

Delta Dental Community Care Foundation Expands its Senior Oral Health Partnership Program with Addition of Health Quality Partners (HQP) of Southern California

HQP, a subsidiary of Health Center Partners of Southern California, receives \$5M grant to improve access to quality oral health care for vulnerable seniors

- Delta Dental Community Care Foundation commits to 5-year, \$5M grant to San Diego senior oral health partnership.
- The grant is designed to increase access to quality oral care for vulnerable seniors, who often have no dental benefit coverage.
- This partnership is led by Health Quality Partners of Southern California, a nonprofit advancing health equity and wellness in local communities.
- The Community Care Foundation will join HQP, dignitaries from the County of San Diego, and seven community health center organizations at a ceremony to commemorate the partnership announcement on May 6, 2024.

SAN FRANCISCO – May 6, 2024 – The Delta Dental Community Care Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Delta Dental of California and affiliates (“the Company”), today announced a significant expansion of its Senior Oral Health Partnership Program. The Community Care Foundation is committing an additional \$5 million over the next five years to a consortium led by [Health Quality Partners of Southern California](#), a subsidiary of Health Center Partners of Southern California, a regional primary care association. This monumental grant is part of a broader strategy that includes more than \$15 million dedicated to senior oral health initiatives.

Since its launch in April 2022, the Senior Oral Health Partnership Program has sought to transform access to quality oral health care for vulnerable seniors. By forming and funding localized collaborations, the program supports the development of innovative approaches and expansion of oral health services. Additionally, program partners collect data on community needs and successes, which is used to inform the Delta Dental Senior Oral Health Care Model.

Health Quality Partners is a nonprofit organization established in 1997 to advance health equity and wellness in Southern California communities through collaborative research, resource development and implementation of a broad array of clinical and non-clinical programs. The organizations participating in the Senior Oral Health Partnership include Federally Qualified Health Centers: [Community Health Systems, Inc.](#), [Imperial Beach Community Clinic](#), [Indian Health Council](#), [Neighborhood Healthcare](#), [San Ysidro Health](#), [Father Joe’s Villages](#) and [Vista Community Clinic](#), as well as the [County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency](#), [Medical Care Services](#). Together in 2022, the seven participating health centers served 51,977 patients 60 years of age or older, of whom 10,757 (21%) had at least one dental visit.

Oral health access for older adults is an urgent and growing crisis. By 2030, one in five Americans will be age 65 or older, according to [U.S. Census data](#). A [survey](#) commissioned by the Company found that 80% of older American adults do not go to the dentist as often as recommended, and access is one of the main barriers. In fact, one in three older adults surveyed later said they cannot afford to see a dentist regularly. Not only that, but [more than half of older adults](#) do not have dental benefit coverage.

“Public private partnerships, like this one with the Delta Dental Community Care Foundation, Health Quality Partners, and seven of our region’s Federally Qualified Health Centers, can expand access to oral health for our aging population,” said Dr. Fadra Whyte, chief dental officer for the County of San Diego. “Leveraging oral health resources, expertise and infrastructure can tailor services to better meet seniors’ needs. This includes more outreach, greater access and breaking down barriers to provide equitable care for seniors.”

“The members of Health Center Partners and Health Quality Partners are most appreciative to the Delta Dental Community Care Foundation for their support of and investment in our senior oral health collaborative to benefit the thousands of elderly patients entrusted to our care,” said Henry Tuttle, president and chief executive officer for Health Center Partners. “The Community Care Foundation’s vision and long-term commitment to this initiative reflects its accurate and timely understanding of the oral health access and services challenges faced by this patient population, and we are grateful for their partnership and shared mission to diminish the effects of social determinants upon this particularly vulnerable population.”

As members of the Senior Oral Health Partnership Program, Health Quality Partners of Southern California will collaborate with the Delta Dental Community Care Foundation to engage with those most vulnerable in the senior population who experience significant challenges to receiving oral health care.

“With the aging population, it’s more difficult to have access to dental care because caregivers can’t bring them in, or they can’t always consent to care. There are so many barriers for seniors, but as a group, we can identify and overcome these challenges through innovation and collaboration,” said Dr. Sergio Cuevas, chief dental officer for San Ysidro Health.

“We love being part of innovative programs. This is a unique opportunity to innovate and collaborate for seniors in our area. With the senior population continuing to grow, there are a lot of disconnects between current systems in place to take care of those patients,” said Dr. Rebecca Cornille, chief dental officer for Vista Community Clinic.

“We are thrilled to welcome our Southern California partners, our largest partnership to date, whose diverse membership across San Diego County helps deliver on our commitment to health equity,” said Kenzie Ferguson, vice president of foundation and corporate social responsibility for Delta Dental of California and affiliates. “Together with all our partners, we strive to build a better, healthier world where older adults can age with dignity and continue to be thriving members of our communities.”

Existing partners from Washington, D.C., [Howard University College of Dentistry](#) and [Mary’s Center](#), and from Santa Cruz County, [Dientes Community Dental Care](#) and [Salud Para La Gente](#), have already served more than 6,000 senior patients, 87% of whom fall below the federal poverty level, demonstrating the program’s impact and the vital role of strategic partnerships in addressing senior health needs.

The Delta Dental Community Care Foundation and Health Quality Partners, along with participating organizations, will commemorate the grant with a ceremony and check presentation on Monday, May 6, 2024, at Vista Community Clinic located at 1000 Vale Terrace Drive in Vista, CA.

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 Community Care Foundation has awarded more than \$140 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://www.deltadentalins.com/foundation.html>.

About Delta Dental of California and affiliates

Since 1955, Delta Dental of California and affiliates 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 45 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 and affiliates' 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, as well as Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.*

About Health Center Partners of Southern California

Health Center Partners of Southern California (HCP) is a regional primary care association of 16 member organizations including Federally Qualified Health Centers, Indian Health Services Organizations, both urban and sovereign, and Planned Parenthood of the Pacific Southwest. HCP's members collectively serve 638,593 unduplicated patients each year, in 2.7 million patient visits, at 176 practice sites across San Diego, Riverside, and Imperial counties, with the fifth largest provider group in the region. For more information, please visit www.hcpsocal.org.

About Health Quality Partners of Southern California

Health Quality Partners of Southern California (HQP), established in 1977, a 501(c)(3) and subsidiary of Health Center Partners, is a non-profit with a mission to advance health equity and wellness in the communities served by its members. Through collaborative research and implementation of a broad array of clinical and non-clinical programs, HQP is an innovation hub that works to improve patient outcomes, achieve operational efficiencies, and develop innovative programs. For more information, please visit www.hqpsocal.org.

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