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DELTA DENTAL OF COLORADO FOUNDATION RELEASES NEW FUNDING OPPORTUNITY FOR NONPROFIT MEDICAL PRACTICES TO PROVIDE DENTAL HYGIENE SERVICES

DENVER – November 28, 2017 – Today, Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation (DDCOF) released a request for applications (RFA) from nonprofit medical practices in Colorado interested in integrating a dental hygienist into their medical teams to provide dental hygiene services. This RFA is part of Wave II of funding for DDCOF’s [Colorado Medical-Dental Integration](#) (CO MDI) Project, which seeks to improve the oral health of vulnerable Coloradans.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood illness among U.S. children ages 6-11. Low-income Coloradans of all ages with and without dental insurance are less likely to receive dental care. However, according to the 2015 Colorado Health Access Survey, over 90 percent of publicly insured Colorado children have at least one medical visit by age one and medical offices are well-visited locations among adults.

To expand oral health access, DDCOF awarded funding to 16 medical practices as part of CO MDI Wave I in 2015. These practices integrated a hygienist into their practice to provide full scope dental hygiene services – oral health education, cleanings, fluoride varnishes and sealants – during regular medical checkups. Wave I grantees have seen more than 36,000 patients and 72 percent have public dental coverage through Medicaid or Child Health Plan *Plus*.

DDCOF is expanding the CO MDI Project to fund up to 10 new organizations from April 2018 – April 2022. [The Wave II CO MDI RFA is available online](#). Applications are due by **Tuesday, January 23, 2018 at 5:00 p.m. MST**. Funding priority will be given to organizations that:

- Have existing or evolving relationships with community dentists to refer to when patients need exams and restorative dental care.
- Provide a medical home to children and/or adults experiencing oral health disparities.
- Demonstrate a clear desire to expand patient services to include full scope preventive dental care.
- Demonstrate a readiness for medical-dental integration as defined in the [CO MDI toolkit](#) and through the toolkit’s [readiness assessment](#).



DCCOF will consider funding:

- Federally Qualified Health Centers integrating a dental hygienist as part of the medical team.
- Nonprofit safety-net practices integrating a dental hygienist as part of the medical team.
- Dental practices collaborating with medical practices to partner as dental homes.

“We are thrilled to release a new round of funding for the CO MDI Project,” said Allison Cusick, executive director of Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation. “The CO MDI model meets patients where they are, offering an opportunity to provide dental care to those who may not otherwise be able to access it. It also communicates the connection between oral health and overall health. The foundation looks forward to expanding the work of the Wave I grantees to reduce oral health disparities in communities across Colorado.”

DCCOF is a state and national leader in funding projects that address oral health disparities in children and vulnerable families. The foundation has [funded projects](#) testing different levels of medical-dental integration for nearly a decade. The overarching goal of the CO MDI Project is to reach families with limited access to dental care due to transportation issues, lack of insurance or geographic barriers.

More information on Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation can be found at www.deltadentalcofoundation.org.

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About Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation:

Over the past 20 years, Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation (DCCOF) initiatives have included educational programs targeting low-income, high-risk families; support of dental health education for medical and dental students as well as providers; and opportunities to teach good dental habits and cavity prevention among pregnant women and children. As a 501(c)(3) organization solely funded by Delta Dental of Colorado, DCCOF works to make good dental health a community priority for all Coloradans. A core belief is that, because dental disease is almost 100 percent preventable, efforts to improve oral health will result in a healthier Colorado overall. To learn more, visit www.deltadentalcofoundation.org.