



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 2022

Mission of Mercy Rockford Tops \$1 Million in Free Dental Care Goal

After a four-year absence, the Illinois State Dental Society Foundation's Mission of Mercy returns to make a difference in people's lives in Northern Illinois

ROCKFORD – The final X-ray machine has left the building. The last drill has made its way back home. But for hundreds of patients in Rockford and the volunteer dental practitioners who helped them for free last weekend, the difference made will be lasting.

Over two days of intense care across the sprawling UW Health Sports Factory in Rockford, the Illinois State Dental Society Foundation's Mission of Mercy topped its goal of \$1 million in free dental care provided to more than 1,000 patients in need on July 22-23. The final total of care provided was \$1,024,736.96.

Hundreds of dental professionals – dentists, dental hygienists, registered nurses and dental assistants – came together with trucks of equipment and volunteer patient ambassadors to provide free care on a first-come, first-served basis over the two days. Patients are screened and evaluated to determine their needs, then sent to one of several workstations for treatment: everything from cleanings and fillings to extractions and partial dentures.

The final procedure count from the Rockford Mission of Mercy event to reach more than \$1 million in care:

- Cleanings – 366
- Extractions – 1,159
- Fillings – 916
- X-Rays – 610
- Root Canals – 58
- Partial Dentures -- 54

The ISDS Foundation created the biannual Mission of Mercy in 2010 to provide care for those who otherwise could not afford or access it, with a high priority on patients suffering from dental infection and pain. Patients receiving treatment during the two-day event are taught the importance of good daily oral hygiene practices, healthy diet and routine preventative dental care, and the event serves a strong public reminder of the tremendous needs for critical dental care in the host city and around the region.

The event is usually conducted every other summer at a different Illinois city, but had not been held since 2018 in Springfield because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Along with hundreds of patients, a number of local and state elected officials visited the site to see the caregiving firsthand and learn more about the need for expanded dental care access and affordability. Organizers said all of the work involved in putting this event together is well worth it when patients leave with better smiles and policymakers have a better understanding of the dental needs all across the state.

“We want to thank the City of Rockford, our area dentists and volunteers who put in the hard work and local media outlets who helped us reach as many people as possible about the free care they could receive at Mission of Mercy,” said Dr. Tom Sullivan, ISDS Foundation President and an event organizer. “Every event is a true team effort. We know we are changing people’s lives for the better in Rockford and the surrounding area through Mission of Mercy and are proud to report the event was another success to meet people’s needs.”

More about the event’s history, questions and answers for patients and other helpful information is available at the ISDS Foundation’s Mission of Mercy website: <https://www.isds.org/foundation/events/mission-of-mercy>.

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Media toolkit for ISDS Foundation Mission of Mercy:

Mission of Mercy website resources: <https://www.isds.org/foundation/events/mission-of-mercy>

Media resources:

- Promotional video from Springfield MOM in 2018: https://vimeo.com/348411381?embedded=true&source=video_title&owner=1591947
- Background flyer from 2018 event: https://www.isds.org/docs/librariesprovider3/default-document-library/imomfinalpromohandoutforweb.pdf?sfvrsn=c02bfd8a_0
- Top questions and answers about the upcoming 2022 event: <https://www.isds.org/news-details/2022/03/22/mission-of-mercy-registration-faq>
- Photos from the 2016 MOM event (you can use these in coverage if needed): <https://www.flickr.com/photos/141608375@N05/albums/72157673538693903>