



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Delta Dental of North Carolina
4242 Six Forks Road
Suite 970
Raleigh, NC 27609

Contact:
Elaine Loyack
ELoyack@DeltaDentalNC.com
(919) 424-1044

Delta Dental Foundation Awards \$5,000 Smiles for Kids Grant to Wilkes Public Health Mobile Dental Clinic to Improve Oral Health of Underserved Children

Wilkes County, NC (May 8, 2019) – The Wilkes Public Health Mobile Dental Clinic received a \$5,000 grant from the [Delta Dental Foundation](#) (DDF) to improve access to oral health care among Wilkes County children.

The grant will help provide a free mobile dental clinic to under-served children in Wilkes County schools who likely have no other access to dental care. The mobile clinic will travel to the rural areas of Wilkes County to provide oral health services, such as examinations, diagnostic screenings, and necessary or preventative treatments. Wilkes County Public Health’s dental program is the only option in the area that is a long-term Medicaid provider with a sliding fee scale for low-income families.

“Wilkes County is the largest in the state, so residents often have to drive far distances to get dental care,” said Mobile Dental Clinic Assistant Executive Director, Dawn Jolly. “Community buy-in is what has made this program successful thus far, and with the Delta Dental Foundation grant we hope to be able to serve more children that are in need in our community.”

A 2019 report by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services’ Oral Health Section¹ found that 15.1% of kindergarten children in the Wilkes County region have untreated tooth decay.

“Many communities across North Carolina face challenges to providing oral health care services to those in need,” Delta Dental of North Carolina CEO Curtis Ladig said. “With our foundation’s support of the Wilkes Public Health Mobile Dental Clinic, we can help address that need and close the gap between those with access and those without.”

The Delta Dental Foundation focuses on ensuring children and adults in North Carolina receive high quality oral health education and dental care. The grant received by Wilkes Public Health is one of 19 grants totaling \$70,000 awarded to North Carolina oral health organizations and programs in 2019. Grant recipients were selected based on criteria that included the number of at-risk children served, the uniqueness of the program, the level of community involvement and the ability to measure results.

¹ North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. (2019, January 07). NC Oral Health Regional Snapshot. Retrieved from <https://publichealth.nc.gov/oralhealth/docs/OralHealthSnapshots-REGION-3-120718.pdf>

About the Delta Dental Foundation

The Delta Dental Foundation is a nonprofit, charitable organization established in 1980, which serves as the philanthropic arm of Delta Dental of Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and North Carolina. The foundation's goals are to support education and research for the advancement of dental science, and to promote the oral health of the public through education and service activities, particularly for those with special needs. For more information, visit www.deltadentalinc.com.

About Delta Dental of North Carolina

Delta Dental of North Carolina is a nonprofit dental service corporation created in 1970 to provide dental benefits throughout the state. Its mission is to improve the oral health of the communities it serves. It does so by providing affordable access to oral health care with the largest network of providers, including two out of every three dentists, in North Carolina.

About Wilkes County Public Health Dental Clinic:

The Wilkes County Public Health Dental Clinic has been in operation since April 2000 with the goal of treating dental disease of children and adults in rural areas of Wilkes County. Per year, the clinic serves approximately 600 children and 200 adults. With their newly acquired mobile dental clinic, there has been further growth of the program, more space and equipment, and the ability to better serve patients' diagnostic and treatment needs in comfort and privacy. For more information visit, Wilkespublicdentalclinic.com.