



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

2014 Annual Report



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Northern Dental Access Center
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Clinic Hours:
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Northern Dental Access Center is a community access, nonprofit 501(c)3 dental clinic, located in Bemidji, Minnesota—providing dental care for low income people within the entire region of rural, northwest Minnesota.



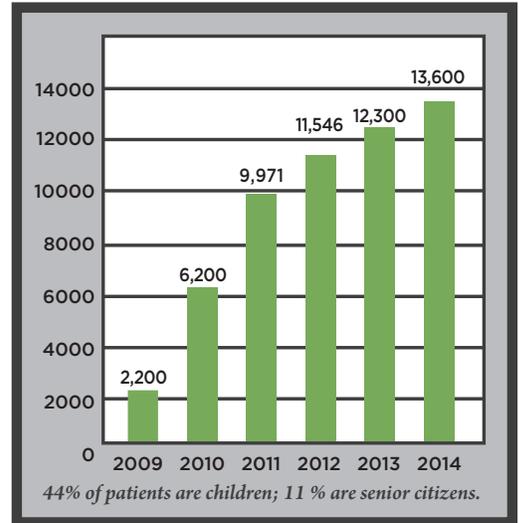
We serve people who are enrolled in Minnesota Health Care Plans (MHCP) and/or who have income levels less than 260% of federal poverty rates. This accounts for roughly 35% of the region—with over **60,000 people already enrolled in MHCP.**

Economic conditions, along with demographic trends, indicate that our region will continue to see growing numbers of people in, or on the edge of, poverty, who suffer from diminished life expectancy and a variety of health disparities.

Still, the most prevalent, yet preventable disease—is tooth decay. Lack of access to dental care is not new—it has been a critical issue facing rural Minnesota for decades. In 6 years, Northern Dental Access Center has made great strides in filling this gap, serving more than 1200 patients each month here in Bemidji. Before then, the nearest access clinic that accepted new patients was in Deerwood or East Grand Forks.

Northern Dental Access Center has no geographic boundaries, bringing people from 100 miles or more. 40% of our patients are from the Bemidji Area; 10% come from western communities such as Thief River Falls, Crookston, Ada, Mahnomens, Fosston and Bagley; another 8% come from northern communities of Red Lake, Redby and Blackduck.

Growth in Patient Appointments



From Our Longest Serving Vice President, Warren Larson

Fifteen years ago, I sat with some of the most passionate and energized people in our community, we wanted **to help** find solutions to the serious public health issue of dental access for those most in need. It has been a great demonstration of how setting Big Hairy Audacious Goal (BHAG) can transform a region, but what’s most important, is the ability **to help** provide the much needed services our friends and neighbors so disparately needed. Today, thousands of people are receiving dental care and support services **to help** them stay healthy. But much more still needs to be accomplished for us **to help** even more people.

2014 has been a pivotal year for Northern Dental’s Board of Directors; we’ve spent considerable time looking back to honor and recognize the work that has brought us to such a successful place. We also realize that for us **to help** meet the growing future needs of our friends and neighbors throughout the region, we must address these needs head on and with the same passion and energy we had when we started this venture. We now better understand the needs of our underserved population in the region. We realize that there is much more **help** needed, so, we have set **our new BHAG—to gather the resources necessary to build a new and larger clinic facility!** This ambitious undertaking will require our best efforts yet, and wouldn’t be possible without the continued great work of our staff, and the wonderful support of our community. We know that by working together, people helping people, makes this world a better place!

Warren



Those who are less fortunate
Often don’t want to ask for help

Hard times hit all of us at some point
Enjoy your good fortune
Let your good fortune help others
People helping people makes this world a better place

Catherine Pulsifer

“First time here and very friendly staff and gentle with special needs kids.”

- patient exit survey

Mutual of America Foundation Award

Northern Dental Access Center and its team of community partners were recipients of the prestigious 2014 Mutual of America Community Partnership Award. Mutual of America Foundation's mission is to "recognize outstanding nonprofit organizations in the United States that have shown exemplary leadership by facilitating partnerships with public, private or social sector leaders who are working together as equal partners, not as donors and recipients, to build a cohesive community that serves as a model for collaborating with others for the greater good."

Says Thomas Gilliam, New York City's Mutual of America Foundation Chairman & CEO:

"Since its inception in 1996, the Community Partnership Award has recognized 190 partnerships from cities and towns all across America. All of the honorees are leaders in society, creating innovative and effective solutions to help those in need. They share a vision of the future in which collaboration, compassionate action and inclusion are the highest values.

Northern Dental Access Center opened in 2009 to provide underserved residents in northwestern Minnesota with compassionate, patient-centered dental care. The result of a seven-year grassroots, collaborative effort, the idea for the Center came from public and private sector leaders from around the region who felt passionately that access to oral health care by disadvantaged populations is a public health care issue that needs addressing. Their vision was to create a dental home that eliminates the barriers that often prevent lower-income people from getting the comprehensive oral health care they desperately need."

A team from Northern Dental Access was flown to New York City for a luxurious awards banquet, and featured in the Foundation's annual publication. In May of 2015, Foundation representatives return to Minnesota for a "Hometown" awards ceremony, so that partners can also share in the accolades.



Time Square Honors



Mutual of America Foundation Selection Committee Member and Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel with Jeanne Edevold Larson, Becky and Bob Enger



July 26, 2014: Northern Dental Access Center of Bemidji hosted representatives of New York City's Mutual of America Foundation Thursday, as part of a site visit to finalists of the Foundation's National Community Partnership Awards. Winners were announced in November, 2014.

Pictured were Northern Dental Access Center Executive Director Jeanne Edevold Larson, and Mutual of America Foundation's Thomas Gilliam, Chairman & CEO; T. Herman, Vice Chairman; and T. Johnson, Senior Regional Vice President, Minneapolis.



"Not only have you changed my life, but you have taught me how to better educate my daughter to help her keep her teeth in good condition."

From Dental Practice Director, Erica Lundberg



Greetings! Six years ago, on a leap of faith, I accepted a part-time, front desk position at this then, little known clinic, the Northern Dental Access Center. Though my primary goal at the time was simply to secure employment, I could never have known the impact this organization would soon have on my life, those of the patients we serve, and on the communities of this beautiful region I am proud to call home.

Servant Leadership is the heart and soul of this remarkable organization I am so fortunate to be a part of, and it is this philosophy from which our approach to patient care, patient advocacy, and commitment to community partnerships springs. This attitude of support resonates throughout the clinic—in each interaction with patients, in our daily work, and is deeply rooted in our Core Values.

Providing a welcoming dental home, saying YES to those who have heard NO too many times, and taking just a minute or two to listen to a patient in need—these are just a few of the things that make working here so rewarding for us... and a crucial part what enhances each patient's experience here. Northern Dental Access Center was created out of the deep concern for the oral health of a target population; but what keeps it going is much less complicated —this extraordinary, dedicated team and its commitment to their patients.

As I reflect back on the growth Northern Dental Access Center in its short 6 years, I marvel at the challenges, growing pains, and successes we have experienced. Looking to the future, we will no doubt have many more stories to tell of lessons learned and goals surpassed. It has been an honor to be involved in this process, and I am thrilled to lead our clinic through its next phases of development and growth.

On behalf of the incredible staff I have the privilege of working with, I extend my deepest thanks to our Board of Directors and the outstanding support they provide our organization; to our Executive Director, Jeanne Edevold Larson, who has worked tirelessly to assure we have the resources and backing to deliver quality care to the thousands of patients seeking us out year after year; to our community partners and stakeholders who believe in our ability to serve our patients; and ultimately, to our patients, for trusting us to deliver on the promise of our mission—and for choosing Northern Dental Access Center as their dental home.

Erica

P.S. From Executive Director, Jeanne Edevold Larson

What an amazing journey! 2014 was a transformative year for Northern Dental Access Center, where its organizational life cycle moved from start-up to growth, and now to stabilization. With the help of all those committed to our success, we have withstood the gamut of obstacles while maintaining a quality and transparent agency, day after day.

During this year, the Board of Directors made a conscious choice to further separate the clinic, from the organization....that is to say—Northern Dental Access Center, the clinic—is now fully functional and sustainable, and managed by Dental Practice Director Erica Lundberg, along with a top notch staff. The organization overall, faces an exciting future, one which I have been tasked with steering—specifically toward expanding resources and partnerships to develop a new, larger community clinic facility. It is an honor and pleasure to work on behalf of this groundbreaking organization; join me in looking forward to the next steps on our journey.



Jeanne

Challenges:

- Space limitations make it difficult to meet increasing patient demand.
- A large team of diverse dentists from all over Minnesota provide care on periodic schedules; recruitment of long term, stable dental staff remains a goal.
- Fluctuation of policy proposals regarding Medicaid reimbursements and Critical Access Dental Payments create constant budgetary worries.

“Please make sure to thank the wonderful people that made this possible.”

Services Available:

Dental care within Minnesota Health Care Plan (Medicaid) parameters:

- ✓ Exams
- ✓ Preventive (Cleanings, Fluoride, Sealants)
- ✓ Fillings
- ✓ Extractions
- ✓ Dentures and partials
- ✓ Root Canals
- ✓ Oral Health Instruction
- ✓ Tobacco Counseling
- ✓ Scaling and Root Planing
- ✓ Behavior Management
- ✓ Referrals for specialty care needs
- ✓ Urgent and same day care

Preventive Services are provided throughout the region via the Community Based Oral Health Program.

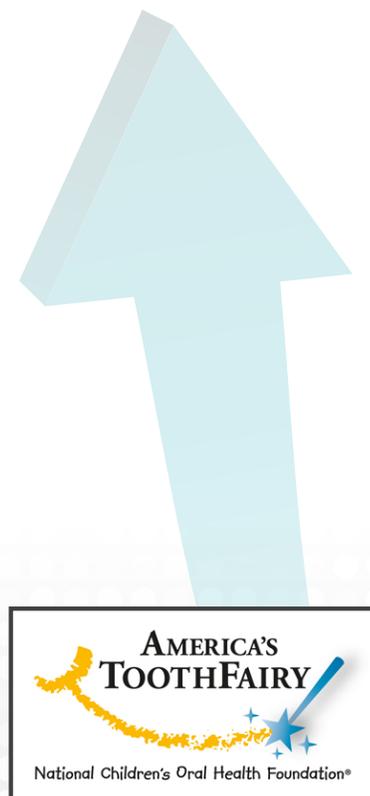


Patient Outreach and Support Services include:

- Patient Advocacy
- Transportation Assistance
- Patient outreach and education
- Insurance Counseling
- Child and teen exams, immunizations, health outreach and referral
- Mental health screening and referrals

2014 Initiatives:

- Partnership with Evergreen Youth & Family Services to support street outreach to homeless and marginalized youth
- Addition of new Dental Therapist position (mid-level provider)
- Facilities Committee established to pursue fundraising and construction of a new clinic facility
- Community Health Worker Certification for first Northern Dental staff person
- Insurance counseling support for patients and the community expanded to full MNSure navigation and enrollment services on site, full time
- Partnership with K.O.A.L.A. Pediatric Dentists to ease the burden on families needing specialty pediatric dental care
- Selected as an Affiliate partner for the National Children's Oral Health Foundation and America's Tooth Fairy
- Community Health Information Liaison (CHIL) helps connect newly insured patients with primary care in their communities
- Employee Wellness Committee
- Enhanced cross-department Performance Management Team



"Everyone here is so easy to talk to. Coming to the dentist isn't fun, but you all make it as comfortable as possible, and that's something I have never experienced in any dental office."

Strategic Planning A Sneak Peek to 2015-17

After rapidly achieving the goals set out by the organization's founders in 2008, Northern Dental Access Center Board of Directors is charged with charting a future that recognizes the external challenges while capitalizing on the internal strengths. As servant leaders, our role is to identify the needs and resources to assure that people in need continue to have access to dental care long into the future.

To that end, a 360° review of the organization highlighted the past, analyzed the present, and forecasted the future landscape to be navigated in the coming years. In the spring of 2014, staff, patients, community members, funders, area dentists, board members and program partners were tapped to weigh in on the organization's progress.

Results include revised vision, mission and goal statements—to guide our efforts in the coming years:

Vision

... a regionally-based, community focused dental center of excellence

The Mission

... to provide access to a dental home* through oral health education, emergency and comprehensive dental care, 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."*

Goals For 2015-2017

- ✓ Improve the oral health among individuals in the target population
- ✓ Improve the overall health of the community
- ✓ Maintain a sustainable organization that achieves standards of excellence and workplace quality
- ✓ Be a regional resource for preparation of future public health professionals

BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goal)

... Build a new and improved clinic facility that can better accommodate current and future demand for care among the target population.



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 nonjudgmental 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.

New Dental Therapist

Welcome to the Northern Dental Team, Teresa Bushnell!

Teresa is one of the new Dental Therapists (DT) in the state and she joined our team in the fall of 2014. Minnesota is the first state in the U.S. to authorize the licensing of dental therapists. Under the new law, dental therapists and advanced dental therapists in Minnesota practice as part of a dental team to provide educational, clinical and therapeutic services, and serve primarily underserved patients. They are sometimes referred to as “mid-level” providers akin to nurse practitioners, other Advanced Practice Registered Nurses and physician assistants in medical settings –because their scope of practice falls between other allied dental professional scopes and a dentist’s scope.



In the early months of having a DT on staff; more than 100 appointments per month have been included into our patient schedule. Grant funds from the Minnesota Department of Health has helped offset the start up costs for this new position. Clearly, benefits are already underway, including:

- Reduced wait times for treatment completion, especially among children;
- More capacity to serve patients with complicated needs—as the DT relieves Dentists from routine procedures;
- Reduced payroll costs for the daily team of dental providers; and
- We are able to showcase the effectiveness of this new position within the public health environment.

Impact

- 13% increase in patient appointments (*from 2013*)
- 12% increase in new patient registration
- 463 people assisted with transportation to appointments
- 30% reduction in external referrals for specialty care
- 15% increase in completed dentures
- 32% reduction in patients reporting using the Emergency Room for dental emergencies
- 18% increase in oral cancer screens
- 984 people assisted with MnSure or Medical Assistance application and enrollment
- Over 650 patients received one-on-one assistance in addressing barriers to care (*we call this Patient Advocacy*)
- 99% of patients responding to exit survey questions:
 - rate the quality of their dental care as good or excellent;
 - rate the facility as having a welcoming environment;
 - report our staff being friendly, knowledgeable and helpful; and
 - report they would recommend Northern Dental Access Center to a friend or family member.

Funding Partners

- Blue Cross Blue Shield Blue Plus of Minnesota
- Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation
- Mardag Foundation
- Medica Foundation
- Minnesota Dental Foundation
- Minnesota Department of Health
- Mutual of America Foundation
- Northwest Minnesota Foundation
- Otto Bremer Foundation
- PrimeWest Health
- Sanford Health Foundation
- United States Department of Health
- United Way of Bemidji Area

Community Partnerships For Patient Services

- Beltrami County Health and Human Services
- Bemidji Food Shelf
- Bemidji State University
- Bi-CAP
- Boys and Girls Club of Bemidji Area
- Carol Kelly, RN, NP
- North Country Community Health Services, CTG (*Community Transformation Grant*) Program
- Clearway Minnesota
- Community Resource Connections
- Evergreen Youth & Family Services
- First City Taxi
- K.O.A.L.A. Dental Care
- Legal Services of NW Minnesota
- Minnesota Department of Health Behavioral Hospital
- National Health Service Corps
- Northwest Technical College
- Sanford Health
- Schools—more than 25 in the region
- Veteran’s Services

Financials

Statement of Financial Position - As of December 31, 2014

Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	
Cash & Investments	\$ 936,717
Accounts Receivable (net of allowances)	84,373
Grants Receivable	50,301
Other Current Assets	1,991
Total Current Assets	\$ 1,073,382

Fixed Assets

Office Equipment	80,732
Dental Equipment	499,922
Improvements	116,727
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(370,993)
Net Fixed Assets	\$ 326,388
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 1,399,770

Liabilities and Net Assets

Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	\$ 35,459
Other Current Liabilities	86,060
Deferred Revenue	513,904
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 635,423
Net Assets - Unrestricted	\$ 764,347
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$ 1,399,770

Based on the financial statements audited by
KBA Peterson Associates, Inc. available on
northerndentalaccess.org.

Statement of Activities for the Year Ended December 31, 2014

Support & Revenue

		% of Total
Service Fees	\$ 2,069,821	80.6%
<i>(net of discounts & allowances)</i>		
Grants	480,866	18.7%
Donated Services	11,510	.5%
Other Income	4,879	.2%
Total Support & Revenue	\$ 2,567,076	100%

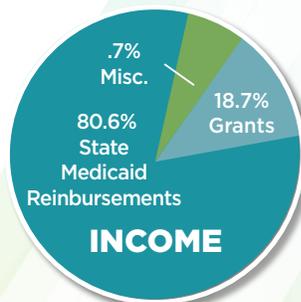
Expenses

		% of Total
Program Services	\$ 2,183,398	89.2%
General & Administrative	230,198	9.4%
Fundraising	33,447	1.4%
Total Expenses	\$ 2,447,043	100%

CHANGE IN NET ASSETS \$ 120,033

NET ASSETS

Beginning of Year	\$ 644,314
End of Year	\$ 764,347



Board of Directors

Robert Enger, Board President
Attorney, Legal Services of
NW Minnesota

Warren Larson, Board Vice President
Sanford Health Bemidji

Vicki Ross-Rhoades, Board Treasurer
Accounting Supervisor,
Itasca State Park DNR

John Lueth, DDS
North Country Dental

Colleen Falk
Business Owner

Cathy Gunvalson
Hygienist

John Parkin
Pediatrician

Scott Turn
Security Bank USA

Linda Yourczek
RN, BSN

Scotty Allison
Beltrami County Veterans Service Officer

Mark Colliton
Physician

Marshall Muirhead, DDS
Retired

Marcia Syverson
Social Worker, retired

Kevin Williamson,
Super 8 Motel, owner

Executive Director:

Jeanne Edevold Larson, M.S.
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