



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Wright Smiles for Central Minnesota – New Community Dental Care Clinic Increases Access for Thousands in the Region**

BUFFALO, MINN. – Community Dental Care, a Minnesota Health Care Programs community clinic established to provide dental services for underserved populations, announced they will open a new dental clinic in summer of 2022. As one of Minnesota’s largest non-profit dental providers, Community Dental Care has been working in partnership with Wright County and the Wright County Dental Access Workgroup to plan and raise funds to design, build, equip and staff a dental clinic to serve people of all ages and abilities in the region. The clinic will provide comprehensive dental care to all people, increasing access to oral health services for thousands of Central Minnesota residents with the most need.

Elected officials, community leaders and health care organizations have long understood that it is challenging for people on public programs and the uninsured to get the dental care that they need. Each year, thousands of people end up in hospital emergency rooms where the cost of care is especially high and providers are not able to address dental concerns. This is precisely why there has been such broad community support from hospitals, health plans, public health organizations, dentists, elected officials and foundations.

*“The new Community Dental Care clinic is the result of a collaborative effort of many in our community and our state. Providing a dental home for the underserved in the new Wright County Government Center will address a long standing public health need in a permanent way for our residents.”*

*Jami Goodrum, Director, Wright County Health and Human Services*

Construction of the new clinic will begin in March of this year, and is expected to be finished by the end of June, 2022. The new Community Dental Care clinic will create 22 local jobs for dentists, dental hygienists, dental assistants, and administrative staff. The 6,200 square foot clinic will include 12 dental operatories and, once fully staffed, will provide comprehensive dental services for 16,000 patient visits each year. Expanding to new communities to provide vitally important health care to historically underserved populations is part of how Community Dental Care fulfills their mission to ensure everyone has equitable access to quality dental care.

*“We are grateful for the collaborative partnership we have built with Wright County and local health care organizations. We look forward to serving people in need in the region with high quality dental care for years to come.”*

*Karen Flanagan Kleinhans, CEO, Community Dental Care*

The state of Minnesota has dedicated \$1.4 million in bond funds to cover the cost of constructing the clinic within the new Wright County Government Center at 3650 Braddock Ave NE, Buffalo, MN, 55313. Community Dental Care has raised an additional \$1.1 million to cover the equipment and start-up costs, funded by generous donations from the Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation, Otto Bremer Trust, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, UCare, Medica, PrimeWest Health, HealthPartners, Allina Health Buffalo Hospital and CentraCare Monticello Hospital. Community Dental Care is seeking an additional \$150,000 in donations to cover the remaining budgeted costs. Donations can be made at <https://www.cdentc.org/donate>.

### **About Community Dental Care**

Community Dental Care is an established leader in promoting health equity by providing access to high quality comprehensive oral health care for the underserved. Community Dental Care is committed to removing barriers that impede so many Minnesotans from receiving care and services that promote oral health, which is key to good health overall. Their mission is to provide culturally sensitive community oral health care, preventive education, professional training, and to advocate for access for all. Today, they provide comprehensive dental care for 50,000 children and adults each year through four clinics (St. Paul, Maplewood, Robbinsdale, and Rochester) and outreach in community settings. Learn more at <https://www.cdentc.org/>

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