



Media Release

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Groups Link Oral Health and Nutrition at Upcoming Free Dental Clinic

The Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS) is joining with the Arkansas Mission of Mercy (ArMOM) free dental clinic to connect uninsured and low-income Arkansans to DHS services, such as the federally-funded nutrition assistance program known as SNAP

On May 31 and June 1, at the Henderson State University campus in Arkadelphia, hundreds of dental volunteers from across the state will provide free basic dental care to adults and children on a first-come, first-served basis. On Friday, May 31, workers from the Clark County DHS office also will be on hand to educate people about the benefits of SNAP and offer application assistance.

“We are excited to join forces with the Mission of Mercy clinic. The same individuals who struggle to afford dental procedures may be the same individuals who can benefit from our services,” said Joni Jones, director of the DHS Division of County Operations. “If a low-income family receives SNAP, they have an easier time affording healthier foods, like fresh vegetables and items with reduced sugar.”

Seniors, people with low-wage jobs, and households with children are some of the groups that may qualify for SNAP benefits.

“Our volunteers have performed nearly 30,000 free dental procedures for Arkansans in need. People we help this year will also get an opportunity to meet with DHS staff, if they choose,” said Kelly Caldwell, manager of Communications and Foundation at Delta Dental of Arkansas. “We all know that poor nutrition affects oral health, so this is a great collaboration.”

Low-income Arkansans can apply or complete a pre-screener at www.access.arkansas.gov to see if they may be eligible for DHS programs. For example, a family of four with gross income below \$2,498 a month may be eligible for assistance.

To learn more about hosting SNAP outreach activities, contact Lindsey Barnett, program manager for SNAP outreach at (501) 682-8288. For more information about the Mission of Mercy dental clinic, volunteering or sponsorships, please visit www.arkansasmissionofmercy.org or call 1-800-501-2732.

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