

Howard Dental Center

Since December, 1994, individuals with HIV and AIDS have had a clinic they could go to for their dental care. Located on the near east side of Denver at 1420 Ogden Street, the Howard Dental Center is a specialty oral health clinic that provides integrated, comprehensive care to its patients.

In 2007, it performed close to 6,000 dental procedures and treated 450 patients. For every dollar is spend in expenses, it produces \$1.13 worth of services. Since its inception, the clinic has provided over \$5.3 million in free oral health care.

Howard Dental Center was started as a collaborative effort of concerned dentists, organized dentistry and dental educators. Initially under the umbrella of the Colorado AIDS Project, it obtained tax-exempt status in November, 1995.

As the HIV/AIDS disease has evolved, so has the Howard Dental Center. The greatest change in oral health care has been the move from emergency treatment to comprehensive care and now to integrated health care. Howard's integrated model seeks to work hand-in-glove with physicians, mental health, drug and alcohol treatment agencies, nutritional counseling and tobacco cessation programs.

One of the newest populations to suffer disproportionate increases in new infections is women of color aged 20-30. Howard has established an outreach program to encourage HIV+ women to consider comprehensive oral health care as an important part of their HIV routine. It also is teaming with The Children's Hospital to provide the oral health component of prenatal care for women who are HIV+.

In addition, Howard serves as a training site for fourth-year dental students at the University of Colorado School of Dental Medicine and for dental hygiene students enrolled at the Community College of Denver.

No fee services are available to medically indigent clients (that's 90 percent of its patients) who have no private insurance and are residents of one of six metropolitan counties: Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas or Jefferson. Recently, Howard expanded its dental services into a fee-based or sliding fee scale component for individuals that do not qualify for the no cost services.