in lab fabrications; significantly more treatment for just three fewer people than expected! Several patients treated received more than \$10,000 in care each, including one patient who received \$45,000 worth of free care! (Eight patients received \$22,817 in routine care from volunteer dentists who had donated the patients' initial treatment and wanted to continue contributing ongoing, maintenance services.) Each patient treated (with the exception of the eight patients receiving ongoing maintenance services) received an average of \$4,897 worth of dental treatment; comprehensive care that illustrates the generosity of the volunteer dentists and labs.

At the end of the June 30<sup>th</sup> reporting period, 83 individuals had been referred to volunteer dentists and were receiving care (i.e., active patients). (Some of the patients treated this fiscal year are still undergoing treatment and are included in the 83 active cases.)

## Applications

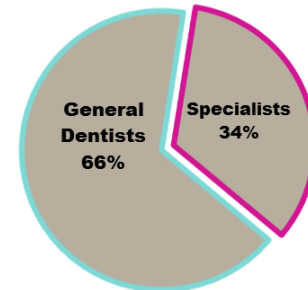
We received 41 applications during the fiscal year, and at the end of the June 30<sup>th</sup> reporting period, 324 people were waiting to be referred to a volunteer. The wait list includes individuals who applied during the fiscal year as well as in previous years.

When the waiting list gets too long, the Coordinator must spend a significant amount of time responding to requests for applications and to subsequent questions from applicants; time that instead could be spent referring people to dentists and coordinating services. We continually monitor the waiting list and assess whether and where we are able to accept applications. Doing so helps the Coordinator process applications more efficiently so she has sufficient time to refer people to the volunteers. We inform the various human service agencies that refer applicants to the DDS program and ask them to help prioritize their clients needing care. Currently, we are unable to accept applications statewide.

## Volunteers

The volunteers are the backbone of the program and we are truly grateful to the **351 dentists** and **108 dental laboratories** that participate statewide. During the fiscal year, 10 new dentists signed up to volunteer!

With so many volunteer dentists, one might think that many of the pending applicants could be paired with a volunteer reasonably soon. Unfortunately, that is not the case. Most volunteer dentists treat just one patient at a time and due to the comprehensive nature of the treatment provided, may thus only treat one patient annually. And, 118 of the volunteers are specialists who may not be called upon every year, leaving 233 general dentists to accept initial referrals. Unfortunately, due to funding challenges, we do not have enough staff time to take advantage of all of the volunteers willing to help. We are trying to raise additional funding to increase the part-time Coordinator's hours so that we could help more people.



Many dental laboratories also volunteer for the North Carolina DDS program. Along with the 108 labs physically located in North Carolina, 15 out-of-state labs that are part of Dental Lifeline Network's national cadre volunteered to help North Carolina DDS patients during the fiscal year. We truly appreciate the generous efforts of all of our volunteers.

*"I love seeing the difference it makes in someone's life, from start to finish."*

- Dr. M. of Asheville, a DDS volunteer since 2010.

## Staffing

The Coordinator determines applicant eligibility, links patients with nearby volunteer dentists, monitors patient progress and arranges laboratory services and the help of specialists as necessary. Most importantly, the Coordinator resolves any problems that may interfere with care and ensures all parties have a positive experience.

For the first half of the fiscal year, services were coordinated by Ms. Stacey Irwin, an experienced DDS Coordinator at our national headquarters in Denver. In mid-January, Ms. Rebekah Spiers began managing the North Carolina DDS program. Ms. Spiers also coordinates the Louisiana DDS program part-time from her office in Baton Rouge. Since Coordinators communicate with patients, dentists and labs via telephone and mail, not having a local Coordinator is usually invisible to the consumers and volunteers.

Unfortunately, due to limited funding, we had to reduce staff hours several times during the fiscal year and now are able to devote only 14 hours per week to the program.

## Financial Information

**During the fiscal year, volunteers donated \$16.83 in care for every dollar spent supporting contributed services!** North Carolina has one of the highest rates among all 43 DDS programs nationwide! While the volunteer dentists and many of the dental laboratories donate their services, we must raise funds to support

**\$16.83**  
in care donated for  
every \$1 spent

their efforts and pay for the DDS Coordinator, lab reimbursements when we cannot find labs to donate, office supplies and other program expenses.

When the DDS program expanded statewide in 2009, the North Carolina Health and Wellness Trust Fund approved a three-year grant starting in July 2009. Unfortunately the grant was discontinued one year early in July 2011 as a result of the state government's funding problems, forcing us to seek support from foundations and corporations to sustain the program. During the fiscal year, we received grant from two anonymous foundations as well as a grant from American Dental Partners Foundation for services for disabled veterans. Dental Lifeline Network subsidized the remaining expenses.

## **Future Plans**

In the next fiscal year—July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016—our goal is to help 75 people with disabilities or who are aged or medically fragile receive at least \$280,000 worth of free dental care, including \$29,000 worth of donated laboratory fabrications. This goal is lower than what we achieved in the 2014-2015 fiscal year since the program will be staffed at only 14 hours per week for the full fiscal year due to funding challenges.