



## Northern Dental ACCESS CENTER

...providing access to a dental home for those in need

A nonprofit agency operated by Mississippi Headwaters Area Dental Health Center

[www.northerndentalaccess.org](http://www.northerndentalaccess.org)

# 2011 Annual Report



## Northern Dental ACCESS CENTER

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Clinic Hours:

Monday-Friday 8:00 am - 4:30 pm

*like us on  
Facebook*



August 25, 2011

"Congratulations on meeting all twenty-seven of the Charities Review Council's Accountability Standards. The standards represent sound principles and practices, and reflect the best thinking of hundreds of philanthropic and nonprofit leaders. I encourage you to use the "Meets Standard" seal to help you get the word out that Northern Dental Access Center is a trustworthy organization."

**Rich Cowles, Executive Director**  
Charities Review Council, St. Paul, MN

## ...From the President

When a group of community individuals began meeting in 2001 for brown bag lunches to discuss dental care access, they never could have foretold the journey - its length, its circuitous route, the breadth and depth of area support - or the end result: the Northern Dental Access Center. The opening of this regional health care facility in 2009 realized the early goals of reducing barriers to access to dental care for public assistance patients, while connecting those individuals to agencies that could serve them. And since achieving those early goals, the organization has continued to define and strive for new and bigger goals, all the while keeping squarely in sight the core mission, "Working to provide access to a dental home for those in need."

It is therefore with pleasure that we share in this annual report the activities of the Northern Dental Access Center for 2011, an exciting and successful year, marking three years of operation.

Making this possible has been the constant, dedicated work of staff, board and stakeholders to address challenges relating to growth and success, while also keeping the clear message in front of all that the job is nowhere near complete. The stability provided by 3 full time dentists has been a great benefit. In addition, they are assisted by numerous other dentists who provide care under a variety of arrangements.

2011 saw the introduction of a program to expand our reach to schools and community-based settings through portable prevention activities. Just as this effort was getting underway there was an unnerving state government shutdown and subsequent budget cuts. However, having foreseen this possibility - and with many hours spent contingency planning- our executive director, along with key staff persons and the board, were able to direct operations in a fiscally prudent manner and weather the crisis. Kudos to them all for navigating through such uncertain and difficult times. The outreach program has indeed gotten off to a solid start, is growing, and promises to provide greatly needed services to regional schools and community-based organizations.

We continue to work with patients and our partner community agencies to identify and address barriers which often prevent families in poverty from getting the care they need. And it is with sincere gratitude to the community, and to all those who have championed this work that I extend a most humble "thank you."

I also recognize my fellow board members who have joined in this pursuit. These are dedicated professionals who share the passion to serve others, who vigorously debate the issues, who work cohesively to assure the best outcomes, and to whom I extend my sincerest thanks! Staff deserve the praise of all of us, as they work tirelessly every day to welcome patients and assure the best care possible - assuring that Northern Dental Access Center is truly a dental home for those in need. It is their frontline passion and commitment to service which deserves so very much credit.

Certainly challenges lie ahead; the path will be fraught with them. But we will face them together, as we assure that those most in need get the care that will improve their health and their lives. Thank you to all who share this vision!

Most respectfully,

**John Lueth, DDS**



## Board of Directors

**John Lueth - DDS President**  
North Country Dental

**Warren Larson - Vice President**  
Sanford Health Bemidji

**Robert Enger**  
Legal Services of Northwest Minnesota

**Cathy Gunvalson**  
Hygienist

**John Parkin**  
Pediatrician

**Becky Secore**  
Beltrami Area Service Collaborative

**Joan Tronson**  
Northwest Area Health Education Center

**Scott Turn**  
Security Bank USA

**Linda Yourczek**  
Beltrami County Health & Human Services

**Jeanne Edevold Larson**  
Executive Director



*Dr. John Lueth*



## 2011 Funding Partners

Bemidji Jaycees  
 Delta Dental of Minnesota  
 Healthier Minnesota Community Clinics Fund  
 Mardag Foundation  
 Medica Foundation  
 Minnesota Dental Foundation  
 Minnesota Department of Health  
 North Country Snowmobile Club  
 Northwest Minnesota Area Health Education Center  
 Otto Bremer Foundation  
 Ruth Edevold Endowment for Excellence  
 Sanford Health Foundation  
 Sunrise Rotary  
 United Way of Bemidji Area  
 US Department of Health

## Target Population

Northern Dental Access Center serves low-income residents (200% of federal poverty guidelines) who live in and around Beltrami County. The median household income is \$44,700 (*Quick Facts US Census*) with 39.9% of the population living in poverty (*MNACHC Greater Minnesota Needs Assessment*), the second highest poverty rate of 87 counties in Minnesota and much higher than the national poverty rate of 14.3%.

The health ranking of Minnesota Counties (*Minnesota Department of Health*) shows Beltrami as the 82nd healthiest of Minnesota's 85 ranked counties. 24% of people in Beltrami County are enrolled in Medicaid; 16% are enrolled in Medicare. According to the US Census Bureau Small Area Health Insurance Estimates, the number of uninsured people in our region is 15% which is 50% higher than the Minnesota State average.

While we focus on Beltrami County for the purposes of understanding the characteristics of the target population, Northern Dental Access Center has no geographic boundaries. 55% of patients come from the immediate Bemidji area; 20% come from the western regions of Bagley, Fosston, Crookston, Thief River Falls; 12% come from northern areas of Red Lake and Blackduck. A smaller number of patients come from as far as International Falls or Mahanomen.

## The Vision...

*a non-competitive dental service for the underprivileged and underinsured, providing oral health education and access to emergency and preventive dental care for people of all ages.*

## The Mission...

*to provide access to a dental home for those in need. The American Academy of Pediatric Dentists defines a dental home as "a place where oral health care is managed in a comprehensive, continuously accessible, coordinated and family-centered way."*

## Economic Impact

Northern Dental Access Center brings \$2 million dollars each year into the Bemidji area, from sources throughout the state and nation.

We employ 23 full time employees with livable wages and benefits, with a payroll of \$1 million dollars.

Thousands of families travel up to 100 miles to see a dentist here, and many indicate that while they are here, they stop at stores, buy gas and eat at restaurants.

Additional volunteer and contract providers travel to the community, staying in hotels, eating in area restaurants and bringing families along to enjoy our community.

## Outcomes

*9,900 patients served*

*41% children*

*5% senior citizens*

*12% of children have been cavity free for 6 months*

*56% reduction in ER visits (at NCRH) that note a secondary diagnosis "unspecified disorder of the teeth and supporting structures" from 2008 to 2010.*

*5% reduction in ER visits that note this as a Primary diagnosis.*

## Achievements in 2011

- Community Clinic Status achieved through the Minnesota Department of Human Services, allowing for increased reimbursements and an expansion of health care services in the future.
- Sales Tax exemption granted from the Minnesota Department of Revenue.
- Met the 27 Charities Review Council's Accountability Standards and awarded their seal of approval.
- Successful implementation of a Non-Enrolled Patient Schedule to allow access to dental care by people in poverty who are not enrolled in a Minnesota Health Care Plan.
- Survival of the July state shutdown with minimal interruption of services to patients; adapting to a reduction in dental service reimbursements by 3% and reduction in critical access dental payments from 50% to 30% (both effective September 1, 2011).
- Recruitment of a full time Lead Dentist and a full time Staff Dentist, raising staffing levels to include three full time dentists, augmented by five contractors and volunteers.
- Approval by the Minnesota Department of Health as a site for Minnesota State Loan Repayment Program; with approval for our new Staff Dentist to receive loan repayment funds.
- Expansion of two more operatories to fill out entire facility; now eleven patient operatories.
- Partner with University of Minnesota Northwest Area Health Education Center as a host site for pre dental students pursuing the Rural Early Admission program, or who need to meet shadowing and community service requirements for traditional dental school admission.



## Core Values

- A culturally-competent approach to services is key to our identity. Rooted in the Ruby Payne Framework for Understanding Poverty, we strive to understand, accept and meet patients where they are and provide a nonjudgemental and welcoming place for them to receive care.
- Our approach to public health requires that we treat more than just a person's mouth—that we honor their circumstances and personal stories to identify any barriers to success, and we then provide linkages to resources to overcome those barriers.
- We believe that partnerships with community people, agencies, policy makers, educational institutions and employers bring strength to the services we can provide to the people we care about. We remain open to new partnerships that will ultimately benefit our patients and the community.
- Our role in the professional development of health care professionals is very important to us. We work to allow future dentists, dental assistants, nurses and others to observe, shadow, intern and practice here whenever possible.
- We are especially attentive to children, helping them to feel comfortable here, to have fun while they wait, and to listen when they speak. Motivating them to break the cycle of oral neglect requires our full attention and compassionate education.
- We believe that everyone has a right to a dental home and we are committed to not competing with the private practice community. We are here to serve people who do not have access to care, and we encourage people of means to work within the private practice dental community for their care.
- We believe in abundance. That when we work together within our community, there will be adequate resources to get the job done. Fear, competitiveness or a sense of scarcity only breeds further scarcity and we will not forget the lessons we have learned about the wealth of resources that collaboration brings to the table.
- We hold firm to the business practice of buying local whenever possible, to support our local and regional community to the best of our ability.
- We believe poverty is a condition of economics, not race or ethnicity.



*in patient  
exit surveys:*



65% of patients report changing their brushing and flossing habits because of their dental visits

69% report overall health has improved since receiving dental care at this office

41% report changing how much sugar they consume as a result of the information provided by our staff

46% report drinking fewer soft drinks, energy drinks/juice

28% report that they made use of the health or service related resources available

100% report our staff were friendly, knowledgeable and helpful in meeting needs and making them feel welcome

100% report they would recommend Northern Dental Access Center to a friend or family member

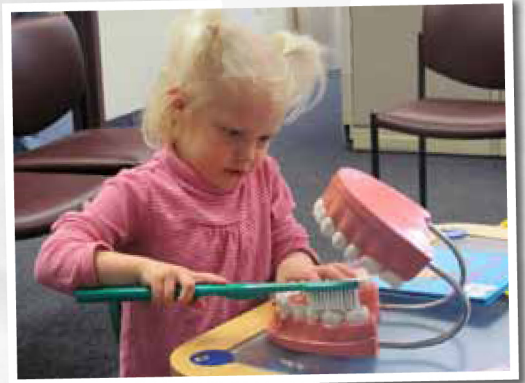
100% rate the dental treatment they received as either Excellent (84%) or Good (16%)



**Northern Dental**  
ACCESS CENTER

## Community Based Oral Health Program

Portable preventive services were introduced in 2011, thanks to a generous grant from Healthier Minnesota Community Clinic Fund. Hygienists and patient advocates set up equipment in community based settings to provide screenings, cleanings, fluoride treatments, dental sealants and oral health instruction for groups of any age. Research shows that every dollar spent on prevention saves more than \$4 of dental care down the road. Our goal is to help people in need access care conveniently and help them reduce barriers to ongoing dental care. Care was provided within six host sites around the region during this first, pilot phase of the project.



## ...From the Director

What an amazing year!

This third year of operation has brought Northern Dental Access Center to a level of stabilization that is both gratifying and humbling. Clearly we are reaching thousands of families who need dental care; and luckily, the financial model developed by early stakeholders in planning, has—for the most part—worked.

While we always live on a razor's edge of (non)profitability, our success in gaining Community Clinic Status and the continuation of critical access dental payments (reduced in 2011), have helped make the basic costs of dental procedures manageable.

Patient support services and advocacy efforts are supported through various grant resources; and additional community partnerships help us leverage a broad spectrum of assistance for our patients. It is these extra efforts that make us special, doing community dentistry differently than anyone else. Just read our core values, and you'll get a taste of what truly drives us each day.

We must remain vigilant to assure that public policy remains strongly in support of oral health for families most in need. Should there ever be significant reductions in our state's commitment to oral health, we may be forced to drastically reduce the services we provide.

For now, we share with you the successes of 2011 in this report, along with our outlook for the future.



*Jeanne Edevold Larson*

We are pleased to provide our neighbors with improved health, and proud of our economic contribution of revenues, jobs and visitors to our community. "Thanks" are owed to so many people...chief among them, are the Board of Directors, led by Dr. Lueth, who empower the staff to care for patients. Our staff share passion for this work and knock themselves out every single day to assure success for each patient and for the agency. The patients make this all worthwhile—they are kind and understanding, and are working hard to improve their own health. And there are many community leaders, dentists, organizations, government agencies and funders to thank—who help coordinate services, fund programs, provide referrals and assist us with problem-solving.

Together, we have achieved so much; I truly hope you join me in taking pride in our successes.

**Jeanne Edevold Larson**



## Strategic Plan 2012-2014

In 2011, the Board of Directors engaged in a strategic planning process to map out our path for the coming years. Highlights include:

### GOAL: Improve the oral health among the target population

#### Objectives

- Reduce patient treatment failures/Increase patient treatment successes
- Increase decay- and disease-free rates among patients
- Increase access to dental care among vulnerable populations
- Increase health screenings and referrals for care



### GOAL: Improve the overall health of the community

#### Objectives

- Pursue Healthy People 2020 Objectives
- Increase sealant rates among children
- Affect public policy that hinders access to care
- Increase/Access integrated care services available to target population

### GOAL: Be a regional resource for preparation of future health professionals

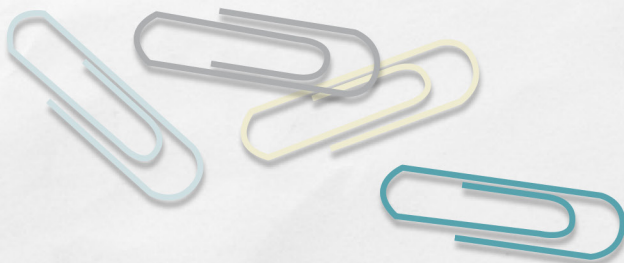
#### Objectives

- Increase exposure to Ruby Payne's Framework for Understanding Poverty among future health professionals
- Increase exposure to public health dentistry and dental home model to future health professionals
- Increase knowledge among future health professionals about the role of oral health in overall health and the unique risk factors among the target population
- Increase usage of community health workers within the community

### GOAL: Maintain a viable organization that achieves standards of excellence

#### Objectives

- Increase organizational efficiency
- Increase revenue diversification
- Maintain Charities Review Council's Accountability Standards
- Increase Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement standards
- Address equipment and facility challenges



# 2011 Financials

*Audited, April 2012 by KBA Peterson Associates, Inc., Independent Auditors*

## Summary Balance Sheet - As of December 31, 2011

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	534,853.00
Accounts Receivable	105,805.59
Other Current Assets	11,311.51
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>651,970.10</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	<b>408,257.97</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$1,060,228.07</b>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	35,343.00
Credit Cards	841.88
Other Current Liabilities	128,263.76
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>164,448.64</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>164,448.64</b>
<b>Equity</b>	<b>895,779.43</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>\$1,060,228.07</b>



## Statement of Functional Revenue & Expenses - From the 2011 IRS Form 990

REVENUE	
Government Grants	224,262
Contributions from Public	344,907
Other Revenue	1,763,217
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$2,332,386</b>
EXPENSES	
Amount Spent for Program Purposes	1,758,191
Management/General Expenses	248,198
Fundraising Expenses	23,476
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$2,029,865</b>
<b>EXCESS REVENUE</b>	<b>302,521</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>1,060,228</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>164,448</b>
<b>END OF YEAR FUND BALANCE</b>	<b>\$895,780</b>