

In this era of health care reform we have a unique opportunity to forge a lasting and productive collaboration between government, nonprofit and the private sector capable of improving health and quality of life for our entire community.

Please join us for a presentation by Dr. Michael Helgeson, CEO of Apple Tree Dental, a novel staff model dental clinic that promises to solve the problems of access to oral health care in our community. www.appletreedental.org. The presentation will be featured at the monthly Peninsula Health Care District Board Meeting to be held at the Millbrae City Hall Council Chambers at 5:45 PM on Thursday, July 22, 2010.

You might be aware that:

- An increasing body of clinical research shows a strong correlation between periodontal disease and several major inflammatory diseases that are killing Americans and threatening to cripple our economy. These include heart disease and stroke, respiratory diseases, low term birth weight, osteoporosis, Alzheimer's Disease, and diabetes. In the case of diabetes a causal relationship has been demonstrated.
- A 2009 Capacity Analysis Study conducted by the California Dental Association concludes that the existing provider capability for delivering dental care is wholly inadequate to meet the needs of over a third of the population. These underserved patients simply do not have access to dental care. The clinical implications of this crisis range from the unnecessary expense of treating acute dental pain in emergency rooms to our children's inability to thrive. A child distracted by dental pain fails to eat well, sleep well, learn well and function well at home resulting in compromised self-esteem and social development.
- San Mateo County has the most rapidly aging population in the nation. The geriatric patient living in extended care facilities has little access to oral health care.
- Education is a critical component of this solution. Preventing the debilitating effects of tooth decay and periodontal disease is both predictable and inexpensive.

Dr. Helgeson's presentation initiates the process of planning to develop and implement a new clinical dental institution to support and integrate with our existing provider capability. We look forward to your attendance and input, and we invite your ongoing participation in this opportunity to improve the quality of life in our community.

Authored by
Dick Gregory, DDS
Chair MPHS Senior Focus
Director Samaritan House Dental Clinics
Co-Chair San Mateo county Oral Health Access Coalition