



**Community Dental Care**  
Quality Dental Care and Preventive Education for All  
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 **DELTA DENTAL**

Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **\$1 million grant goes to work for thousands of Rochester-area families in need**

*A new dental clinic will provide care to 10,000 people each year*

ROCHESTER, MINN. – Thanks to a \$1 million grant from Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation, more than 10,000 Southeastern Minnesota children and adults will soon have access to quality dental care.

Community Dental Care, one of the largest nonprofit dental clinics in Minnesota, announced today it has received a \$1 million grant from Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation to help build a new Community Dental Care clinic in Rochester, expanding access to oral health services for Southeastern Minnesota residents with the most need. To date, this is the largest grant that Community Dental Care has received.

“We are so happy to support this project, which will bring accessible dental care to an area of the state that has demonstrated a significant need, and to do so with a partner who has a proven record of meeting those needs,” said Joe Lally, Executive Director of Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation. “We know that oral health is key to overall health, and we believe that every single person deserves a healthy smile. This new clinic will make a substantial impact for thousands of Minnesotans who otherwise would not have access to quality care.”

There is a significant, unmet need for oral health care in Southeastern Minnesota. Currently, Community Dental Care’s small, six-chair clinic in Rochester has a list of patients who are waiting two months for a dentist appointment and seven months for a hygienist. In Olmsted County and the surrounding areas, of the 71,000 people who are eligible for public programs, almost 70 percent went without care in 2014. Only 43 percent of the more than 10,000 Medicaid-eligible children visited a dentist.

The new clinic broke ground last month and is expected to begin serving patients in September 2017. With 18 chairs, the new clinic will create 30-35 full-time, professional jobs and provide primary dental services to 10,000 people (about 35,000 encounters) annually. The services will be targeted to low-income families and people living in poverty.

“The need for dental services in Rochester and our surrounding communities is enormous,” said Dr. Vacharee Peterson, CEO of Community Dental Care. “Too many people are going without even a simple exam, which can prevent the need for serious or emergency dental procedures in the future. This new clinic will transform dental care access for thousands of these children and families in need. We are grateful for the support and the trust from Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation.”

Grant funds will also support start-up costs at the new clinic for Community Dental Care’s nationally recognized, community-based Program to Improve Community Oral Health. Programming at the new clinic will include in-clinic preventive education for children and parents and community outreach. Funds were also designated for two pilot projects to extend school-based preventive services to young teens at the Robbinsdale Middle School and the MN Cavity Free Kids project—providing education to parents of infants and toddlers under age 3.

### **About Community Dental Care**

Community Dental Care is one of the largest nonprofit dental clinics in Minnesota and is recognized by the Minnesota Department of Health as one of six successful models statewide providing dental services for underserved communities. Its mission is to ensure equal access to quality dental care and preventive education for all. They achieve this through clinical services, community preventive education programs, training of professionals, and advocacy. Founded by Drs. Vacharee and Andrew Peterson, the clinic was for-profit for 22 years before incorporating as a nonprofit in 2004. Today, they operate four clinics in St. Paul, Maplewood, Robbinsdale, and Rochester. In 2015, they provided care for more than 43,000 individual patients. Of these, 92% were low-income, 65% were a racial/ethnic minority, and 46% were children.

### **About Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation**

In 2009, Delta Dental of Minnesota’s parent sold a company and used 100 percent of the proceeds to establish and fund Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation. Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation supports Delta Dental of Minnesota’s mission of improving the health of Minnesotans through oral health. Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation works to expand access to dental care for Minnesota’s underserved populations across the state by primarily investing in programs and organizations that provide dental care to people in need. Since 2011, the foundation has invested more than \$21 million in grants to nearly 70 programs and organizations that provide care and promote oral health.

### **Media contacts:**

Clarise Tushie-Lessard, Delta Dental of Minnesota  
Office: 612-224-3341  
Cell: 612-437-7191  
[ctushie-lessard@deltadentalmn.org](mailto:ctushie-lessard@deltadentalmn.org)

Crystal Yang, Community Dental Care  
Office: 651-925-8410  
[CrystalYang@cdentc.org](mailto:CrystalYang@cdentc.org)

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