

Smiles for Seniors Oral Health & Wellness Program 2021-2022

KinderSmile Foundation, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, opened the doors to KinderSmile Community Oral Health Center Trenton in the midst of the Pandemic to help assist with all of the public health challenges Trenton is facing with lack of access to oral health care. Trenton is identified as a marginalized community plagued with decades of health inequities and disparities among the black & brown population. The City of Trenton is designated as medically underserved by the Commissioner of Health and Senior Services, based on the NJ Medically Underserved Index.

The number of uninsured senior adults who do not have a regular dentist, and the almost nonexistent dental practices (1) who accepted Medicaid and Medicare. Statistics have shown that seniors are living longer. 15% of Trenton senior residents' households have an annual income less than \$10K and 36% less than \$20K. Oral health is vital to overall health. Good oral health can prevent chronic systemic diseases such as diabetes and chronic heart diseases. Oral health can also impact the digestion system which can lead to irritable bowel syndrome or intestinal failure. Poor oral health can lead to death. In many states, Medicare has limited to no dental coverage. Many seniors struggle to pay the copay required for dental care. The New Jersey State Medicaid and managed care program reimbursed dental providers 40% to 60% less than private insurance companies. This creates a State dilemma of only 9% of NJ licensed dentists providing dental services for the low-income community.

Smiles for Seniors Oral Health & Wellness Program pilot program will identify 50 Trenton senior residents who are uninsured, or partially uninsured. We will provide oral health education and transition the participants to receive comprehensive dental care. These services will include but will not be limited to exams, radiographs, cleanings, treatment planning, extractions, fillings, partial and complete dentures. We anticipate that at least 55% of the participants will return on a biannual basis for their follow up checkup. We anticipate that at least 85% will adhere to the oral hygiene instructions provided. Each participant will be entered in our patient management system, Eaglesoft and will be tracked on the amount of visits for treatment, oral education sessions and biannual check up visits. At the end of the project, we will provide an assessment of the numbers of participants educated, provided treatment, and biannual checkups.

KinderSmile Community Oral Health Center Trenton currently partners with over 26 community organizations. We will identify the seniors from our existing community partners who are in need of dental services. This program will enable the seniors to properly masticate their foods, lead healthy lives, eliminate the progression of systemic diseases, and gain confidence. We will reach out to Trenton Area Soup Kitchen (TASK), Arc Mercer (Special Needs Adult), Capital Health Hospital, and Medina Community Clinic. KinderSmile Foundation has been asked by the New Jersey Dental Association (NJDA) to assist with providing dental services for the participants in "LifeLine" the NJ donated dental program.



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We anticipate that the program can be sustainable after year 3. The federal government is working to include dental benefits associated with most Medicare plans. At this point there are very limited programs available. We are hoping that legislatures and stakeholders see the importance of oral health.

We are requesting a \$50,000 grant to match a \$50,000 donation to service 50 seniors from September 2021 to September 2022. We are hoping that you will partner with us to provide the much needed access to oral health care for the seniors in Trenton. Private donor Shawn Ellsworth will earmark \$50,000 for the “Special Smiles for Seniors” project for 2022 & 2023.

Each participant's treatment plan will stay within the dollar amount of \$1,500. The goal is to provide comfort and function for each senior. Cosmetic dental services will not be included in this program. Basic routine and comprehensive treatments such as examinations, cleanings, extractions, filling and dentures will be provided. We currently work with a dental laboratory to work with our organization by providing reduced fees to fabricate the prosthesis. Enrolled participants who surpass the \$1,500 credit will be transitioned to our very reduced fee schedule for continued care, and will remain patients at our Dental Home.

KinderSmile Foundation’s Board, staff, and volunteers are as culturally and racially diverse as the community and patients we serve. We strongly represent diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of our work. KinderSmile Community Oral Health Center Trenton is culturally sensitive to all of our patients. We have fluent bilingual Spanish, Creole, and Twi (African) employees to help translate and ensure that all patients are comfortable receiving comprehensive dental services.

Our goal is to have a successful program to introduce to the stakeholders in Trenton to garner financial support to expand the project. We will also collect data to potentially produce future publications.

Thank you for considering this request to support KinderSmile Foundation in our effort to provide oral health education and access to dental care to the underserved senior population of Trenton. Consistent with FFA values, KinderSmile Foundation relies on collaboration with our community partners and social services agencies, using feedback from patients and the community to consistently improve and expand our services, maintain an organization that is as culturally diverse as the community we serve, and always provide quality oral health education and dental care to the underserved in a barrier-free Dental Home.

Proposed Actions:

- **Identify 25 seniors ages 60 years and up to participate in the “Smiles for Seniors” program.** KinderSmile Community Oral Health Center Trenton has cross-referring relationships with 26 community partner organizations. We will continue to forge partnerships with organizations in Trenton to increase awareness and entice participation.
- **Establish MOUs (Memorandum of Understanding) with all community partners, maximizing potential referrals and sustainability.** Identify the Trenton community partners who serve the senior community.
- **Provide personal and culturally sensitive oral health education to all participants.** Monitor and provide guidance on compliance, including oral disease prevention and nutritional counseling.
- **Provide preventive and comprehensive dental care to all participants.** Each senior will receive a credit of \$1,500 for comprehensive dental care to restore form and function, empowering them with the means to continue healthy oral hygiene routines once they graduate from the program.
- **Provide a permanent Dental Home for the Seniors.** Encourage the senior participants to break the cycle and maintain a routine of visiting the dentist every six months, as recommended by the American Dental Association. Reinforce the importance of a link to a Dental Home.



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Budget:

Salaries:

Program Dentist (part time) \$40,000

Program Dental Hygienist (part time) \$19,000

Program Dental Assistant (part time) \$8,000

Health insurance, payroll taxes, malpractice insurance (part time) \$7,000

Total Personnel Expenses \$74,500

Program Costs:

Administrative Expenses and Promotional Materials \$1,500

Lab Costs \$37,500

Clinical Supplies \$10,000

Meetings Food Expenses \$500

Transportation \$1,500

Total Program Costs \$51,000

Total Annual Expenses \$125,000