

**The U.S. Surgeon General recognizes oral health as an integral part of a person's total health, with the dentist being the primary oral health care provider.**

The Wisconsin Dental Association Mission of Mercy, or MOM, focuses on:

- 1. Providing free access to critical dental care while placing a high priority on patients suffering from dental infections or pain.**
- 2. Raising public awareness of the increasing difficulty adults and children with limited financial resources face in accessing critical dental care.**
- 3. Challenging patients, policymakers and dental professionals to work together to reduce dental disease and improve the oral health of Wisconsin residents, including those who have been promised care by the state.**

**The WDA and WDA Foundation will team up for their second MOM program on June 25 – 26, 2010 at Sheboygan North High School in Sheboygan, Wis.**

- Our goal is to serve **2,000 patients** (estimating 1,650 adults and 350 children under the age of 18). Individuals will be seen **first-come, first-served**. Doors open at 6 a.m. both days. Photo identification, social security number or other personal identification/documentation is **NOT** required.
- Approximately **\$1 million in charitable care** is expected to be donated. Fillings, extractions, cleanings and limited lab work (i.e., treatment partials) will be offered. The program is unable to treat patients with specific medically-compromising conditions, such as extremely high blood pressure or severe disabilities.
- **Education is the most cost-effective way to reduce oral disease among patients**, including those covered by medical assistance. Helping patients understand the importance of good daily oral hygiene practices, healthy diet and routine preventive dental care is an essential part of WDA MOM event.
- Some **950 volunteers**, including **175 dentists**, dental hygienists and assistants, lab technicians and lay persons from across Wisconsin will donate their time and skills. Dental supply companies also are helping.
- Collaborating organizations include Marquette University School of Dentistry, Delta Dental of Wisconsin, Henry Schein Dental and America's Dentists Care Foundation.
- More than **\$185,000** in tax-deductible financial donations and in-kind contributions to the WDA Foundation will help cover dental equipment and facility rentals, supplies, pharmaceuticals and food costs for this four-day charitable care event. (Setup, volunteer orientation and cleanup are on June 24 and 27.)
- On average, MOM events **deliver \$6 - \$8 in dental care for every donor dollar received.**

**Charitable MOM events serve individuals who, for various reasons (e.g., financial, enrolled in state's medical assistance programs, live in underserved areas), have difficulty accessing dental care.**

- In Wisconsin, state and federal governments spend less than 1 percent or just \$38 million of a \$4.4 billion annual MA budget on oral health programs for children and adults.
- Eighty percent of states spend a higher percentage of MA dollars on dental care than Wisconsin.
- Patients with limited incomes in particular suffer from dental disease for various reasons: Personal failure to practice good oral hygiene and follow a balanced diet; inability to find a dental office that will see them for routine oral health care, because small-business practices cannot absorb too much income loss from below-cost state reimbursement; and lawmakers' failure to sufficiently fund the dental care they've promised through various benefit programs.

**“Dentists Do Serve (DDS) and Dentists Make a Difference (DMD)”, but charity alone is not a sufficient system for providing dental care. Mission of Mercy is not a solution, but it does help meet some individuals' urgent dental care needs while bringing the access problem to the attention of legislators and the general public.**

- The WDA and WDA Foundation's first Mission of Mercy was held in La Crosse in June 2009 where 1,533 patients received more than \$850,000 in charitable dental treatment.