We are Thankful for You
We hope this letter finds you and your loved ones in good health. We all have been through a lot over the past six months! I am pleased to report that, in spite of COVID-19, Community Dental Care continues to fulfill our mission to provide culturally sensitive oral health care, preventive education, professional training and to advocate for access for all. Please read on to learn how!

Karen Flanagan Kleinhans, MHA
Chief Executive Officer

Rising to the Challenge
Six months ago we were confronted with the realization that we needed to change the way we operate. As an essential healthcare provider for emergency dental services, we have continued to serve patients throughout the pandemic. With over 300,000 patients of record, we have been inundated with calls from people in desperate need, often suffering from serious dental infection.

Since the start of the pandemic, CDC has made significant investments in implementing enhanced clinical protocols, including additional personal protective equipment (PPE) and screening all patients and employees for symptoms of COVID-19 and recent exposure. We are in the process of upgrading our HVAC system to include ionization technology which eliminates 99.4% of bacterial and virus particles from the air. We have adapted our cavity prevention programs to be consistent with clinical protocols and social distancing requirements. These efforts and investments have allowed us to continue providing critically-needed oral health services, while following guidelines from the Minnesota Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control.

Our work is possible due to generous donors, including Delta Dental of Minnesota Foundation, Otto Bremer Trust, Rochester Area Foundation, St. Paul Foundation, Fairview Foundation and the many individuals who support us. We rely on charitable support to help fund additional costs related to safety. We are truly grateful for donors who help us continue to meet community needs!
There are thousands of individuals in our community who encounter barriers to receiving the basic dental care they need. Especially during this time of COVID-19, a major barrier to dental care is financial. Other reasons include stable transportation, inability to take time off from work, fear of dentistry, and more. Dental disease left untreated can cause serious infection throughout the entire body.

Monica, a Hmong-American from East Saint Paul, works two jobs and does not have dental insurance. Monica felt a sharp pain in her tooth that kept her awake for several nights. She avoided visiting the dentist because she worried about the cost. Monica knew she couldn’t delay seeing the dentist any longer as the constant ache and throbbing impacted her ability to work, eat, and sleep.

Monica received compassionate dental treatment needed to relieve her pain and worked with our dental team to address the concerns of her oral health.

“Dr. Billington was understanding and caring and explained every step of the process,” Monica shared. “He didn’t make me feel bad about my teeth but he helped me understand just how important treatment would be for getting me on track to be healthy.”

$1.5 million is what it takes to say “YES!” to patients like Monica. Donations from individuals like you allow us to deliver high quality dental care in a convenient, caring, and respectful environment.

We strive to make dental care more affordable and we simply could not do so without your support.
Donor Spotlight: Phil and Deb Lacher

You may know Phil Lacher, Community Dental Care’s longtime CFO, as the highly competent, reliable and compassionate leader that he is, but did you know he is also one of our longest and largest donors? For over 10 years, Phil and Deb have made monthly contributions to Community Dental Care in support of our mini-grant fund to provide free dental care for children and adults in need. When asked why they give, Phil explained, “My heart is with children. Some of these kids don’t stand a chance in life unless we help them.” Phil prioritizes giving to our mini-grant fund because he knows his gifts go directly to people in need, both adults and children who have urgent dental disease and cannot afford care. “We see so many people who need help, I hope to inspire others to give to the mini-grant fund as well.”

Phil has worked for Community Dental Care for more than 12 years, and has seen the organization through both great expansion and many challenges. When asked to comment, Karen Kleinhans, CEO, shared, “I am so grateful for Phil, not only for his expertise, hard work and reliability, but also for his tremendous commitment to our mission. We are so fortunate to have him as our CFO and friend!”

Helping Others is My Passion

“As a health educator my passion is to educate families with their oral health and feel better about their smiles.”
– Lah Moo, PICOH Health Educator

“I work at Community Dental Care because it feels like what we are doing here matters and makes a positive impact. The work challenges me, and I truly value the people I work with.”
– Dr. Shivan Nelson, Dental Director

The Hygienist Is In!

How do you help people who have never gone to the dentist nor learned how to take care of their oral health? You go to them! Kate Iverson, a collaborative practice hygienist at Community Dental Care, provides dental services to children and pregnant mothers at the M Health Fairview Roselawn Clinic in Saint Paul four times a month. Dr. Jim Letts, a physician at the clinic, noticed many of his patients had fairly severe dental disease and wanted to get them care. Kate explains, “This collaboration allows us to provide screenings, education and preventive services in a place that is familiar and convenient to the patients.” Providing access to care is key to our mission and we are grateful to Dr. Letts and the Roselawn Clinic for this collaboration.
Comprehensive dental care provided to nearly 50,000 people of all ages each year
Community prevention programs for kids and families in over 60 locations
Patients come to our clinics from 63 counties throughout Minnesota
$1.5 million in charity care provided annually to individuals in need
67% of our staff are minority, from diverse ethnicities and/or bilingual in 25+ languages

Thank you for sharing in our vision that all people should have access to high quality, affordable dental care to improve their overall health in a convenient, caring, and respectful environment.