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Subject: Health Department Receives Teledentistry Grant

Health Department Receives Teledentistry Grant

Troy, MO – Lincoln County Health Department (LCHD) has received a $46,000 grant through the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) to expand their Teledentistry program. The grant will fund the purchase of two sets of equipment, allowing two providers to see patients at the same time. As part of the activities under the grant, LCHD will partner with the Shelby County Health Department (SCHD) to facilitate dental services in Shelby County schools and assist SCHD in determining the feasibility of establishing their own Teledentistry program.

“We are excited for this opportunity to expand our Teledentistry services, which will allow us to provide more complete dental services to a greater number of Lincoln County residents,” said Kim Farrell, Dental Clinic Coordinator at LCHD. Audrey Gough, Administrator of Shelby County Health Department, said, “This is a wonderful opportunity for health departments to work together, maximizing resources to provide the greatest benefit to Missouri residents.” Both Lincoln County and Shelby County are designated by the Health Resources and Services Administration as Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA) for dental providers. HPSAs are determined based on the ratio of population to providers.

Teledentistry makes it possible for patients to receive services while they are in one physical location and the dentist is in another location, according to the American Dental Association. Information is sent using secure telecommunication technologies, allowing for the delivery of dental services outside of a brick-and-mortar dental office. The same standard of care applies, whether the patient is being seen in-person or using Teledentistry services.

In Lincoln County, the program is currently providing services in schools, and is exploring the possibility of expanding to local nursing homes and residents in other settings. This is the first year the program will operate in Shelby County, and the program will focus on serving children in the school setting.

The LCHD dental clinic was first opened for children in April 2005, and in 2014 the clinic added services for adults, including pregnant women. The clinic serves Lincoln County residents with Medicaid, Medicare, or those who are uninsured.

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Pictured L-R: Jennifer Harris, Margie Beckmann, Jen Kopp, Kim Farrell LCHD; Dr. John Dane, Julie Boeckman, DHSS; Brett Siefert, LCHD; Audrey Gough, SCHD.