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Dental Partnerships Bring Smiles

*The Arc Partners With Upper Chesapeake Chapter of the Seattle Study Club
and the Harford/Cecil County Dental Association*



At a time when we are bombarded with negative press about the state of our healthcare system and concerns about healthcare reform, The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region has some positive news to report....a wonderful partnership with the Upper Chesapeake Chapter of the Seattle Study Club and the Harford/Cecil County Dental Association to provide pro bono dental care for people supported by The Arc.

The Arc provides supports to over 400 individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities and their families. Our mission is to help people to live full and meaningful lives through advocacy, linkage with resources and community building opportunities. Of the 400 people served, over 200 are adults who have limited, or more often, no dental insurance. As you can imagine, this leads to all kinds of unnecessary complications including gum disease, infection, and quite often, loss of teeth that could be prevented with regular dental care.

Although there is a dental clinic in Perryville, the clinic only serves children under 18 or adults over 60 years of age. In addition, dentists in the area who accept Medical Assistance as payment are few and far between! Otherwise, the individuals we support have to pay out of pocket for care, or they travel down to the University of Maryland Dental School Clinic where services are provided on a sliding scale fee....and often that cost is beyond their means.

Last Spring, we approached Dr. Peter Roth who is a member of the Upper Chesapeake Chapter of the Seattle Study Club and Vice President of the Harford/Cecil County Dental Association to discuss the possibility of partnering with us to provide donated dental services for individuals we support. Dr. Roth readily took on the task of becoming the spokesperson for The Arc to fellow dentists through the Association. He "sponsored" the first patient and then challenged his colleagues to get involved. To date seven dentists have stepped forward to participate. The beauty of this affiliation is that participating dentists have signed on to provide lifelong care for one patient. As Dr. Roth shared, "we are providing them with the care they need now as well as a structured maintenance plan for the future". To date participating dentists have provided cleanings, x-rays, filling cavities, making crowns and have even performed root canals.....saving literally thousands of dollars for people at The Arc who would have otherwise had to pay out of pocket. Merle Kougl RN, Director of Health Services at The Arc shared, "We don't want to give the impression that people were being neglected, however finances necessitated waiting to have extensive work done until the money could be saved. The generosity of this program is ensuring that the preventative care is done in a timely manner, thereby reducing the complications that could result from delaying treatment. We are very appreciative"

The following dentists are currently participating in this very worthwhile partnership: Dr. Peter Roth, Dr. James Tanneyhill, Dr. R. Jason Lembach, Dr. Peggy Leary, Dr. Charles Sheets, Dr. Joseph Seipp, and Dr. Charles Morris.

For those area dentists who are interested in helping one person in need of dental care, please contact Torri Dietrich at The Arc Northern Chesapeake Region at 410.836.7177 x347.

Caption: Dr. Peter Roth and Kenny Spicer are all smiles with this new and exciting partnership.

The Arc offers a wide variety of services to individuals with developmental disabilities in Harford, Cecil, and Kent counties, both children and adults, to make informed choices with their lifestyles, vocations, education and recreational pursuits, and to assure stable and nurturing lives among their families and friends.