



MOM Piedmont Regional Dental Day BACKGROUND

P.O. Box 152 • Barboursville, VA 22923 • 540.748.3756 • www.vaprdc.org

A nation-wide need...

More than 100 million people in the United States are without dental insurance. Many suffer from what the U.S. surgeon general calls “a silent epidemic of dental and oral diseases” caused by “profound” disparities in dental care.

"Those who suffer the worst oral health are found among the poor of all ages, with poor children and poor older Americans particularly vulnerable. Members of racial and ethnic minority groups also experience a disproportionate level of oral health problems," the surgeon general wrote in a 2000 report.

...Reflected in Virginia

The Virginia Employment Commission 2000 Population Projects estimated that one-in-five Virginians live in an area underserved by dentists. Typically these are rural communities with a significant population living in poverty. Individuals in these areas are often left without any dental care to face extreme pain, discomfort, and embarrassment. They are most often people who are employed but poor, and people who are elderly, disabled, or uninsured.

The Mission of Mercy project

In response to this need, the Virginia Dental Health Foundation (VDHF) launched the Mission of Mercy (MOM) project, and began to "make caring visible." The Mission of Mercy projects, staffed and organized almost entirely by volunteers, are one- to three-day dental clinics set up to provide a comprehensive range of dental services to those in need in Virginia. Most clinics are conducted in identified underserved areas of the state where there are not enough dentists and hygienists to serve the oral health needs of the community. Targeted to uninsured and underinsured children and adults, any individual who is able to show up on site is considered eligible to receive services. The intention is not to judge, but rather to serve.

To date, 46 MOM projects have been held across Virginia. For each MOM project, there are hundreds of volunteers who participate. To date, thousands of patients have been provided with more than \$18 million of dollars worth of free dental care. **Virginia's MOM projects have broken records for the largest two- and three-day dental outreach clinics ever conducted in the United States.**

May 1st: A local Mission of Mercy: Piedmont Regional Dental Day

In response to the local need, the newly established Piedmont Regional Dental Clinic, along with the Virginia Dental Association and Virginia Commonwealth University, and with support from area free medical clinics, will cosponsor the **Piedmont Regional Mission of Mercy** on May 1, 2010, at 7:00 a.m. at the Barboursville Fire House (5251 Spotswood Trail, Barboursville, Virginia 22923).

Dental services provided will include: 1) Preventative dentistry: teeth cleaning, fluoride application, sealants, oral hygiene, and nutritional counseling; 2) Restorative dentistry: fillings; and 3) Extractions and limited surgery. All dental services will be delivered by fully accredited dentists, dental hygienists, and supervised dental student volunteers.

The Piedmont Regional Dental Clinic

The Piedmont Regional Dental Clinic (PRDC) is a new non-profit organization dedicated to providing low-cost dental services to underserved residents in the Piedmont region of Virginia. The Clinic is modeled after the very successful Augusta Regional Dental Clinic. Although it is just getting started, when fully operational, the PRDC will have permanent offices and a full-time dental staff. The MOM Piedmont Regional Dental Day is the first project of PRDC.

The Virginia Dental Association and Virginia Dental Health Foundation

The Virginia Dental Association (VDA) is a non-profit organization, affiliated with the American Dental Association (ADA), whose vision is to continually improve the quality of dental education and treatment within the state of Virginia (www.vadental.org). The Virginia Dental Health Foundation (VDHF) is a charitable and educational organization established by VDA in 1996 to increase access to dental care for Virginians by generating and redirecting resources throughout the Commonwealth.

The VDHF believes that oral health is an intricate part of the overall health and well being of an individual. Neglected oral hygiene has both physiological and psychological effects. Diseases of the mouth can lead to other serious concerns such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Individuals who suffer from medical complications such as cancer and AIDS are at an increased risk for developing oral disease. The programs supported by the VDHF help to alleviate individuals of pain, discomfort, malnutrition, embarrassment, low self esteem and depression that often result from poor oral hygiene.

MOM Dental Days in Virginia

Thus far, a total of 46 MOM projects have been held in Wise County, the Eastern Shore, Northern Virginia, Martinsville, Norfolk, Grundy, Roanoke, Emporia, Goochland, Petersburg, and New Orleans, LA. To date, 33,897 patients have been provided with more than \$18 million worth of free dental care. In 2008, the Foundation spent \$254,000 on its Missions of Mercy projects. Other states have used the Virginia Mission of Mercy as a model: Texas, Kansas, Arkansas, Nebraska, Colorado, West Virginia, Connecticut, and North Carolina.

Some past MOM Projects include:

- Goochland MOM, 2009: 207 patients received an estimated \$134,893 in free dental services
- Emporia MOM, 2009: 958 patients received an estimated \$545,352 in free dental services
- Grundy MOM, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009: 2,773 patients received an estimated \$1.6 million in free dental services
- Wise County MOM, 2000–2009: 12,191 patients received an estimated \$6.7 million in free dental services
- Northern Virginia MOM, 2002, 2004–2009: 4,667 patients received an estimated \$1.3 million in free dental services
- Eastern Shore MOM, 2001–2009: 6,213 patients received an estimated \$2.7 million in free dental services
- Petersburg MOM, 2003, 2005, 2007: 249 patients received an estimated \$80,407 in free dental services
- Roanoke MOM, 2007-2008: 1,965 patients received an estimated \$985,746 in free dental services
- Martinsville MOM, 2003: 876 patients received an estimated \$288,145 in free dental services
- Norfolk MOM, 2003: 305 patients received an estimated \$85,619 in free dental services

Donations

To make the Piedmont Regional Mission of Mercy event possible, financial support is needed. Donations to support the Mission of Mercy projects may be made online at www.vaprdc.org or mailed to:

Piedmont Regional Dental Clinic
Mission of Mercy Project
PO Box 152
Barboursville, VA 22923
540.661.0008