NEWS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

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Iowa Donated Dental Services Program Serving Iowans with Dental Needs for Over 5 Years

A Program of the Dental Lifeline Network

Johnston, IA (January 25, 2011) – The Iowa Donated Dental Services (DDS) program has been coordinating the services of volunteer dentists and laboratories to provide comprehensive dental care to Iowans who are disabled, elderly or medically at risk since 2005. The Iowa DDS program is part of Dental Lifeline Network, a charitable affiliate of the American Dental Association.

The Iowa DDS program was established in 2005 with the endorsement of the Iowa Dental Association and financial support from Delta Dental of Iowa. Initially, Delta Dental provided $80,000 over a two-year period to support the Coordinator and program upstart costs, as well as house the program. In 2007, The Iowa Department of Public Health took over the funding of the program while Delta Dental made a commitment to continue to house the program.

"We are pleased to support the Iowa Donated Dental Services program," said Donn Hutchins, President and CEO of Delta Dental of Iowa. "As a not-for-profit, we look for opportunities to help improve access to dental care through our public benefit program and Foundation. The DDS program aligns with our Foundation's mission to support and improve the oral health of Iowans."

"Many Iowans who are disabled, elderly or medically at risk suffer from serious dental problems because they cannot afford complex dental care treatment. With DDS, these Iowans can get needed dental services that are not available through government assistance programs like Medicare or may have limited benefits such as Medicaid," said Fred Leviton, President of Dental Lifeline Network.

Since 2005, DDS has helped 519 Iowans access more than $1.3 million worth of donated dental treatment from 275 volunteer dentists. The DDS program serves as the only volunteer dental program in Iowa specifically for elderly and disabled adults.

"We greatly appreciate the state funding of nearly $32,000 annually to fund this vital program for hundreds of Iowans who have limited financial resources. This is a great example of a state funded program that generates thousands of dollars of care for a minimal investment," said Fred Leviton.

The DDS program is managed by a Coordinator who recruits volunteer dentists and labs for the in-kind services. The Coordinator is also responsible to regularly communicate with the dental office and the patient to ensure that appointments are kept and everyone's needs are met. In addition, the Coordinator also makes arrangements for specialists and labs to donate their services if necessary.

Nationally, more than 12,900 dentists and 2,700 dental laboratories have donated over $116 million in comprehensive dental services to 77,000 individuals since the program inception in 1986.

For more information on the Iowa DDS program, contact Phyllis Stoelk the Iowa DDS coordinator at (800) 985-0034 or pstoelk@dentallifeline.org.

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Dental Lifeline Network; a charitable affiliate of the American Dental Association; is committed, through collaboration, to arrange comprehensive dental treatment and long-term preventive services to needy disabled, elderly or medically compromised individuals through a national network of direct service programs that involve 15,000 volunteer dentists and 3,000 volunteer laboratories. Dental Lifeline Network offers three direct-service programs: Donated Dental Services (DDS), Bridge/Campaign of Concern, and HouseCalls.

Delta Dental of Iowa is the largest and most experienced provider of dental benefits in the state. As a not-for-profit, Delta Dental of Iowa invests in oral health projects through the Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation that focus on access to care, prevention, education and research. Delta Dental of Iowa is a member of the Delta Dental Plans Association, a national organization of not-for-profit Delta Dental member companies. The national association is the largest dental benefits carrier in the nation providing coverage to 54 million people in more than 93,600 employer groups.