NCOHF grants support community-based children’s care

By Fred Michmershuizen, Online Editor

The money donated to National Children’s Oral Health Foundation: America’s Toothfairy is being put to good use. NCOHF recently announced it has awarded grants totaling $109,050 to eight not-for-profit community, university and hospital-based dental programs nationwide.

The grants are as follows:
- Catholic Healthcare West, Chandler, Ariz., $15,000
- Community Oral Health Services, Salinas, Calif., $15,000
- Sonrisas Community Dental Center, Half Moon Bay, Calif., $9,050
- The Children’s Dental Center, Inglewood, Calif., $15,000
- The Gary Center, La Habra, Calif., $10,000
- Indiana University School of Dentistry, Indianapolis, $15,000
- Community Dentistry on Wheels, Largo, Md., $15,000
- A Fluoride Connection Non Profit Corp., Madison, Wis., $15,000

According to the NCOHF, the grant recipients are members of the growing affiliate network delivering comprehensive preventive, restorative and education-

Economic hardship takes toll on teeth

Is it true that people postpone or forgo dental treatment in difficult economic times? According to one recent survey of dental practitioners, the answer is, unfortunately, yes.

The Chicago Dental Society conducted a poll of 250 members to learn more about their opinions on current trends, dental topics and more. According to the survey, the effects of the recession on the dental industry have worsened over the last year.

More than 90 percent of dentists surveyed said their clients are putting off cosmetic procedures, the Chicago Dental Society reported. In addition, more than 75 percent of
‘More should be done to improve children’s oral health,’ AGD says

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According to the Academy of General Dentistry, more needs to be done to improve children’s oral health as oral diseases negatively impact learning, interfere with eating and contribute to poor self-esteem.

AGD President David F. Halpern, DMD, FAGD, testified in the nation’s capital recently during the first meeting of the Institute of Medicine (IOM) Committee on Oral Health Initiative. During his testimony, Halpern emphasized access to care and oral health literacy.

“Public schools have played a critical role in keeping our children healthy,” Halpern said. “Schools are critical in keeping our children healthy.”

Additionally, Halpern expressed his support for initiatives that ensure that minority and rural populations receive quality oral health care services from dentists. Such initiatives, he said, could include loan repayment programs to dentists working in community health and underserved settings, the restoration of Title VII, and patient transportation and non-dental social services programs.

Halpern also spoke about the importance of shifting from a treatment-based concept of medicine to one based on prevention. He stated that this transformation can be achieved by assisting patients, physicians and communities to become oral health literate.

“Yes, the HHS must continue its water fluoridation programs as a fallback to maintain a minimal level of oral health in communities, but this is not nearly sufficient — utilization through greater oral health literacy is mandatory,” Halpern said.

Halpern also expressed his disappointment over the lack of a practicing private-practice dentist on the committee and encouraged the committee to reconsider appointing a general dentist from the private-practice community.

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