



## Columbia Oral Health Clinic Columbia, South Carolina

### Program Overview

The Columbia Oral Health Clinic (COHC) offers free oral health services to community members living with HIV/AIDS and to low-income individuals without health insurance. The clinic only serves individuals referred from other partnering community health organizations (with the exception of extractions). Clinic staff conduct an initial diagnostic assessment to identify an individual's needs, develop and implement a comprehensive treatment plan to meet those needs, and provide education on good oral health habits.

### Program History and Development



**COLUMBIA ORAL  
HEALTH CLINIC**

The Columbia Oral Health Clinic began in 1999 after the founders identified a lack of dental providers willing to serve individuals living with HIV/AIDS in Columbia, South Carolina. Since individuals living with HIV/AIDS often have a weakened immune system, they are more likely to experience increased

risk of oral health problems. Over time, the program evolved into a nonprofit entity that employs its own dentist and dental staff.

### Program Sustainability

- In 2015, the clinic received funding from The Ryan White Foundation Part B Program, The Nord Family Foundation, DentaQuest Foundation, Gannett Foundation, The Sisters of Charity Foundation, and the Disabled American Veteran Charity.
- Funding for COHC was split between contracted services through the Ryan White Foundation's Part B Program (85 percent) and private and foundation grants (15 percent).
- The program is staffed by a dentist, dental assistant, dental hygienist, and director.
- The annual dental clinic budget is approximately \$250,000. Expenses include staff salaries, denture laboratory fees, and supplies. The average cost per individual is \$240.
- To attract providers, the clinic offers an above-market starting salary (more than \$100,000) and \$50,000 in debt forgiveness to dentists who commit to working in the clinic for two years.

### Program Impact

- In 2015, this clinic provided 2,513 dental services to 236 unique individuals.
- Since the clinic started tracking client data in 2004, they have provided 35,797 dental procedures to 4,201 unique individuals.
- Anecdotal reports suggest that the program has improved individuals' self-esteem and employability and made it easier to take medications.
- Data provided by the American Dental Association's 2013 Survey of Dental Fees (National & Regional – South Atlantic Division), found COHC's "average cost" of \$85 per dental procedure to be well below the average cost of the same procedures done on a national and regional level.<sup>1</sup>
- Columbia Oral Health Clinic was awarded the Midlands Care Consortium Unsung Hero Award in 2004, the National Health Service Corp. Award of Excellence in 2006, and the PALSS Heart of Carolina Award in 2013.

### Program Contact Information

Program Phone Number: 803-779-4795

Program Website: <http://www.columbiaoralhealthclinic.org/index.htm>

<sup>1</sup> American Dental Association, Health Policy Institute, 2013 Survey of Dental Fees



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### Program Features

Note: A checked box below indicates an existing program feature.

#### Age

- 0-17 (Children and Youth)
- 18-60 (Adult)
- 60+ (Older Adult)

#### Specific Populations

- Homeless individuals
- Individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities
- Individuals with physical disabilities
- Individuals with specific or complex medical conditions
- Individuals with low income
- Individuals with no dental insurance
- Individuals with Medicaid
- Veterans
- Refugees/immigrants

#### Geography

- Rural
- Urban

#### Service Delivery Setting

- Hospital
- Dental school
- Community/safety net clinic
- Private dental office
- Long-term care facility
- Senior center/community center
- Private residence
- Fairgrounds/stadium/parking lot
- Church
- School
- Homeless shelter
- Public housing

#### Service Delivery Model

- Dental clinic model (e.g. permanent setting)
- Mobile-portable model
- Eligibility and enrollment model (e.g. referrals, care coordination)
- Virtual model (e.g. telehealth)
- Event-based model
- Outreach and education model

#### Staffing

- Dentist
- Dental hygienist
- Dental therapist
- Dental assistant
- Dental/dental hygiene students
- Nursing staff
- Community health workers
- Non-dental clinical staff
- Non-clinical staff

#### Payment for Care

- Medicaid
- No charge to client
- Sliding fee scale
- Out of pocket
- Commercial dental insurance

#### Program Funding

- Foundation/organization grant
- Public funding (e.g. local, state, federal)
- Private donations (e.g. individuals, businesses)

#### Dental and Oral Health Services

- Emergency services
- Basic services
  - Screenings
  - Cleanings
  - Fluoride varnish
  - Sealants
  - X-rays
- Comprehensive services
  - Fillings
  - Scaling/root planing
  - Extractions
  - Oral surgery
  - Root canals
  - Dentures, partials, relines, repairs
  - Crowns
  - Bridges
  - Orthodontics

#### Other Program Services

- Referrals to dental and oral health services
- Care coordination/care management
- Patient education
- Caregiver education
- Provider education
- Advocacy/coalition

#### Integration with Services

- Medical services
- Behavioral health services
- Vision services
- Pharmacy services
- Transportation services
- Translation services
- Nutrition services

This profile was prepared using publicly available information. Date of last update: March 2016