

# Dental Care for Seniors: An Example

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# What I will cover

- How do seniors access dental care?
- TCHD Senior Dental Clinic—an example of how the dental community cares for seniors
- “Typical” patients
  - All seniors are unique individuals

# How do seniors access dental care?

- Private dental practices (fee-for-service)
- Stand-alone clinics (Tri-County)
- Integrated programs (InnovAge)
- Univ of Colorado School of Dental Medicine
- Mobile clinics (Senior Mobile Dental, Access Mobile Dental, Dental Lifeline)
- Annual free clinics (COMOM)

# Our Dental Team

- 2 dentists:
  - Lonnie Fallin, DDS
  - Kylee Brightside, DDS
- 1 hygienist:
  - Joan Eskens, MS, MHA, RDH
- 1 dental assistant
  - Beverly James, EDDA
- 1 clinic support staff
  - Veronica Rios, clinic support staff



# Our Dental Team

- Lonnie Fallin, DDS
  - dentist
- Beverly James, EDDA
  - dental assistant



# Our Dental Team



- Kylee Brightside, DDS
  - dentist

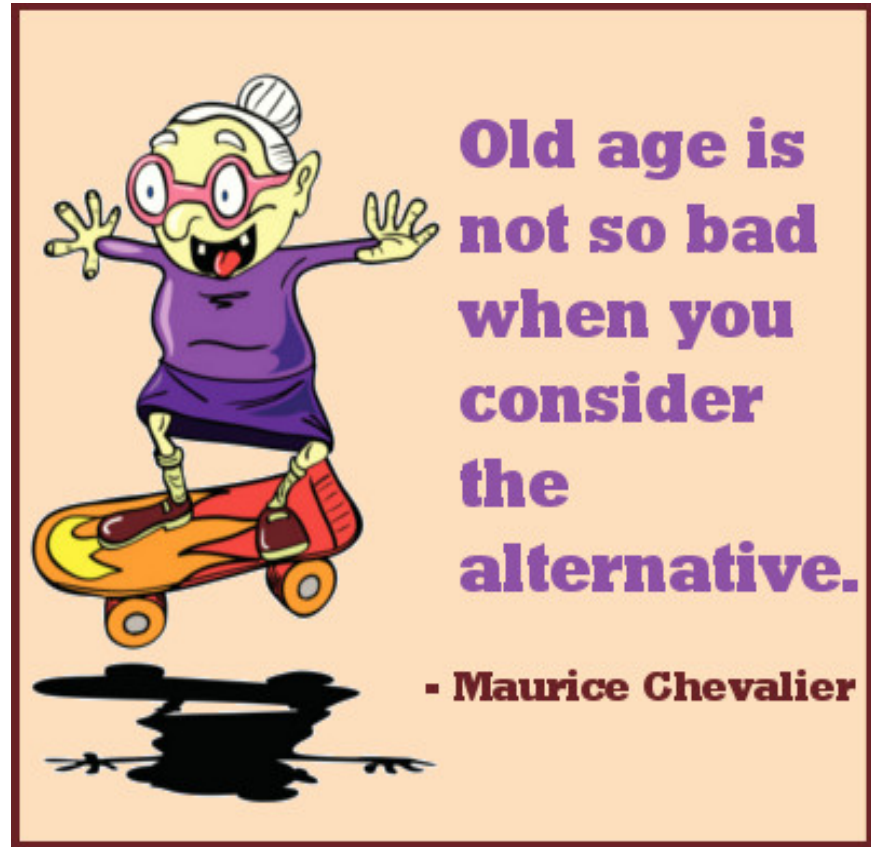
# Our Dental Team

- Veronica Rios
  - clinic support staff



# Our Dental Team

- Joan Eskens
  - dental hygienist
  - clinic manager



# We Are Here to Serve Seniors

## Our *Mission Statement*:

- Provide dental treatment to
  - people age 55 and older
  - limited income
  - live in Arapahoe County
  - no insurance

# We Are Here to Serve Seniors

## Our *Goals*:

- Have the client leave clinic with functional dentition
- Preserve dental health for the client's lifetime

# We Are Here to Serve Seniors

"In the end, it's not the years  
in your life that count;  
it's the life in your years."

Abraham Lincoln

# We Are Here to Serve Seniors

## Our Philosophy:

- Respect and consideration for each senior
- Integrity
- Service to others
- Excellence of care
- Comprehensive dental treatment
- Preventive dental care



# What Do We Do?

- Exams
  - teeth and supporting structures
  - soft tissues (oral cancer)
- Blood pressures
- X-rays

# What Do We Do?

- Fillings
- Crowns and Bridges
- Extractions
- Limited surgery
- Some root canal therapy

# What Do We Do?

- Dentures
  - complete
  - partial
- Limited TMJ therapy (nightguards)
- Referrals for specialty services
  - complicated root canal therapy
  - complex tooth extractions
  - oral pathology

# What Do We Do?

- Cleanings (periodontal health)
  - regular
  - gingivitis
  - scaling and root planing (deep cleanings)
- Dental health education

# What *Don't* We Do?

- Implants
- Cosmetic dentistry
  - veneers
  - teeth whitening
- Periodontal surgery
- Complicated TMJ therapy

# How We Are Funded

- Arapahoe County
- Tri-County Health Department
- Patient payments

# Patient Payments

- Sliding fee scale
  - 10, 15, 20% of private offices in Englewood
  - payment schedule
- Medicaid
- Colorado Department of Health Care Policy & Financing (HCPF)

# How do Seniors get to us?

- Drive themselves
- Relative/friend drives them
- City bus
- Access-a-ride
- Omni-bus (city of Littleton)
- Taxi
- Walk
- Bicycle



# Typical Patients

"We must both, I'm afraid, recognize that, as we grow older, we become like old cars—more and more repair and replacements are necessary."

C.S. Lewis

# Typical Patients

- 55-95 years old
- All races represented
- Many religions represented
- Several languages spoken

# Typical Patients

- Tooth loss
  - periodontal disease
  - caries
- Multiple systemic disorders
  - poly pharmacy
- Happy to have access to dental care

# Typical Patients

- Many years since last dental visit
- Needs:
  - teeth extracted
  - replacement teeth
  - fillings
  - cleaning
    - dental prophylaxis or
    - scaling and root planing (deep cleaning)

# Alice—long-term patient

- 82 years old
- Drives herself
- Patient since 2006
- A mom, a grandma, a great grandma, a niece
- Healthy for her age
  - takes medicine for
    - cholesterol
    - osteoporosis

# Alice—long-term patient



# Alice—long-term patient

- Has periodontal disease
  - has no upper teeth
  - scaling and root planing 2009
  - comes in every 3 months for cleanings (periodontal maintenance)





# Alice—long-term patient

- Wears a full upper denture
- Recently:
  - had decay under the crowns in a bridge
  - extractions of several teeth
  - fabricating a lower partial denture





# Bob—a new patient

- 93 years old
- Veteran of World War II, Korea, Vietnam
- A story-teller
- Mentally competent
- Takes medicines for liver and thyroid

# Bob—a new patient

Had 12 teeth

- all decayed
- some roots tips
- unaware of problems
- all extracted



# Bob—a new patient

- “Gumming” his food for years
- Will have full dentures
- Often misses appointments
- May take months to get his dentures



# Jackie—a denture patient

- 65 years old
- Multiple systemic disorders
  - diabetes
  - asthma
  - high cholesterol
  - high blood pressure
  - arthritis
- Takes 8 prescription medicines
- Takes several OTC medicines

# Jackie—a denture patient



- Dentures
  - full upper
  - partial lower (has 6 teeth)

# Jackie—a denture patient

- Returns for
  - denture adjustments
  - new dentures, when needed
- Does not like to get her teeth cleaned professionally





# How to Find Us



- 4857 S. Broadway St.  
Englewood, CO 80113
- Belleview and Broadway
- 303-783-7106

*"Happiness is not a goal...it's  
a by-product of a life well  
lived."*

Eleanor Roosevelt

