

Project: St. Joseph's Community Dental Clinic

Category: Dental

Target Population: People receiving Medical Assistance or Minnesota Care

Geographic Area: North central and northwestern Minnesota (Cass, Clearwater, Beltrami, Becker, Hubbard and Wadena Counties)

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Description: The St. Joseph's Community Dental Clinic serves patients receiving Medical Assistance or Minnesota Care. The hospital-based clinic emphasizes comprehensive services, rather than only episodic care during acute situations, to reduce dental disease over time.

The clinic opened in the spring of 2004 and includes two dentists and eight additional staff. The start-up costs were funded by a Catholic Health Initiatives grant, a Northwest Minnesota Foundation Early Childhood Initiatives grant, Citizen's National Bank, State Bank and Northwoods Bank. Coordinating with other area dentists, school and hospital staff and other county agencies is critical to the success of the clinic.

St. Joseph's Community Dental Clinic is integrated with Public Health Services, with nurses assisting new patients with education and referrals. This integration has led to overall coordination for at-risk individuals by connecting public health and dental care and the hospital.

Oral surgery is offered twice a month through St. Joseph's Area Health Services.

Plans for the Future:

- Seven treatment units, three full-time dentists, four Certified Registered Dental Assistants, three hygienists and adequate administrative support.
- Outreach screening for children in Head Start, mothers and children receiving WIC and individuals receiving Disabled Adult Child assistance by bringing dentists to them.

The Minnesota Office of Rural Health and Primary Care's Successful Models Web site is <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/models/viewmodels.html>.