

Getting Started

MOM in a Nutshell

A typical one-day MOM project sees 500 patients, utilizes 275 volunteers (*typically about 150 volunteers provide health and dental services, the rest are general volunteers*) and costs \$50,000. Planning for a MOM takes a strong leadership committee which works for seven-12 months prior to the event to get everything ready.

MOM projects were created to provide dental care for a large number of patients in great need. Patients arrive on-site, register for services, and are asked to fill out and sign a health and release form. Since patients are treated on a first-come, first-served basis, they wait in line until their turn with a dentist. After registration, patients are funneled through an initial screening where volunteer medical professionals take blood pressures and perform glucose screenings to ensure that the patients are healthy enough for dental treatment.

Once the health screening is complete and the patient is deemed ready for treatment, a volunteer dentist determines what procedures are needed and are wanted. Due to the sheer volume of patients and time constraints, the dentists are not able to address every dental problem.

Once the dentist and patient determine which procedures will be provided that day, the patient is channeled to either the cleaning, extraction, or restorative area(s) for their dental work. If one of the several mobile dental vans in operation from across the state is available on the day of the MOM, a limited number of complex extractions and/or procedures may be handled there.

In some cases a pharmacy is onsite to provide over-the-counter pain medication. Leadership volunteers typically create a partnership with a local pharmacy to provide discounted rates on antibiotics and prescription pain medications. There are no narcotics onsite at MOM projects.

Volunteer dental professionals are required to complete tracking forms for each patient served, indicating the number and type of procedures performed. If a patient needs operative care (*extractions, etc.*), he or she receives a post-op form that includes a local social service agency's telephone number and contact name. Should the individual experience complications in the days immediately following the clinic, the agency contact can refer him or her to a local dentist, who has agreed to see MOM patients for emergency follow-up care.

First Steps

You know the dental needs in your area are overwhelming and you would like to provide care through a MOM project, now what?

In order to successfully implement a MOM you must have:

- An engaged and responsible planning committee;
- Support of at least one local dentist;
- A fundraising mechanism; and
- An appropriate location.

Planning Committee

This group is responsible for managing the implementation of the entire MOM project – an undertaking that can take from 7-12 months and thousands of volunteer hours. At a minimum, the Planning Committee must include a local dentist who will serve as the Dental Director, and the chairs of the event workgroups (*finance, logistics, patient registration, health screenings, dental services, food and beverage, public relations and volunteers*).

The event itself will need 275 volunteers, about 150 of which should be medical and dental volunteers. The remainder will be general volunteers.

Support of Local Dentists

Support of at least one (*ideally many*) local dentist is crucial to a successful MOM Project. A local dentist must serve as the Dental Director and he/she is essential in recruiting dental volunteers.

The Virginia Dental Association has regional groups of dentists (*components*) located throughout the Commonwealth. Be sure to meet with your local component to identify leaders interested in helping to plan and implement the MOM project and to recruit day-of volunteers. Be certain to provide the component dentists with updates on project planning. Not only is the component full of potential volunteers, the member-dentists may also be interested in providing financial contributions to the MOM project.

Fundraising Mechanism

MOM projects cost money. While volunteers provide the care, your group needs to anticipate costs for: event space, equipment rental, supplies, marketing materials, and printing as well as food, transportation and lodging costs for the volunteers. A typical one day MOM serving 500 patients will cost approximately \$50,000. An overview of a typical one day MOM project budget is included in the finance section of this implementation guidebook; a more detailed version is in the appendix.

Before approaching the VDAF for assistance with a MOM, your group must be able to demonstrate its ability to raise the necessary funds. Your group should have:

- \$20,000 pledged to the MOM.
- Community commitment:
 - Area service agencies or foundations have pledged financial and volunteer support for set up, patient registration, break-down, clean up, feeding volunteers, etc.
 - Area businesses have demonstrated a willingness to provide in-kind donations of supplies.
- Plans to attend an upcoming MOM project in Virginia.

Appropriate Event Space

A MOM must take place in a space large enough to accommodate patients, (*typically about 10,000 square feet*) – this includes:

- A waiting area (*out of the weather if during cold/hot weather seasons*)
- Large area for main clinic operations with space for:
 - Portable dental chairs
 - X-ray units/digital Panorex machine
 - Sterilization
 - Data collection
 - Registration
 - Volunteer check in and break area
- Health screenings

It must also have a water source and electricity. In addition, the space must be able to provide sufficient parking and handle traffic flow issues. Possible venues to consider include:

- High school or college gymnasiums
- Civic or conference centers
- Catering halls
- Indoor sport facilities
- Airport hangers

NOTE: Once the Virginia Dental Association Foundation is engaged with your project, representatives from the VDAF will come out to do a site survey to determine if the space is appropriate for the event. They will help determine how many operatories can be set up within the space, and the best space arrangement.

Virginia Dental Association Foundation Role

Once your group has these key pieces in place, it is time to reach out the Virginia Dental Association Foundation. The VDAF will help by facilitating dental student participation with the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Dentistry and

Virginia Dental Association Foundation

Barbara Rollins

Mission of Mercy

Rollins@vadental.org

P.O. Box 3095

Richmond, VA 23228

private practice dentists, assistants and hygienists from across the state. The VDAF will also provide overall guidance and the necessary portable equipment, dental supplies (*at cost*) and assistance with event layout.