

Delta Dental Community Care Foundation

California Senior Oral Health Coalition 2024

Request for Proposals (RFP) | Due November 10, 2023

Delta Dental Senior Oral Health Coalition Program

Background

In support of our mission to build caring, resilient communities, the Delta Dental Community Care Foundation (DDCCF) works with nonprofit partners across our enterprise to increase access to oral health care, fund oral health education and support organizations that serve vital needs in our communities. Since 2011, the Foundation has awarded more than \$130 million across our 15 enterprise states and the District of Columbia*. The Delta Dental Community Care Foundation is the philanthropic arm of Delta Dental of California and its affiliated companies, including Delta Dental Insurance Company, Delta Dental of Pennsylvania and Delta Dental of New York, Inc.

In 2020, the board and leadership at Delta Dental Community Care Foundation committed to addressing the increasing shortfalls in senior oral health, which has become a public health crisis. Through Delta Dental's experience in the oral health care sector, we know that an alarming number of older adults are accessing oral health care only at the point of emergency or not at all. As a result, they suffer from indignity, health problems and poorer quality of life.

The Delta Dental Community Care Foundation will dedicate up to \$5 million in grant funding over five years to one coalition of organizations serving a defined geographic community within California. The California-based coalition will work together to address the pressing issue of senior oral health access from a systems-change perspective. Proposals are requested and must be submitted by November 10, 2023, on behalf of a proposed coalition of two or more organizations working together. Please see Application Process & Submission section below for details.

The Issue of Senior Oral Health

The senior population in the United States (age 65+) faces innumerable health challenges. Many low-income seniors, or those on fixed incomes, are forced to make tough choices regarding the cost of health care, often forgoing oral health treatment in favor of other health priorities. Additionally, in two out of three cases, Medicare does not cover oral health.¹ Overall, 62% of older adults in the United States have no dental insurance.² In the absence of ongoing oral health care, many seniors suffer from untreated gum disease and decay. Approximately two in three seniors have gum disease, and one in five have untreated tooth decay. Nearly 25% of the low-income

*Delta Dental Community Care Foundation operates in California, Nevada, Utah, Montana, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, New York, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Delaware, Maryland, and Washington D.C.

¹ Kaiser Family Foundation analysis of the Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey (MCBS), 2016; National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey 2013-2016

² Manski RJ, Rohde F. Dental Services: Use, Expenses, Source of Payment, Coverage and Procedure Type, 1996-2015. Research Findings No. 38. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, US Dept of Health and Human Services; 2017.

senior population in the United States have lost all their natural teeth due to these two factors.³ Many more lose some teeth and the ability to comfortably eat nutritious foods.

The picture becomes even more concerning when focusing on communities of color, such as Latinx or Black seniors, who suffer 2-3 times the rate of untreated tooth decay compared to the general population.⁴ For Black, Latinx and Native American adults, dental care is the most unmet health need.⁵

The legacy of racist policies and pervasive discrimination has unfairly shaped the living conditions and circumstances of Black, Latinx, and other Americans of color throughout history. Consequently, in the United States race/ethnicity significantly predicts population health. These conditions and circumstances are "social determinants of health," including the neighborhood, housing, education, employment, income and wealth, health care, insurance, and other risks and opportunities constraining or enabling individual choices and practices.⁶ At the population level, the unfair distribution of health-harming or health-promoting social determinants of health results in health inequities, including in oral health. In fact, oral health has been found to be the leading race-based health disparity in the United States.

This gap in oral health outcomes is unacceptable. As increased research confirms the direct correlation between oral health and systemic health issues such as heart disease and Alzheimer's, the urgency of this public health crisis becomes apparent. In addition, with the senior population set to nearly double from approximately 50 million in 2018 to 95 million in 2060 and life expectancy growing, health care providers will increasingly need to expand and adapt services to this population.

About the Senior Oral Health Coalition Program

In response, the Delta Dental Community Care Foundation is directing resources to build coalitions of community partners focused on specific geographic areas across our enterprise states. This RFP is to build a coalition in California. The coalition will work to improve oral health outcomes of the most vulnerable seniors by addressing the barriers that prevent too many from attaining quality oral health care as they age. Our goal is to create deep partnerships with the coalition to transform their community's oral health care landscape, to serve the most vulnerable seniors and close the gaps in oral health outcomes for this population.

The inaugural Senior Oral Health Coalition was launched in 2022 in Washington D.C. and a second coalition was launched in Santa Cruz County, California in 2023. You may learn more about our current coalition partners at [Delta Dental's Senior Oral Health page](#). Once selected, this additional California coalition will represent the continued expansion of this program. While each coalition's programs and interventions will focus on their immediate community, there will be opportunities for coalitions to collaborate, network, and learn from each other's successes and challenges.

The Senior Oral Health Coalition program aims to address oral health care inequities by working with partners actively engaged with historically underserved communities and transforming systems to improve oral health outcomes for these communities. We will prioritize organizations that have demonstrable trust and established relationships within high-risk senior communities, particularly low-income communities of color.

³ Dye BA, Thornton-Evans G, Xianfen L, Iafolla TJ. Dental Caries and Tooth Loss in Adults in the United States, 2011-2012. NCHS Data Brief, no 197. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics; 2015.

⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Oral Health Surveillance Report: Trends in Dental Caries and Sealants, Tooth Retention, and Edentulism, United States, 1999-2004 to 2011-2016. US Dept of Health and Human Services; 2019.

⁵ Something to Smile About: Careers in the Dental Profession Brochure. American Dental Association.

⁶ Braveman P, Gruskin S. Defining equity in health. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health* 2003; 57:254-258.

The selected coalition will be expected to establish baseline percentages of access to care for their community, with particular attention paid to disaggregated demographic data by race, ethnicity, disability, along with other data on their social determinants of health. Throughout the program, funded coalitions will work with Delta Dental and our third-party data and evaluation consultant team to collect, analyze, and share program data to guide coalition activities and serve as measures of success. By the conclusion of the grant period, each coalition will be expected to contribute to the development and refinement of a replicable model for communities across the country looking to implement transformational solutions to reduce oral health challenges and disparities among their senior population.

Mission

The mission of the Delta Dental Community Care Foundation Senior Oral Health Coalition Program is to improve the quality of life for vulnerable seniors by transforming access to and quality of oral health care in their communities.

Eligible Organizations

Eligible organizations are those that are recognized by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service as tax-exempt and designated a public charity under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS (Internal Revenue Service) Code. Eligible organizations include, but are not limited to, health and human service agencies, colleges and universities and civic and advocacy groups. Delta Dental Community Care Foundation may also engage government agencies.

Nonprofit organizations (NPOs) that may not be eligible include those without 501(c)(3) status and religious or political groups, unless the grant is specified for a community outreach program (e.g., a religious-affiliated health care facility or food bank). In addition, the organization must share the Foundation's values and align with its mission.

All potential organizations require vetting to ensure that the organization serves a charitable purpose, and the Delta Dental Community Care Foundation grant will be used to further that charitable purpose.

Selection Criteria

One proposal should be submitted on behalf of two or more organizations **operating within California** who have agreed to partner to participate in the coalition for five years. The proposal review process will include Delta Dental Community Care Foundation staff, board of directors, and current Senior Oral Health Coalition grantee partners. The below criteria will guide the process of partner selection:

1. **Readiness** – The organizations have worked together on joint projects in the past and have demonstrated impact and efficacy and/or the partners are primed to collaborate and have established open lines of communication and trust. The applicant organizations also have capacity to implement systems-wide change in the senior oral health space in their community and are committed to equal participation in this joint initiative with the Delta Dental Community Care Foundation.
2. **Experience/Expertise** – The entities have demonstrated experience in high quality oral health care provision for vulnerable populations. They collectively have the basic infrastructure (including research, data management, staffing and facilities) to begin working together on providing oral health care to seniors and address the root causes of

disparities in the community without delay. The organizations have complementary areas of expertise.

3. **Community Reach** – The applicant organizations have established relationships and experience working with senior communities of color and/or other demographic groups in their community that suffer from a disproportionate burden of oral disease and poor oral health outcomes. The partner community is well-defined, and the organizations have the capacity to develop strategies that are tailored to their specific needs and assets.
4. **Evidence-based Strategy** – The organizations clearly understand and provide evidence demonstrating how poor oral health and systemic barriers to accessing oral health care impact their communities. The organizations articulate an initial plan to use data to inform program decisions and measure impact. Further, the activities proposed are innovative and have the potential to make lasting changes to improve oral health outcomes for older adults.

Coalition Partner Expectations

Mindset: Get into the collective mindset! The work of the coalitions is in service to the goals and mission of the program, extending beyond the individual organizations. All planning and implementation should be done as collaboratively as possible.

Project Management: Successful collaboration requires an investment in shared infrastructure and project management capacity. Coalitions will be expected to budget time and funds to support this, and to come prepared for each annual summit and ongoing coalition meeting to move the shared agenda forward.

Reporting/M Measurement: While DDCCF will not require a prescribed grant report, the coalition is expected to work with DDCCF to determine measures of success, plan how the coalition will collect and assess data, and hold quarterly data review sessions which include all coalition members and DDCCF. There will be several required metrics that align with fellow coalitions. At each annual summit, the partners will be expected to share learnings from the previous year of implementation to inform the coming year's strategy.

Budget Allocation: Grant funding has been committed to the coalition effort. Allocation of the grant funds between partner organizations will be decided by the coalition collaboratively, according to the strategy and workplan devised in the planning period.

Communications: Delta Dental will provide communications support to help tell the story of your coalition's work. This may include coalition events, webinars, press outreach, and social media posts.

Application Process & Submission

How to Submit

Please find the proposal questions below on pages 6-7. Proposals from applicant coalitions of two or more organizations submitted together will be due to the Delta Dental Community Care Foundation no later than **November 10, 2023**.

One submission per proposed coalition will be accepted. Please submit your proposal via email to SignatureProgram@delta.org.

Please limit your response to the questions outlined below to eight pages or less. Only PDF or Word documents will be accepted.

Review and Selection Process

The Delta Dental Community Care Foundation will review all proposals and contact short-listed applicants for follow-up discussions by mid-December 2023. Follow-up discussions will focus on the submitted application, the coalition partners, their areas of expertise and information about the partner community.

The Delta Dental Community Care Foundation will notify the selected coalition by mid-January 2024.

Coalition Planning and Expectations After Selection

Once selected, the California Senior Oral Health Coalition will collaborate over the first several months to set an initial strategy and budget by participating in the annual Senior Oral Health Coalition Summit and subsequent partner meetings. Below you will find a timeline from RFP (Request for Proposals) release date to initial grant award approval.

The partnership will launch with selected coalition members participating in an in-person strategy summit, planned for the week of March 25-29, 2024, at the Delta Dental offices in Oakland, CA. The Delta Dental Community Care Foundation will cover the cost of attendance for up to five staff members from each coalition member organization. Following the summit, the Delta Dental Community Care Foundation will work with the Coalition partners to formalize a work plan and budget.

Key Dates	Activity/Deadline
September 13, 2023	RFP Release Date
October 4, 2023	Applicant Informational Webinar (recording information below)
November 10, 2023	Proposal deadline
January 5, 2024	Coalition selection notification
January 5 - March 25, 2024	Prepare for Strategic Planning Summit
March 25 - 29, 2024	SOHC Strategic Planning Summit Oakland, CA
April 1 - April 29, 2024	Meetings with partners and the Delta Dental Community Care Foundation to finalize initial strategy, workplan, and budget
April 29, 2024	Coalition workplan and budget (with initial grant amounts) due to Delta Dental Community Care Foundation
May 6, 2024	Initial grant amounts approved

Informational Webinars

The Delta Dental Community Care Foundation held an informational webinar on the program and application process on October 4, 2023. Access to the webinar recording is provided below:

Senior Oral Health Coalition RFP Informational Webinar

Held on October 4, 2023

[View the recording here](#) Password: hF=ss8ZBrK

Questions?

Applicants may review our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document or contact the Delta Dental Community Care Foundation with questions at any time by emailing SignatureProgram@delta.org.

Proposal Questions | Proposals due November 10, 2023

Please keep your response to 5-8 pages in total. The selected coalition will further develop the program strategy through a strategic planning summit scheduled for Spring 2024 (see timeline above). The proposal will provide an initial assessment and definition of the issues found at the community level and an understanding of the coalition partners and their ideas and capacities for collaboratively addressing these issues over a five-year period.

Contact Information

For each organization included in the proposed coalition, please provide the following information:

- Organization Name
- Contact Name, Title, Email, Phone Number
- Tax ID
- Location
- Organization Type (Nonprofit, Clinic/FQHC, Advocacy, Governmental, etc.)
- Mission/Summary of Programs

About the Proposed Coalition Partners

1. Please tell us why the proposed organizations will make the most effective coalition to address the issue of senior oral health access and disparities in your community.
2. What are your organizations' complementary skills/capacities/experiences?
3. Have the proposed partners collaborated in the past? If so, please detail how.

Defining the Problem

4. Describe the nature of oral health disparities and barriers to oral health care access for seniors in your community. What are the root causes of these barriers and disparities that your coalition proposes to address?

Partner Community & Program Beneficiaries

5. What specific communities will the proposed coalition engage with to make the most impact on senior oral health disparities?
6. What is the proposed coalition's experience working with this community? Please be specific if working within a community based on racial/ethnic identity, ability/disability, immigration status, occupation, gender identity, housing status, urban/rural, incarcerated, etc.
7. What assets, programs or resources are already present in this community that your coalition will build on or leverage to augment the impact of the proposed coalition?

Proposed Interventions & Measurement

8. What are your coalition's proposed interventions to effect systems change and increase equitable access to oral health for seniors in your community over five years?
9. How does the coalition propose to engage affected populations in decision-making, planning and monitoring progress?

10. How will the proposed coalition measure success?
11. What data is already available, and what data systems will you need to build and manage to monitor and measure your outcomes? Please be specific about coalition applicants' organizational capacity in data collection and assessment.

