



## **Boulder County's Dental Aid Launches Tele-dentistry Program to Aid Patients in Low-income, Rural Areas.**

*New program ensures children and adults, who are unable to access dental care in a traditional dental office setting, receive preventive oral health care services.*

LAFAYETTE, Colo., March 14, 2017 — [Dental Aid](#), the area's only nonprofit organization that supports the oral health care needs of low income adults and children, announces the launch of the [SMILES Dental Project](#) to four remote sites. The sites include [Mental Health Partners](#), [Sister Carmen Community Center](#), [Bridge House](#) and [OUR Center](#). The Dental Aid team will take advantage of telehealth technology to deliver preventive and interim dental services to approximately 30 patients a week.

Dental Aid is one of six organizations across Colorado selected as a SMILES Dental Project participant; it is the only such provider in Boulder and Broomfield counties. The SMILES project deploys collaborative, telehealth-connected dental teams to perform preventive and early intervention services for adults and children in low-income, rural areas. The teams also initiate referrals, as needed, for follow-up treatment with a dentist, thereby expanding access to dental services and improving overall health outcomes.

Many adults and children – especially in low-income, rural communities – don't visit dental offices and clinics on a regular basis due to the cost, location of services, cultural and language barriers. Without ongoing preventive care, patients suffering from pain and infections end up in emergency rooms where they rack up higher healthcare costs.

As part of the SMILES project, a live audio/video link connects a certified, registered hygienist to a fully qualified dentist in another location. With the assistance of a case manager, the hygienist performs preventive and interim dental services to patients in remote locations.

“Dental Aid is excited to launch this progressive oral health care outreach effort,” says Dennis Lewis, Dental Aid president. “It aligns with our mission to deliver quality dental care services to underserved people who cannot get to our clinics. This grant enables Dental Aid to reduce many of the dental care access barriers for the underserved in Boulder and Broomfield counties.”

SMILES Dental Project is funded jointly by the [Caring for Colorado Foundation](#) and the [Colorado Health Foundation](#). “We have a long-standing commitment to improve oral health for underserved populations in Colorado,” says Chris Wiant, president and CEO of Caring for Colorado Foundation. “The SMILES Dental Project gives us the opportunity to test new and innovative ways of providing access to care for populations unable to access care through the traditional dental care system.”

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### ***About Dental Aid***

Dental Aid provides compassionate, affordable, high quality dental care and education to low-income and uninsured residents of Colorado's Boulder and Broomfield counties.

The long term clinical focus of Dental Aid follows a chronic disease management model directed at prevention, education and treatment in the early stages of disease. In addition to direct clinical care, Dental Aid prioritizes education and outreach to high-risk patients including:

- Families and children of all ages
- Pregnant women
- People with chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and HIV/AIDS
- People with physical, mental or emotional disabilities

Dental Aid was one of the first stand-alone, nonprofit, complete-care dental clinics in the U.S. The organization was founded in 1974 as a referral organization and opened its first full-service clinic in 1980. Today, Dental Aid provides dental care to more than 8,000 children and adults annually. It provides services through three clinics (Boulder, Longmont and Louisville, CO) and a satellite clinic at the Boulder Shelter for the Homeless. In addition, portable dental equipment is used to bring dental care to the homebound or those living in long term care facilities. For more information, visit [www.dentalaid.org](http://www.dentalaid.org).

### ***About SMILES Dental Project***

SMILES Dental Project is funded jointly by Caring for Colorado Foundation [www.caringforcolorado.org](http://www.caringforcolorado.org) and the Colorado Health Foundation. [www.coloradohealth.org](http://www.coloradohealth.org). To learn more, visit the SMILES blog at [www.caringforcolorado.blogspot.com](http://www.caringforcolorado.blogspot.com).

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