

DentaQuest Foundation

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DentaQuest Foundation approaches its work with the foundational belief that oral health is a social justice issue, and that everyone should have the same opportunity to live a healthy life. The foundation's initiatives and the work of its network of partners seek to empower people most impacted by health inequity. Its mission is to improve the oral health of all.

Established in 2000, DentaQuest Foundation initially focused its grantmaking efforts within Massachusetts, with most grants addressing clinical needs and funding for organizations to build, staff, and equip dental clinics in underserved areas. The foundation continues to respond to urgent clinical needs in communities through its Community Response Fund. However, as a national philanthropic oral health organization, the foundation employs a larger strategy that incorporates the belief that real change can only be achieved by fixing the broken systems of care, community, financing, and policy.

Program Information: The focus of the foundation's grantmaking efforts and network building is Oral Health 2020, which aims to eradicate dental disease in children and improve lifelong oral health. This initiative seeks to achieve four goals by 2020: eradicating early childhood dental decay, integrating oral health into the public education system, incorporating a comprehensive dental benefit into publicly funded health insurance plans, and developing a system of measurement to track oral health status across the country. These goals are also driven by environmental supports to improve the public perception of oral health and to advance interprofessional education and coordinated care.

► Financial Information:

Total Assets: \$77.8 million (FY 2014)

Amount Dedicated to Health-Related Grants: \$17 million (FY 2015)

► Special Initiatives and/or Representative Health and Human Services Grants:

- **Grassroots Engagement Initiative** – This recently launched initiative is an effort to engage those most directly impacted by oral health disparities and health inequities. The grassroots initiative has made grants (two phases of \$50,000 each) to 20 community-based organizations in six states (Arizona, California, Florida, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Virginia). A mix of advocacy and direct service organizations, grantees have an impact on a diverse group across racial, ethnic, geographic, and economic populations. The goal for grassroots grantees is to identify needs and barriers in their communities and develop a plan of action to improve oral health in those areas.
- **National Oral Health Connection Team and Regional Oral Health Connection Teams** – These teams work to strengthen connections at the national, regional, and state levels among people and organizations working to improve oral health. These teams are tasked with growing the Oral Health 2020 network and also responding to the needs of the network in terms of technical assistance, communications resources, capacity building, etc. (\$396,000 FY 2015).
- **National Oral Health Innovation and Integration Network (NOHIIN)** – Working with primary care associations (PCAs) across the United States, NOHIIN helps promote oral health integration into primary care, while showcasing patient-centered care as the model for health care. This initiative focuses on strengthening the oral health safety net and provides technical assistance and capacity building to federally qualified health centers and similar community health care providers. To date, 29 PCAs have been engaged and received funding for this initiative (\$900,000 FY 2015).
- **Oral Health 2014** – Grants in this initiative addressed specific areas of focus identified by the National Oral Health Alliance, which included: prevention and public health infrastructure, oral health literacy, medical/dental collaboration, metrics for improving oral health, financing models, and strengthening the dental care delivery system. Oral Health 2014 was a three-year initiative that concluded at the end of 2014. Grantees, predominately state-level advocacy organizations and coalitions, helped lay the foundation for Oral Health 2020 (\$1.05 million FY 2014).

Most Pressing Health and Human Services Issues in the Community We Serve:

“Health philanthropy presents the opportunity to create great change and lead a movement forward. It is unacceptable that tooth decay is the most common childhood disease when the disease is entirely preventable. We must address marginalization—of the mouth from the rest of the body, and of those populations disproportionately affected by health inequities. By doing this, we can move the social norm from one where pain and suffering are prevalent, to one where everyone can expect good oral health.”

Ralph Fuccillo, M.A.
President

