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MDA Foundation: Mission of Mercy Volunteer Registration Is Open!

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By Anne Berquist
Foundation Director of Development

Mission of Mercy Volunteer Registration Is Open!

Here's a fantastic opportunity to demonstrate your compassion and your dedication to improving the lives of the people in our state: Volunteer to assist with the MDA Mission of Mercy free dental clinic.

After a lengthy hiatus, the MDA Foundation is thrilled to make free dental care available to anyone in Michigan June 13-17, at the Dort Financial Center, 3502 Lapeer Road, in Flint. It's our hope to serve about 2,000 people who need dental care in the two days the clinic will be operating. Treatment will be delivered to those seeking help between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., June 14 and 15. The on-site clinic will be built June 13 and torn down June 16.

Most of the people who come to the MOM for care cannot afford dentistry but have a tremendous need for life-changing care. You can be a part of the team that changes lives by volunteering for the MOM.

Who can help?

The MOM needs dentists, specialists, dental assistants, dental hygienists, and laypeople to volunteer their time and skills to pull this event together. I encourage dental practices to make participation an office-wide event by encouraging all dental team members to volunteer. Of course, we need all the clinical volunteers we can recruit to provide hygiene, restorative, oral surgery, endodontic, and pediatric care. But we also need people to help build and tear down the temporary clinic, to run supplies to temporary operatories, to assist the people who are waiting in line for care, to intake patients, to serve as patient ambassadors, and to guide patients to various stations for triage, treatment, and other non-clinical tasks.

Volunteers can commit for just a few hours, or for the entire four-day period. Accommodations will be available at volunteers' expense for those who wish to stay overnight, or who are traveling distances to the site in Flint. Food will be available on-site for volunteers.

What's the workflow like?

Patients register for care, provide a health history, and undergo medical screenings and necessary treatments for medically compromising conditions, such as extremely high blood pressure or untreated diabetes. In view of COVID-19, patients will be screened for elevated temperature and other symptoms. Patients move on to triage, where an overall oral health assessment is conducted, and the most urgent treatment needs are identified. Patients are then escorted by a volunteer patient ambassador to the proper treatment area within the clinic. Patients receive treatment for their primary oral health need. If patients have multiple needs, and wish to, they may return to the line to await further care. At the end of treatment, patients have a consultation to advise them of follow-up care needed and alternatives to obtain the treatment. Education about oral health is also provided.

What's the payoff for volunteers?

You can earn one continuing education credit for every two hours that you volunteer at the MOM. Whether you volunteer for behind-the-scenes tasks like building and tearing down the site or being a supply runner, or you provide clinical expertise, the biggest payoff for you will be the knowledge that your efforts helped end the pain and suffering of people with severe dental conditions. People who have worked in previous MOMs say it was among the most joyful experiences of their lives. Patients are so appreciative of the care they receive, and express their gratitude lavishly. You will feel good knowing that you made a difference in many people's lives.

Please scan the QR code on this page to access the MOM volunteer website. Sign up today! Encourage your friends and teammates to sign up, too. If you have questions about the MOM, or how you can help, please call me at 800-589-6236, ext. 423, or email me at aberquist@michigandental.org. ●

