



College of
Dentistry

DELTA DENTAL COMMUNITY CARE FOUNDATION LAUNCHES MULTI-YEAR FUNDING PROGRAM TO ADDRESS NATIONAL ORAL HEALTH CARE CRISIS AMONG OLDER ADULTS

Recent National Institutes of Health Report Declares Adults Aged 65-Plus are the Most Critically Underserved Population in U.S. for Oral Care

SAN FRANCISCO – April 26, 2022 – The Delta Dental Community Care Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Delta Dental of California, today announced it is launching a multi-year program to fund community-based coalitions to address the oral health care crisis among older adults in the U.S. A [recent report](#) by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) cited adults aged 65 years and older as the most critically underserved and vulnerable population for oral health care in America. In collaboration with its first two coalition partners, [Howard University College of Dentistry](#) and [Mary's Center](#) – a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), the Foundation's program is intended to promote the connection between oral health and overall health, provide quality outcomes, improve access and create greater equity in the care and treatment older adults receive.

The program's broader goals include identifying, assessing and addressing the socioeconomic and systemic causes of poor oral health among older adults, particularly those living in poverty; creating a replicable model for community-driven oral health solutions; and improving quality of life for seniors by reducing oral care disparities. In addition to Howard University College of Dentistry and Mary's Center, the Foundation will select and work with partners who are actively assisting historically underserved communities and transforming systems to improve oral health outcomes.

"Through Delta Dental's decades of experience in the oral health care sector, we know that the unmet oral health needs of older adults represent a public health crisis and a serious gap in America's health ecosystem," said Kenzie Ferguson, vice president of foundation and corporate social responsibility for Delta Dental of California. "Through this program, the Delta Dental Community Care Foundation and its partners are focused on providing support for the most vulnerable group of seniors – those living in poverty, people of color and those whose mobility issues keep them from receiving oral health care."

The Foundation's initial coalition partners, Howard University College of Dentistry and Mary's Center, are both based in the Washington D.C. metro area and have previously collaborated to address the health needs of communities of color and drive broader systemic change. Each partner will collect data on patient pathology, treatment, barriers to access and social determinants of health. The information will be utilized to identify effective interventions and inform the Delta Dental Senior Oral Health Care Model, which will be replicated as the program develops. The Foundation will expand the program to other communities and partnerships over the next three to five years.

"For more than 10 years, the Delta Dental Community Care Foundation has supported the College of Dentistry and our programs of improving access to care to the underserved," said Andrea D. Jackson, dean of the Howard University College of Dentistry. "Their generous

philanthropic contribution addresses the critical issue in providing oral health care to our senior population. We are excited to partner with the Delta Dental foundation and Mary's Center to collectively focus on reaching the underserved senior patients and providing a much needed service to improve their oral health and overall health."

"We are excited to embark on this partnership to address the critical oral health disparities among our older adult community members with the support and generosity of the Delta Dental Community Care Foundation," said Dr. Tollie B. Elliott, Sr., chief executive officer of Mary's Center. "Dental services are a core component of Mary's Center's holistic, multipronged approach to care. Every day, we see how oral health directly affects overall health and quality of life, and we are determined to close the gaps of essential dental care among our most underserved and under-resourced populations."

About Delta Dental Community Care Foundation

The Delta Dental Community Care Foundation is the philanthropic arm of Delta Dental of California and its affiliated companies including Delta Dental Insurance Company, Delta Dental of Pennsylvania and Delta Dental of New York, Inc. Since 2011, the Foundation has awarded more than \$80 million in funding and support to increase access to quality dental care, oral health education, and to advance scientific research across the company's 15-state service area and the District of Columbia. For more information about the Delta Dental Community Care Foundation, please visit <https://www1.deltadentalins.com/foundation.html>

About Delta Dental of California

Since 1955, Delta Dental of California has offered comprehensive, high quality oral health care coverage to millions of enrollees and built the strongest network of dental providers in the country. The Delta Dental of California enterprise includes its affiliates Delta Dental Insurance Company, Delta Dental of Pennsylvania, Delta Dental of New York, Inc., as well as the national DeltaCare USA network, and provides dental benefits to more than 39 million people across 15 states and the District of Columbia*. All are members of the Delta Dental Plans Association based in Oak Brook, Illinois, the not-for-profit national association that through a national network of Delta Dental companies collectively covers millions of people nationwide. For more information about Delta Dental of California, please visit www.deltadentalins.com

*Delta Dental of California's operating areas encompass Alabama, California, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, New York, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, West Virginia and the District of Columbia.

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For More Information, Contact:

Tom Sarris
Director, Corporate Communications
Delta Dental of California
tsarris@delta.org