



The Heart of the Matter

Centre Volunteers in Medicine • 2520 Green Tech Dr., Suite D, State College, PA 16803 • 814-231-4043 • www.cvim.net • Summer 2010

CVIM Dental Services: Perhaps Not What You'd Expect

A day of dentistry at CVIM is very different than a typical day at other area dentist offices. Some of CVIM's dental patients have never seen a dentist, and most have not seen a dentist for a long time. The primary reason patients come to CVIM for dental care is to address pain.

On average, CVIM sees 2-4 emergency cases per day, in addition to the regularly scheduled new patient exams and restorative work (including extractions and fillings). CVIM dentists first assess the patient's mouth to identify the source of pain and determine how it can be alleviated. Pain is often caused by advanced cavities and infection. A full treatment plan is then developed. A CVIM dental patient generally has to come back for 4 to 6 appointments before his or her oral health problems are resolved.

Many patients come to CVIM with oral abscesses, some which are life threatening. We recently cared for a patient who had lived with an abscess for 13 years. It had developed in to a grapefruit sized knot on the side of his jaw and neck and caused him significant pain during all of those years. CVIM helped another patient with an abscess that literally ate away the bone of his jaw and perforated his sinus cavity. The danger of an abscess, left untreated, cannot be understated. *(continued on page 3)*

From the Director's Desk



Dear Friends,

Less than twelve hours had passed from the time the Health Care Reform Bill was signed in to law when I received the first of many phone calls asking, "How will Health Care Reform impact Centre Volunteers in Medicine?" In the immediate future, we expect to see a very small impact. For instance, beginning in September 2010, adult children up to age 26 can get coverage through insurance policies held by their parents. It is possible that a very small number of CVIM's patients may be able to utilize this new option.

More meaningful measures will begin to be implemented in 2014. States will be required to expand Medicaid to childless adults, and Medicaid will be expanded to include families with household incomes up to 133 percent of federal poverty level, or \$29,327 for a family of four (presently, the cut off is 100 percent). The mandate for all Americans to purchase health insurance will also begin in 2014. The fine for not doing so in the first year is \$695.00.

CVIM was founded to provide care to Centre County residents with household incomes between 100 and 200% of the federal poverty level who do not qualify for other benefit programs. CVIM has always served friends and neighbors who "fall through the gap" because their household income is above the Medicaid cut off, but too low to afford coverage on their own. The Health Care Reform legislation recognizes that some families will still fall in this gap, even when subsidized rates are offered, and these families will be able to file for a waiver.

Full implementation of the many measures contained in this 2,000+ page bill will not occur until 2019. Several states, including Pennsylvania, have filed suits to block the healthcare reform law. We all must wait for these legal battles to be resolved and to see how states decide to implement the measures that are law. CVIM believes our medical services will be needed during this nine year period, and likely beyond, to continue to care for our friends and neighbors here in Centre County.

Finally, the healthcare reform law contains NO provisions to expand access to adult dental care. CVIM presently has a wait list of 1,600+ qualified patients awaiting a dental appointment. We have featured the life-changing outcomes of our dental program in this issue, and ask you to join our summer campaign to raise funds for dental services. CVIM is now, and expects to be, the only local resource for dental care for uninsured low-income residents of Centre County. Your generous support has provided care to thousands of county residents over the past seven years; we ask that you continue to support us now and in the future so that we may always be a local health care solution.

Health and Happiness,

Kristen Houser, MPA
Executive Director

This issue of "The Heart of the Matter" is sponsored by the Geisinger Medical Groups in Centre County.

Meet Sharon Snyder, CVIM Dental Patient



Sharon Snyder's beautiful new smile!

Sharon Snyder never thought she'd have problems with her teeth. She had good dental care as a child, and dental insurance with her job. But Sharon found herself in the middle of a divorce and facing other health challenges. Then she lost her dental insurance and could only afford dental care for her children. In three years Sharon developed a mouth full of problems, and didn't know where to turn.

Every tooth in Sharon's mouth had something wrong, but the most visible problem could be seen: parts of Sharon's front teeth had chipped off. She was embarrassed and her self-confidence plummeted. Sharon could not eat properly with broken teeth, and she resorted to soft foods. Sharon's other health issues exacerbated her dental problems, and her dental problems complicated her health issues. It was a vicious cycle, and she needed help.

A friend told Sharon about CVIM. Sharon never thought she'd rely on a free clinic, but she was in so much pain that she swallowed her pride, and scheduled an eligibility appointment. Once qualified for services, Sharon saw a dentist who developed her care plan. Her treatment would take several visits over a period of months due to the extensive damage that needed to be repaired.



Before treatment, Sharon's tooth damage was extensive.

First, CVIM addressed Sharon's front teeth, the most visible problem in her mouth. Her embarrassment and fear of being judged by others about their appearance had handicapped how she spoke to others. She had learned to hide them by folding her upper lip over her broken-off teeth while speaking, and as a result, spoke with a bit of a lisp.

Sharon was handed a mirror at the end of her appointment for restorative care for her front teeth. She could barely believe her eyes, and could not find the words to describe how she felt. She told us, "I was astonished. I looked like my old self again. I couldn't say a word. It was unbelievable to me. When I got to my car I broke down, and sat there for a while and cried. I was so relieved. All the way home I kept checking my smile out in the car's rear-view mirror, and then I'd cry some more. My tears were tears of joy. I was no longer in pain, and I could smile with confidence once more."



A life-change restoration by CVIM.

Today Sharon is nearly through her dental treatment plan. She says the life impact of the repairs to her front teeth has been great. Her confidence is back and her overall health is better.

Sharon wants everyone to know how grateful she is for the care she received at CVIM. She thanks our volunteers, dental staff, and donors like you for helping change her life. She says that she does not know how her teeth would have ever been repaired without our services, and she suspects that her health would have continued to decline because of her unhealthy mouth.

"No one should have to think twice before smiling," she says, "I received the best care, and now I once more have a beautiful smile. It means more than I could say, and has had a positive impact on my life. Thank you!"

New Medication Policy

Access to affordable medicine is vital to patient health. CVIM strives to insure quality care and patient safety with the limited resources at our disposal. To that end, CVIM only uses medications purchased or received through pharmacies or approved medical distribution programs that can verify proper storage and handling of medications. As a matter of patient safety and quality control, CVIM will not accept medications from any other source, including private citizens and physician offices.

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CVIM Dental Services: Perhaps Not What You'd Expect

(continued from page 1)

Living with constant pain and discomfort is a common experience for CVIM dental patients. Their inability to afford dental care can even compromise their overall health. People with periodontal disease are at greater risk of contracting systemic diseases, such as cardiovascular disease. Patients with diseased gums release significantly higher levels of bacterial toxins into their bloodstreams which then can travel to other organs of the body. The mouth can be a major source of chronic or permanent release of these toxins into the bloodstream during chewing.

It is the goal of CVIM's dental team to restore our patients' mouths to a healthy state. This frequently means extracting the teeth that are beyond repair. In May 2009, CVIM dentists extracted a record 51 teeth in one week! In October 2009, a patient brought bouquets of carnations to CVIM to thank us for pulling all of his teeth. Many people can not imagine going through such a drastic procedure, but this token of his gratitude speaks volumes to the relief he experienced.

The dental team at CVIM not only pulls teeth, they save as many as they can. Dentists often are able to restore existing teeth and literally rebuild smiles. See our patient story for a fabulous example! Dental pain is not only excruciating, it can be debilitating. Many patients report they cannot eat healthy foods like fruit and vegetables because of the pain, opting for soft or liquid options, which are far less nutritious. Their pain may prevent them from having normal interpersonal relationships and from being able to regularly report for work. CVIM relieves pain, restores oral health and educates patients about how to avoid oral problems in the future.

We provide these services at no cost to our patients, but dental care is costly to provide. We have funded these services for the past two years with grant dollars from the Highmark Foundation and the PA Department of Health. However, the Highmark Funds have expired and the Department of Health dollars will run out in September 2010. Presently more than 1,600 qualified patients are waiting for a dental appointment. Won't you help us continue to alleviate pain and restore the health and the smiles of our Centre County friends and neighbors? Please join us by mailing in the coupon below and being a part of our summer dental campaign!

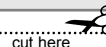
Thank You Bellefonte Moose Riders!



On May 15 the Bellefonte Moose Riders held a Poker Run and Pig Roast to benefit CVIM. CVIM thanks the Moose Riders, and everyone who participated and made the event successful!

Wish List

Catering trays with lids
(large and small)
Fax machine - new
Garbage bags - 33 gal. and 13 gal.
with drawstring tops
Gift cards - Lowes or Home Depot
to purchase cabinets
Gift cards - Staples, Wegmans,
Weis, Walmart or Giant
Insulin syringes
Lancets
Manilla folders - 3 tab
Paper towels
Stamps - first class postage
White lunch bags (from Target)
Six Foot Ladder



Keep Centre County Smiling!

CVIM patients rely on generous supporters like you to have access to dental care and good oral care. You can help us provide dental care by making a gift at the suggested levels below:

- Earn your Gold Crown!** Though CVIM does not provide such extravagant care, your gift of \$5,000 makes you worthy to wear one! A \$5,000 gift provides one week of supplies and staff time at CVIM, and surgical care for medically complicated patients.
- Give a Million Dollar Smile** at a greatly reduced price with a gift of \$3,200 – that is a sponsorship of \$100 per tooth in a healthy, full smile!
- Join the Tooth Fairy Brigade!** A gift of \$1,000 provides the equivalent of 6 simple tooth extractions, taking away pain and infection from CVIM patients' mouths.
- Clean as a Whistle!** Donors giving \$500 provide the equivalent of 20 hours of dental hygiene services for CVIM patients.
- Other** All gifts are needed and greatly appreciated. Please write in the amount of your donation \$ _____

You can donate using this form or on-line at www.cvim.net

Name _____ (Please complete information as you wish to be recognized.)
Address _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Email _____

Please charge my VISA MASTERCARD or Check enclosed (payable to CVIM)

Card# _____ Exp. Date _____ 3-digit security code _____ Signature (required) _____

- I do not need a thank-you letter from CVIM. Please contact me about making a planned gift or bequest to CVIM
- I would like my donation to remain anonymous.

Thank you for your support of Centre Volunteers in Medicine!

Donations can be made on-line or mailed to: CVIM, 2520 Green Tech Drive, Suite D, State College, PA 16803

Centre Volunteers in Medicine is a 501(c) (3) organization and its tax identification number is 25-1897969. The official registration and financial information of Centre Volunteers in Medicine may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement. Q210



Centre Volunteers in Medicine
 P.O. Box 10365
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CVIM Special Events News

Marathoners for Medicine Exceed Goal

The Boston Marathon Challenge exceeded its fundraising goal of \$30,000 this year! CVIM thanks all of the runners who raised money for CVIM by running in the Boston Marathon, the Pittsburgh Marathon, the Poconos Marathon, and all of the students who ran in the Bellefonte to Boston Challenge at Bellefonte High School!

Cycling for Care, June 19, 2010

Dust off your bikes and join area cyclists in CVIM's 2nd annual "Cycling for Care" event on June 19, 2010. Riders can raise funds and participate in this non-competitive event and choose from three scenic routes: the Metric Century (62 miles), the Centre Loop (37.5 miles), and the Linden Fun Loop (6.8 miles). All routes begin and end at Mount Nittany Middle School, and a celebration lunch will be provided at the finish. Follow the links at www.cvim.net to register!

Save the Date!

Q: How can you have a fun night out, challenge your mind and provide help for our uninsured neighbors?

A: CVIM's 3rd annual Battle of the Minds!

Thursday, Nov. 18, 2010

The Penn Stater

Cocktails: 5:30 p.m.

Dinner & Game: 7:00 p.m.

Please call 231-4043 for information.



Two CVIM Volunteers Recognized



Jon Porter and Jeanne Spicer were honored for their years of service to CVIM at the 38th Annual Rose Cologne Volunteer Recognition Dinner. Jon was still a Penn State student in February of 2003 when he began volunteering. Jeanne joined him in June of 2004 and the rest is history!

This dynamic duo has used their technological expertise to improve the health of uninsured residents of Centre County. With busy careers at Accuweather and Penn State, they often volunteer late at night and work behind the scenes. They have built a computer network by linking dozens of donated computers, created software to meet the unique needs of the agency and modified existing programs to enable CVIM to quantify services provided and work more efficiently. Thanks to Jon and Jeanne, we are better able to serve our friends and neighbors in need.