



RHODE ISLAND DATA BRIEF

Rhode Island Dental Safety Net Report, 2013

October
2014

INTRODUCTION

Oral health is a critical but frequently overlooked component of overall health and well-being. Dental caries (tooth decay) is the most common preventable chronic childhood disease.¹ Periodontal (gum) disease is associated with diabetes, heart disease and stroke, respiratory disease, and adverse pregnancy outcomes. Additionally, evidence of systemic diseases and conditions, poor nutritional status, tobacco exposure, microbial infections, immune disorders, and some cancers, can be assessed through oral exams.^{1,2}

THE ROLE OF THE DENTAL SAFETY NET

Dental safety net providers are public and private non-profit organizations that provide oral healthcare services to children, adults, and older adults, particularly those who are uninsured, have Medicaid/RIte Care coverage, and/or are otherwise disenfranchised.^{3,4} These dental providers ensure that tens of thousands of Rhode Islanders of all ages have access to oral healthcare, regardless of their insurance status or ability to pay. They are a critical component of the current and future healthcare delivery system in Rhode Island.

PURPOSE OF 2014 UPDATE

This report provides baseline data on the dental safety net at the end of 2013, prior to the expanded Medicaid coverage and additional dental insurance options available through the Affordable Care Act beginning January 2014. Rhode Island's decision to implement Medicaid expansion has extended eligibility to adults with income at or less than 138% of the Federal Poverty Level, and has played a valuable role in allowing more low-income Rhode Islanders to gain access to dental care. Overall, as of March 31, 64,590 individuals newly enrolled in Medicaid through the new eligibility system.⁵ The enrollment increase is attributed mostly to Rhode Island's Medicaid expansion. Some of the new enrollees (about 12,000) were previously eligible for Medicaid but had not enrolled. In addition, more than 9,000 individuals purchased dental coverage through HealthSource RI, the state health benefits exchange.⁶ Dental safety net providers will continue to play a critical role responding to a likely rising community demand for preventive and primary healthcare services, including oral health, in the era of the Affordable Care Act. The purpose of this report is to provide baseline measurements before the Affordable Care Act implementation and identify additional service needs in a new healthcare environment.

HISTORY OF THE RI DENTAL SAFETY NET REPORT

In 2006, Rhode Island KIDS COUNT conducted a survey of dental safety net providers and issued a special report: *The Dental Safety Net in Rhode Island*. The Rhode Island Department of Health, Rhode Island Health Center Association, and Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, as members of the Rhode Island Oral Health Commission, collaboratively conducted an update survey from September 2010 – April 2011. The 2010-11 survey was designed to obtain up-to-date information from providers, share progress and achievements, evaluate persisting challenges and needs, and assure a robust dental safety net in Rhode Island with strategies to expand services, as needed. Both surveys focused on staffing, capacity and utilization, referrals, funding and financing, future needs, school-based dental programs, and community-based dental programs.^{7,8}

1. US Department of Health and Human Services. (2000). Oral health in America: A report of the Surgeon General. Rockville, MD: National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research. National Institutes of Health.

2. Advancing Oral Health in America, Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, 2011.

3. Why do we need a dental care safety net? (n.d.). Retrieved July 16, 2014, from www.dentalclinicmanual.com

4. Children's Dental Health Project. (2011). Moving on the oral health provisions in health reform: A roadmap for implementation. Retrieved July 16, 2014, from www.cdhp.org

5. HealthSource RI Press Release. Retrieved Aug. 12, 2014 from <http://www.healthsourceri.com/press-releases/healthsource-ri-releases-enrollment-demographic-and-volume-data-through-march-31/>.

6. National Association of Dental Plans. (July 2014). Selection of Qualified Dental Plans in 2014 Marketplaces. Retrieved Aug 7, 2014.

7. RI KIDS COUNT (June 2006). *The Dental Safety Net in Rhode Island*. Special Report.

8. RI KIDS COUNT, RI Health Center Association, RI Department of Health (May 2011). *The Dental Safety Net in Rhode Island*. Special Report.

This report was collaboratively produced by the Rhode Island Oral Health Program, Rhode Island Health Center Association, and Rhode Island Oral Health Commission.

SURVEY OVERVIEW

The Dental Safety Net Survey, distributed in December 2013, consisted of 3 sections: (1) Site Profile, (2) Staffing and Capacity, and (3) Utilization. The questions asked for information pertaining to Calendar Year (CY) 2013, in a way consistent with the previous surveys conducted in 2010-11 and 2005-06. The data were reported by Rhode Island's eight community health centers, two hospital-based dental centers, the Dental Hygiene Clinic at the Community College of Rhode Island, and the Wisdom Tooth nursing home mobile dental program. The information was compiled by the Rhode Island Department of Health Oral Health Program, in collaboration with the Rhode Island Health Center Association and the Dental Safety Net Workgroup of the Rhode Island Oral Health Commission, between January and February 2014.

TABLE 1. PATIENTS* SERVED BY DENTAL SAFETY NET PROVIDERS IN RHODE ISLAND, 2013

	Children (0-18 years)		Adults (≥19 years)		All	Change Since 2009
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS (Number of Sites)	#	%	#	%		
Blackstone Valley Community Health Care (1)	2,109	35%	3,953	65%	6,062	+23%
Comprehensive Community Action Program (2) [†]	2,904	38%	4,775	62%	7,679	+33%
East Bay Community Action Program (1) [†]	1,781	55%	1,469	45%	3,250	-24%
Providence Community Health Centers (2)	4,031	85%	706	15%	4,737	+53%
Thundermist Community Health Centers (3) [†]	5,658	32%	12,018	68%	17,676	+71%
Tri-Town Community Action Agency (1)	581	35%	1,070	65%	1,651	<i>Opened in 2010</i>
WellOne Primary Medical and Dental Care (3)	1,561	30%	3,575	70%	5,136	+19%
Wood River Health Services (1)	671	30%	1,592	70%	2,263	-9%
<i>Subtotal</i>	19,296	40%	29,158	60%	48,454	+38%
	Children (0-18 years)		Adults (≥19 years)		All	Change Since 2009
HOSPITAL-BASED DENTAL CENTERS (Number of Sites)	#	%	#	%		
Samuels Sinclair Dental Center / RI Hospital (1)	5,284	71%	2,118	29%	7,402	+29%
St. Joseph Health Services (3)**	14,625	90%	1,625	10%	16,250	+23%
<i>Subtotal</i>	19,909	84%	3,743	16%	23,652	+25%
	Children (0-18 years)		Adults (≥19 years)		All	Change Since 2009
OTHER DENTAL PROGRAMS (Number of Sites)	#	%	#	%		
Community College of Rhode Island (1)	169	10%	1,521	90%	1,690	-1%
Wisdom Tooth			5,166	100%	5,166	--
<i>2013 Total</i>	39,374	50%	39,588	50%	78,962	32% [^]

*Patients served are unduplicated counts. All numbers are self-reported by the providers; limitations may exist based on variability in reporting systems.

[†]Includes services through the Molar Express (school-based mobile dental program).

**Although St. Joseph Health Services collected only patient visits (and not unduplicated patients served) for the 2013 survey, an approximate number of unduplicated patients served was derived based on the reported 48,750 patient visits and an average of three visits per patient.

--No comparable data from 2009.

[^]The total percent change since 2009 does not include the 5,166 patients served by the Wisdom Tooth mobile dental program, due to no comparable data reported in the previous survey.

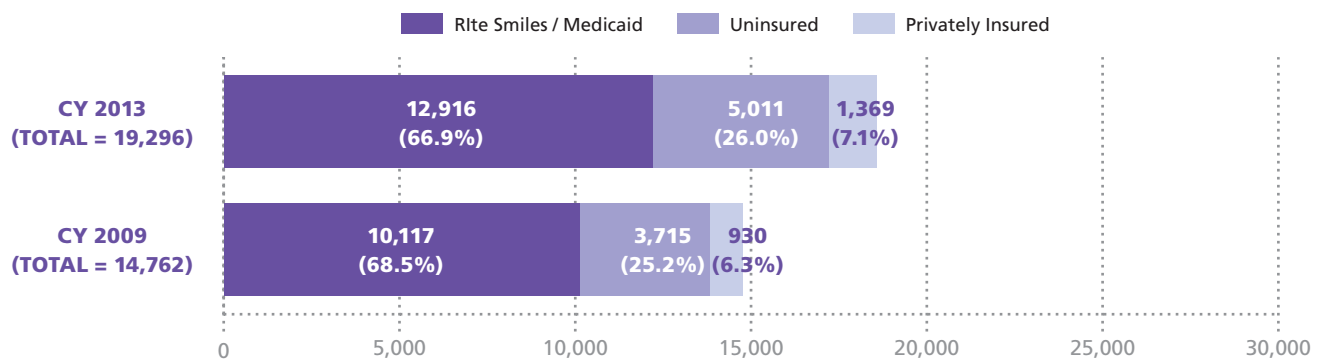
PATIENTS SERVED BY DENTAL SAFETY NET PROVIDERS IN RHODE ISLAND (2013) AND INCREASES OF PATIENTS SINCE 2009

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

During 2013, 48,454 patients (19,296 children and 29,158 adults) were treated at the eight community health centers responding to the survey (Table 1). About 40% of patients served by the community health centers were children (ages 0-18 years) and 60% were adults ages 19 years and older. The percentage distribution among children and adults varies by site. Most community health centers saw more adult patients than children, with the exception of Providence Community Health Centers, which focuses on serving children and pregnant women.

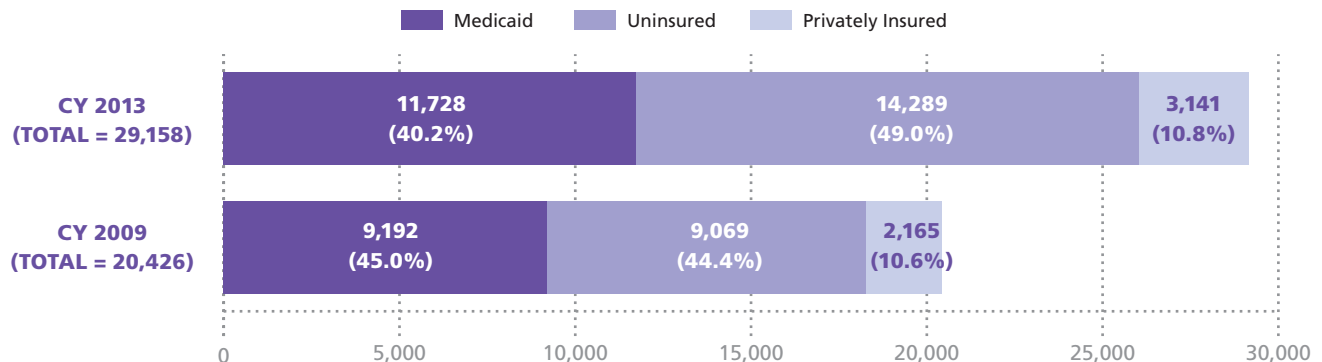
The health centers served 13,266 more patients in 2013, a 38% increase from 2009 when 35,188 dental patients were treated (Table 1). Most of the health centers reported increases in dental patients. Decreases at two agencies may have been caused by challenges in hiring dental providers.

FIGURE 1. PEDIATRIC DENTAL PATIENTS SERVED BY COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS BY INSURANCE TYPE, RHODE ISLAND, 2013 & 2009



The health centers served about 4,500 more children during 2013 compared to 2009. Most children served by the eight community health centers were covered by Medicaid/ Rte Smiles or were uninsured (Figure 1).

FIGURE 2. ADULT DENTAL PATIENTS SERVED BY COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS BY INSURANCE TYPE, RHODE ISLAND, 2013 & 2009



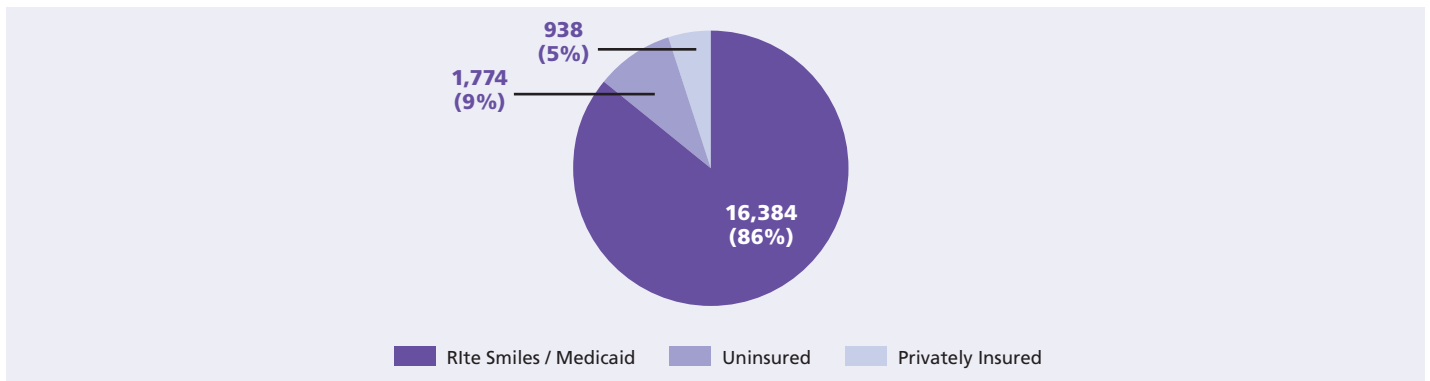
The health centers served about 9,000 more adults during 2013 compared to 2009. Among adults treated by the community health centers in 2013, 40% had Medicaid, 49% were uninsured, and 11% had private insurance coverage (Figure 2). The increase in the number of uninsured adult patients from 2009 to 2013 was more significant than that of adults covered by Medicaid or private insurance.

HOSPITAL-BASED DENTAL CENTERS

During 2013, 23,652 patients (19,909 children and 3,743 adults) were treated at the two hospital-based dental centers (Samuels Sinclair Dental Center at Rhode Island Hospital and St. Joseph Health Services); 84% of patients served by hospitals were children (ages 0-18 years) and 16% were adults ages 19 years and older (Table 1).

The hospital-based dental centers served 4,666 more patients in total, a 25% increase from 2009 when 18,986 dental patients were treated (Table 1). Both hospital-based dental centers reported increases in dental patients.

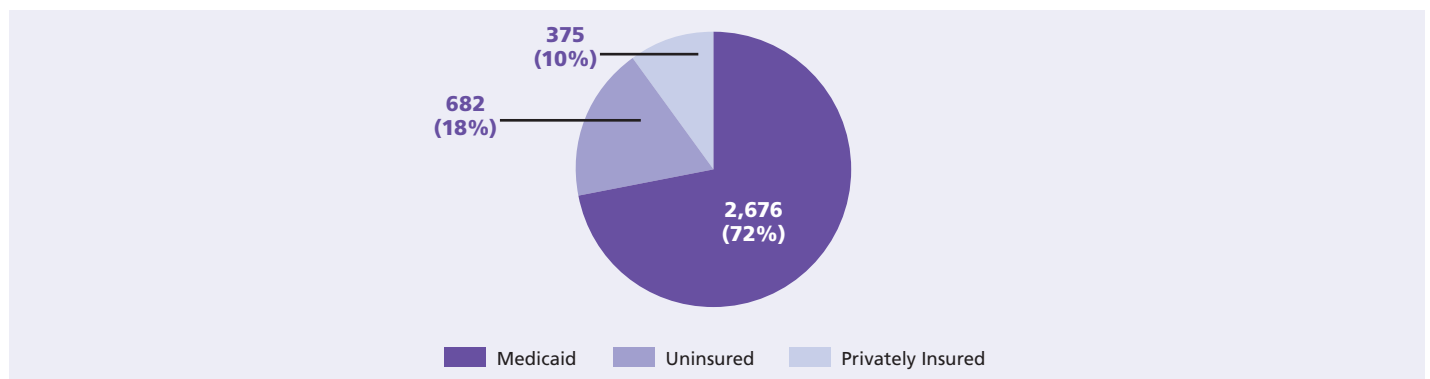
FIGURE 3. PEDIATRIC PATIENTS SERVED BY HOSPITAL-BASED DENTAL CENTERS BY INSURANCE TYPE, RHODE ISLAND,* 2013



*Samuels Sinclair Dental Center/Rhode Island Hospital and St. Joseph Health Services combined.

The hospital-based dental centers served 2,857 more children during 2013 compared to 2009. Among children treated at both hospital-based dental centers, 86% were enrolled in Medicaid/Rite Smiles, 9% were privately insured, and 5% were uninsured (Figure 3).

FIGURE 4. ADULT PATIENTS SERVED BY HOSPITAL-BASED DENTAL CENTERS BY INSURANCE TYPE, RHODE ISLAND,* 2013



*Samuels Sinclair Dental Center/Rhode Island Hospital and St. Joseph Health Services combined.

Compared to 2009, the hospital-based dental centers served about 1,809 more adults during 2013. In 2013, St. Joseph treated 1,603 more adults than in 2009. This 73% increase in the number of adult patients can be attributed to the expansion of its residency program to include Advanced Education in General Dentistry (AEGD). Among all adults treated at the hospital-based dental centers, 72% were enrolled in Medicaid, 18% were privately insured, and 10% were uninsured (Figure 4).

DENTAL SAFETY NET CAPACITY

CLINICAL STAFFING

An adequate supply of dentists, dental hygienists, and dental assistants are critical to maintain a quality oral health workforce. The full-time equivalent (FTE) of 177 dental providers (dentists, hygienists, and assistants) made up the dental safety net in 2013.

As a whole, the dental safety net workforce increased by almost 18% from 2011 to 2013. During this time, Rhode Island's community health centers increased their dental safety net workforce by 19%, hiring an additional 18 FTE staff (about 3 FTE dentists, 4 FTE dental hygienists, and 12 FTE dental assistants).

From 2011 to 2013, Rhode Island's hospital-based dental centers increased their dental safety net workforce by almost 14%. Samuels Sinclair Dental Center's residency program is currently dormant and has stopped enrolling new residents since Fall 2013. In 2013, St. Joseph Health Services added more dental providers and expanded its residency programs to include Advanced Education in General Dentistry (AEGD), and now serves significantly more adult patients than in the past.

TABLE 2. CLINICAL STAFFING (FULL-TIME EQUIVALENTS), RHODE ISLAND, 2013 & 2011

	2013				
COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS (Number of Sites)	DENTIST	DENTAL HYGIENIST	DENTAL ASSISTANT	TOTAL FTE	CHANGE SINCE 2011
Blackstone Valley Community Health Care (1)	5.00	2.00	6.00	13.00	+0.80
Comprehensive Community Action Program (2)	4.05	2.50	8.75	15.30	+0.55
East Bay Community Action Program (1)	1.00	1.00	2.00	4.00	-2.00
Providence Community Health Centers (2)	2.50	2.50	6.40	11.40	+3.65
Thundermist Community Health Centers (3)	9.88	8.41	21.02	39.31	+12.23
Tri-Town Community Action Agency (1)	1.00	1.10	2.00	4.10	+0.30
WellOne Primary Medical and Dental Care (3)	5.20	3.30	12.00	20.50	+2.10
Wood River Health Services (1)	1.70	1.70	2.70	6.10	+0.84
<i>Subtotal</i>	30.33	22.51	60.87	113.71	
Change since 2011	+3.05	+3.73	+11.69		+18.47 (+19.4%)
HOSPITAL-BASED DENTAL CENTERS (Number of Sites)	DENTIST / RESIDENT	DENTAL HYGIENIST	DENTAL ASSISTANT	TOTAL FTE	CHANGE SINCE 2011
Samuels Sinclair Dental Center / RI Hospital (1)	6.60	3.60	6.60	16.80	-1.60
St. Joseph Health Services (3)	20.60	6.80	14.50	41.90	+8.77
<i>Subtotal</i>	27.20	10.40	21.10	58.70	
Change since 2011	+2.82	+1.50	+2.85		+7.17 (+13.9%)
OTHER DENTAL PROGRAMS (Number of Sites)	DENTIST	DENTAL HYGIENIST	DENTAL ASSISTANT	TOTAL FTE	CHANGE SINCE 2011
Community College of Rhode Island (1)	0.00	7.00 FTE instructors + 45 students	1.00	8.00	0.00
Wisdom Tooth	1.00	2.00	2.00	5.00	+1.00
<i>Subtotal</i>	1.00	9.00	3.00	13.00	
Change since 2011	+0.00	+1.50	+2.85		+1.00 (+8.3%)
2013 TOTAL	58.53	34.91[^]	83.97	177.41[^]	
Change since 2011	+5.87 (+11.1%)	+6.23 (+21.7%)	+14.54 (20.9%)		+26.64 (+17.7%)

[^]The total number of FTE staff employed by the dental safety net does not include the students or staff at the CCRI Dental Hygiene Clinic.

DENTAL OPERATORIES AND CHAIRS

A dental operator is a room in which oral health services are provided, including the dental chair and equipment. There has been an increase of dental operatories in Rhode Island's community health centers and hospital-based dental centers within the past 2 years (Table 3).

TABLE 3. NUMBER OF DENTAL OPERATORIES/CHAIRS, FIXED SITES, RHODE ISLAND, 2013 & 2011

PROVIDER	DENTAL OPERATORIES / CHAIRS	
	2013	CHANGE SINCE 2011
Blackstone Valley Community Health Care	12	-
Comprehensive Community Action Program	8	-
East Bay Community Action Program	4	-
Providence Community Health Centers	8	-
Thundermist Community Health Centers	27	+10
Tri-Town Community Action Agency	3	-
WellOne Primary Medical and Dental Care	17	-
Wood River Health Services	5	-
Samuels Sinclair Dental Center / RI Hospital	12	+1
St. Joseph Health Services	24	+6
Community College of Rhode Island	18	-
<i>Subtotal</i>	138	-
Change since 2011		+17
Percent Change since 2011		+14%

APPOINTMENT AVAILABILITY

All community health centers and hospital-based dental centers in Rhode Island provide same-day emergency appointments, although some limit them to established patients only. The number of days until the next available appointment date for new patients ranges from 2 to 74 days and varies by agency and site. Appointment availability may differ for new and established patients. The average number of days until the next available appointment for a new patient is 37 days, although there are two centers that reported significantly shorter waiting times.

THE DENTAL HYGIENE CLINIC AT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF RHODE ISLAND (CCRI)

The CCRI Dental Hygiene Clinic is located at the Lincoln Campus and is a learning environment for student dental hygienists that operates during the academic year, from September to May. During 2013, the clinic's 45 students, along with the full-time equivalent of 7 supervising dental hygienists and 1 dental assistant, provided dental hygiene and preventive services (dental exams/cleanings, sealants, and radiographs) to 1,690 patients (Table 1). The majority of patients are adults and about 10% of patients are children. The minimum age for clinic patients is 5 years old.

WISDOM TOOTH – MOBILE DENTAL PROGRAM

Wisdom Tooth is a mobile dentistry program operated by CareLink Inc. that provides services to residents of nursing homes, assisted living programs, and patients in the Program of All Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) locations. Wisdom Tooth provides diagnostic, preventive, and palliative services (including cleanings, X-rays, restorations/fillings, simple extractions, and denture fitting and repairs) where the patient lives using mobile dental equipment.

Wisdom Tooth employs 11 full- and part-time providers and staff, and serves 48 nursing homes, 2 assisted living programs, and 2 PACE locations. In 2013, more than 5,000 patients were seen by the program (Table 1). Most had Medicaid coverage (71%), 13% had private insurance coverage, 9% were uninsured, and about 7% received care under the PACE program. The PACE program cares for adults 55 years and older who have chronic health needs and live at home. Wisdom Tooth serves additional locations and patients through a partnership with WellOne Dental Center.

DENTAL SAFETY NET PROVIDERS IN RHODE ISLAND

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

Blackstone Valley Community Health Care

210 Main Street, Pawtucket, RI 02860

(401) 729-5239

8:00am – 5:00pm (Monday – Friday)

Two Saturdays per month: 8:00am – 12:00pm

(September – May)

**Dental appointments reserved for Blackstone Valley medical patients*

Block Island Health Services

6 Payne Road, Box 919, Block Island, RI 02807

Dr. Trombly: (401) 862-2713

9:00am – 4:00pm (Friday)

Comprehensive Community Action Program

Family Health Services

1090 Cranston Street, Cranston, RI 02920

(401) 942-4867

8:00am – 5:00pm (Monday, Friday)

8:00am – 8:00pm

(Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday)

Comprehensive Community Action Program

Everett C. Wilcox Center

226 Buttonwoods Avenue, Warwick, RI 02886

(401) 732-9090

8:00am – 5:00pm (Monday, Friday)

8:00am – 8:00pm

(Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday)

East Bay Community Action Program

19 Broadway, Newport, RI 02840

(401) 845-0564

8:00am – 5:00pm (Monday – Friday)

Providence Community Health Center

335R Prairie Avenue, Providence, RI 02905

(401) 444-0430

8:00am – 7:00pm (Monday – Thursday)

8:00am – 5:00pm (Friday)

8:00am – 2:00pm (Saturday)

**Dental services reserved for children age birth-19 and pregnant women only*

Providence Community Health Center /

Crossroads Rhode Island

160 Broad Street, Providence, RI 02903

(401) 861-2403

8:30am – 4:30pm (Tuesday, Friday)

**Dental services reserved for homeless patients only*

Thundermist Health Center of South County

1 River Street, Wakefield, RI 02879

(401) 783-5646

8:00am – 8:00pm (Monday – Thursday)

8:00am – 5:00pm (Friday)

8:00am – 1:00pm (1st Saturday/month)

8:00am – 4:00pm (4th Saturday/month)

Thundermist Health Center of West Warwick

1219 Main Street, West Warwick, RI 02893

(401) 615-2804

8:00am – 8:00pm (Monday – Thursday)

8:00am – 5:00pm (Friday, Saturday)

Thundermist Health Center of Woonsocket

191 Social St #9, Woonsocket RI 02895

(401) 767-4161

8:00am – 8:00pm (Monday – Thursday)

8:00am – 5:00pm (Friday)

8:00am – 4:00pm (Saturday)

Tri-Town Community Action Agency

1126 Hartford Avenue, Johnston, RI 02919

(401) 519-1940

8:30am – 5:00pm (Monday, Wednesday, Friday)

11:30am – 8:00pm (Tuesday, Thursday)

**Priority given to patients from Johnston, North Providence, and Smithfield*

WellOne Primary Medical and Dental Care

142A Danielson Pike, Foster, RI 02825

(401) 647-3702

8:30am – 5:00pm (Monday, Thursday, Friday)

9:30am – 6:00pm (Tuesday, Wednesday)

WellOne Primary Medical and Dental Care

36 Bridge Way, Pascoag, RI 02859

(401) 567-0800

8:30am – 5:00pm

(Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday)

8:30am – 6:00pm (Thursday)

WellOne Primary Medical and Dental Care

308 Callahan Road, North Kingstown, RI 02852

(401) 295-9706

8:00am – 5:00pm (Monday, Wednesday, Friday)

8:30am – 5:00pm (Tuesday)

8:00am – 5:30pm (Thursday)

Wood River Health Services

823 Main Street, Hope Valley, RI 02832

(401) 387-9601

8:00am – 5:00pm (Monday – Friday)

HOSPITAL-BASED DENTAL CENTERS

**Samuels Sinclair Dental Center /
Rhode Island Hospital**
593 Eddy Street, Providence, RI 02903
(401) 444-5284

8:00am – 4:30pm
(Monday – Friday, closed 12:00pm – 1:00pm)
**Adults with special needs; all children*

**St. Joseph Health Services –
Pediatric & Family Dental Center**
21 Peace Street, 2nd Floor, Providence, RI 02907
(401) 456-4461

8:00am – 4:30pm (Monday – Friday)
**All children, parents of current pediatric patients,
adults with special health care needs*

**St. Joseph Health Services -
Pediatric & Family Dental Center**
249 Roosevelt Avenue, Pawtucket, RI 02860
(401) 723-2891

8:00am – 4:30pm (Monday – Friday)
**All children, parents of current pediatric patients,
adults with special health care needs*

**St. Joseph Health Services -
Pediatric & Family Dental Associates**
1524 Atwood Avenue, Suite 125, Johnston, RI 02903
(401) 444-5284

8:00am – 4:30pm (Monday – Friday)
**All children, parents of current pediatric patients,
adults with special health care needs*

DENTAL HYGIENE CLINIC

Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI)
1762 Louisquisset Pike, Lincoln, RI 02865
(401) 333-7250

7:30am – 5:30pm
(Spring Semester: Monday, Wednesday, Friday)
7:30am – 6:00pm
(Spring Semester: Tuesday, Thursday)
7:30am – 5:30pm
(Fall Semester: Monday – Friday)
**Dental cleanings only; patients must call to see if
their needs align with criteria for student
learning curriculum*

MOBILE DENTAL PROGRAMS

Molar Express

**Children and young adults, ages 2 – 21*
Please call 1-866-MOLARXP (1-866-665-2797) to see
if the Molar Express services your area.

Wisdom Tooth (Nursing homes)

CareLink
225 Chapman Street, Providence, RI 02905
(401) 490-7610
9:00am – 4:00pm (Monday – Thursday)

MISCELLANEOUS

Donated Dental Services (DDS) Program

**For disabled, elderly, or medically compromised
patients who complete an application, meet eligibility
criteria, and cannot afford needed dental services*
DDS applications are available online at
www.dentallifeline.org/rhode-island
or by phone (866-572-9390).
The DDS Program is not for dental emergencies
or urgent care.