



Dentists Do Serve (DDS) & Dentists Make a Difference (DMD) in Wisconsin

Here are a few examples of how Wisconsin Dental Association dentists do serve their communities and make a difference by providing charitable dental care to children and adults facing barriers to care across Wisconsin.

Charitable Dentistry – Every year, 73 percent of practicing WDA members will donate approximately \$10,000 each to an average of 15 low-income patients through their private practices. In 2011, this meant 1,578 dentists donated \$15.7 million in care to an estimated 23,670 needy patients statewide. *These donations are in addition to nonreimbursed medical assistance care, dentists volunteering with community programs/clinics and unpaid patient bills.*

Community Dental Clinics – Hundreds of volunteer dentists provide needed care to patients at more than 70 free or low-cost clinics statewide. Examples include Appleton's Tri-County Community Dental Clinic, Racine's Health Care Network, Milwaukee's St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Dental Clinic and Monroe's Fowler Memorial Free Dental Clinic. A reduced-rate dental clinic list by county is posted on WDA.org as a public service.

Donated Dental Services – This WDA Foundation program provides comprehensive dental care at no charge to adults who cannot work due to a permanent disability, chronic illness or advanced age, and public aid programs do not meet their oral health needs. Since 1998, more than \$6.8 million in care has been donated by 749 dentists to 2,399 patients; 150 dental labs have donated supplies and services worth \$494,000. The state, Delta Dental of Wisconsin and WDA Insurance and Services Corp provide monetary support for administrative and lab costs. Participating dentists donate more than \$8 in clinical expertise, treatment and materials for every one dollar in funding from the three entities.

Give Kids A Smile® – Some 478 Wisconsin dentists, along with 544 dental team members, students and community volunteers donated approximately \$982,000 in needed care and oral health instruction to 5,496 children from families with limited financial resources during February 2012 as part of the 10th annual Give Kids A Smile® national children's dental access program. Wisconsin GKAS® events have provided \$6 million in care to 40,417 kids since 2003.

Mission of Mercy – The third WDA Foundation and WDA Mission of Mercy was held near Wausau in June 2011. A team of 1,050 volunteers, including 215 dentists, from across Wisconsin delivered some \$1.12 million in charitable care to 1,570 adults and kids in two days. A total 8,033 fillings, extractions, cleanings, treatment partials and root canals were provided, along with instruction in personal oral hygiene and diet. More than 70 organizations and individuals gave some \$160,000 in tax-free monetary and in-kind donations to help cover dental equipment and facility rental, supplies, pharmaceuticals and food costs. On average, \$5 to \$7 in care was donated for every one dollar received. WDA MOM events have provided \$2.9 million in care through more than 5,700 patient visits since 2009. Goals for the next WDA Mission of Mercy to be held in Madison June 29 – 30, 2012, include: \$1.75 million in care; 3,500 patient visits; 1,500 volunteers.

Dentists Surpass Government MA Contributions – Some 1 million children and adults (20 percent of Wisconsin residents) benefit from state dental medical assistance (Medicaid, BadgerCare programs) during a 12-month period. State fee-for-service MA data for fiscal year 2010 shows \$146.6 million in dental care was provided to enrollees. However, state and federal governments paid just \$58 million (39 percent) toward that care with participating dentists donating the balance of \$88.6 million in services. *The dental community donates more in care than the state and federal governments combined pay for.* In 2011, 37 percent of WDA members were MA-certified providers. When surveyed, 81 percent of WDA dentists said they would consider seeing MA patients or see more MA patients if state reimbursement to private practices equaled that paid to Federally Qualified Health Centers (about double the rate currently paid to private practices).

WDA Healthy Choices – Oral health is critical to overall health, and ensuring residents have proper dental care is important to our state economically and socially. As doctors of oral health, dentists have the training and education necessary to relieve pain and make people well – but they can't solve the state's dental crisis alone. The WDA is committed to working with policy leaders to find solutions and has identified viable "Healthy Choices" that would reduce barriers to dental care, thus improving oral health and overall health in Wisconsin.