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Governor Mills Announces Maine Veterans' Dental Network to Continue Services in New Year with \$100,000 Grant from Northeast Delta Dental

Augusta, MAINE — Governor Janet Mills announced today that, due to a generous grant from Northeast Delta Dental, the Maine Veterans' Dental Network (MVDN) will resume its dental services in the New Year for Maine veterans who otherwise cannot afford them.

"I am truly grateful to Northeast Delta Dental for their generosity, which will allow this program to continue providing vital dental services to veterans across Maine," **said Governor Janet Mills.** "My Administration is committed to doing all we can to serve and honor our servicemembers, and this partnership is critical to their overall health and wellbeing."

Governor Mills [launched](#) the Maine Veterans Dental Network in partnership with Northeast Delta Dental, participating dental clinics, and Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC). The Network began providing services on May 15th with an initial grant of \$35,000 from Northeast Delta Dental. Northeast Delta Dental has now provided a \$100,000 grant to allow the Veteran's Dental Network to continue its services in January 2022.

"We are both honored and fortunate to be able to assist in this very worthy cause," **said Tom Raffio, President & CEO, Northeast Delta Dental.** "After the sacrifices they have made for our country, these veterans deserve access to oral health care, and we thank Governor Mills and her administration for making this a reality with their program."

Any veteran who is a Maine resident, is not 100% service-connected to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), doesn't have dental insurance, cannot afford to pay for dental care out of pocket, has a DD-214 showing an Honorable or General Under Honorable conditions discharge, and/or deployed on active duty for at least 180 days with the Maine Army National Guard or Air Guard or

retired from the National Guard with (20) years of service meets the criteria to access the grant funded program.

“Access to oral health care has been a long-standing problem for veterans in our state,” **noted Maine Bureau of Veterans Services Director David Richmond.** “Without the support of the Northeast Delta Dental, the Veteran’s Dental Network would not be possible. We are so grateful to be affiliated with a veteran-centric organization like theirs.”

Veteran’s Dental Network participating clinics and FQHCs include: Community Dental (Biddeford, Farmington, Lewiston, Monson, Portland, and Rumford); Lincoln County Dental (Wiscasset); Kennebec Valley Family Dentistry (Augusta); Waterville Community Dental (Waterville); UNE Dental Clinic, the UMA Dental Clinic; Eastport Health Care (Calais, Eastport, and Machias), and Fish River Rural Health (Madawaska, Fort Kent, and Eagle Lake).

Starting in January 2022, veterans who would like to receive services will first connect with Sarah Sherman, Director of Strategic Partnerships at the Bureau of Veteran’s Services, at Sarah.Sherman@Maine.Gov. Once veterans fill out a State of Maine Request form and provide a copy of their DD-214 (discharge papers) to Sherman, she will then refer them to nearest participating dental clinic. If the veteran doesn’t have a copy of their DD-214, the Bureau can help them acquire one.

“The Mills Administration recognized a need for veterans’ improved access to dental care in communities across the state. By working with like-minded oral health care professionals, we created a program from scratch, and effectively addressed a problem. The MVDN received requests for dental services from over 250 veterans since its launch in May, and served those who qualified by providing them with everything from a checkup, cleaning, and an x-ray to extractions and dentures,”**stated MBVS Director of Strategic Partnerships, Sarah Sherman.**

“One of my favorite veteran interactions came early in the program when I informed a Vietnam Era Veteran that he qualified for the program and his response was, ‘Do you mean to tell me that I will be able to smile at my daughter’s wedding in August?’**Sherman recalled,** “Having the capacity to respond with ‘Yes’ made both his day and mine, and all the hard work over the past year extremely worthwhile.”

For more information or to access the Maine Veterans’ Dental Network, please contact Sherman at 207-430-5816 or email Sarah.Sherman@Maine.Gov.

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