

Memo to: VSDS Member Dentists
From: Peter Taylor
Date: October 28, 2009

Re: Vermont Ronald McDonald Care Mobile (a dental van)

The Vermont Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) of Burlington Care Mobile began treating children in Alburgh on September 28th. The Plainfield Health Center (a Federally Qualified Health Center) is the base of operations for this dental van. It will serve schools located in service areas of Vermont's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC's). These FQHC's will be responsible for providing outreach and coordination with local dental and school communities. The van's schedule can be found on line at www.rmh-vermont.org. Updates to the website schedule will be done as soon as possible. The schedule may change from time to time because of maintenance or school scheduling issues. The van is expected to stay at each location for 1-2 weeks and 3-4 weeks in each county, before going to the next location. The van is expected to make return trips to each site.

On Tuesday October 20th, I met with Pam Fenimore, Executive Director RMHC of Burlington and Dr. Patrick Rowe, Dental Director, Vermont Department of Health, Oral Health Program to discuss the mission of the Van and confusion surrounding the information rollout for the van in Alburgh. The Ronald McDonald Care Mobile is a national program of Ronald McDonald House Charities and this Care Mobile was applied for by the Burlington chapter.

Pam clarified that the mission of the van is to provide care to children who do not have a dental home and to facilitate, as much as possible, children finding a dental home. The van staff work with community dentists to support their ability to provide oral health care for local children.

When plans are made for the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile to come to a school, the area FQHC or RMHC is responsible for notifying the local dental community. Local dentists are encouraged to partner with the van to establish dental homes for the children who are served. The dental van is not intended to be a dental home, but rather a means of access to dental care for those children who would otherwise not have care. Parents must give permission for children to be seen on the van, and those who already have dental homes will be encouraged to continue to see their local dentist.

The van is staffed by a dental assistant and Driver/Manager and two dentists and two dental hygienists who are all employed by "The Health Center." One of the dentists and hygienists will be on the van at a time.

Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC's) are community operated non profit organizations that provide comprehensive primary care to anyone residing in Vermont towns that are designated within the FQHC service area regardless of their method of payment. Being "Federally qualified" means that these centers get funds from Washington to provide sliding -scale fees to the uninsured. There are currently 6 FQHC's in Vermont, 4 of which are involved in this project at this time: The Community Health Services of Lamoille County (serving towns in Lamoille County), The Health Center (serving towns in Washington County), Little Rivers Health Care (serving towns in Orange County), and Northern Tier Center for Health (serving towns in Franklin and Grand Isle Counties). The dental van can only travel to schools that are in towns the service areas of FQHC's that have agreed to be a part of the project.

Please see the reverse side of this memo for answers to "frequently asked questions" about the Ronald McDonald Dental Care Van

"Frequently Asked Questions about the Dental Van"

Who is sponsoring this project?

Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) of Burlington is sponsoring this project. To learn more about this organization, visit <http://nnhc.org/what-we-do/ronald-mcdonald-care-mobile/> RMHC has partnered with the FQHC located in Plainfield, VT, "The Health Center". The Health Center will serve as the base of operations for the project and will partner with other FQHC's in Vermont to bring services to local communities.

The mission/vision statement for the program is as follows: "The Ronald McDonald Care Mobile will deliver quality dental services to Vermont children in selected underserved communities who do not have access to a dentist, regardless of insurance status or ability to pay."

Who is eligible to receive services provided by the dental van?

While every child in the service can receive care at the van, the focus is on children who do not have a dental home. It is the responsibility of the area FQHC and school district to notify the parents/guardians of children without a dental home of the program and obtain a signed permission form. Children who are in preschool or daycare, or who are home schooled will also be eligible to receive services. There are no restrictions regarding method of payment. Dr. Dynasaur and private insurance will be accepted. If parents do not have insurance and cannot afford care, payment will be provided by RMHC. The van will serve, children ages 1-20. Adults are not eligible to receive services.

There are issues of fear, illiteracy, and the value of oral health, that keep parents from accessing oral health care, even when it is made readily available at school. Some parents will still need assistance and encouragement to sign up their children to participate in this program.

What about children who already have a dental home?

The FQHC and schools will be asked to focus their efforts on only those children who do not have a dental home. The permission form asks if the child has an established dental home, and encourages them to continue to receive care there if they do.

What about follow up or emergency care?

It is the responsibility of the area FQHC to lay the groundwork with the local dental community. Local dentists will be encouraged to be available to children who are served on the van for any follow up or emergency care. In addition, the dental van is expected to make return visits to each site every three months.

When will the Dental Van be in my area?

The Dental Van will not visit all schools only those in FQHC service areas when the FQHC has invited the van into the area. For a schedule of the Van visits, go to www.rmh-vermont.org

Who should I contact if I have more questions about this project?

Pam Fenimore, Executive Director of RMHC of Burlington, VT will be available to answer questions about the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile whenever possible or will refer the question to someone who has the answer. She can be reached at the Ronald McDonald House at 802-862-4943.

Schedule as of 10-27-09

The Care Mobile schedule is as follows with a week at each site:

Oct. 19- Bradford Elementary(3 days because of school vacation)

Oct. 26- Oxbow Jr. and Sr. High School shuttled to Bradford

Nov. 2 – Waits River

Nov. 9 – Blue Mountain in Wells River

Nov. 16 – Eden Elementary

Nov. 23 – Thanksgiving vacation

Nov. 30 – Waterville

Dec. 7 – Cambridge

Dec. 14 – Maintenance

Dec. 23-Jan.2 School vacation