

# Why the Success of Dentistry's Charitable Foundation Should Matter to You

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The Dentistry Canada Fund (DCF) is the outcome of some 40 years of charitable evolution within the dental family. As you may know, DCF was established in 1994 through the amalgamation of the Canadian Fund for Dental Education (CFDE), the Canadian Dental Foundation (CDF), the Dental Research Fund, the Library Trust Fund and several other smaller funds. DCF, including its previous forms, has a proud history of supporting programs of educational excellence and applied research that have made a difference in the lives of many.

With this article, I wish to start the process of enhancing your knowledge of the activities of your charitable foundation. In future *Journal* editions, news updates will provide a concise snapshot of current DCF programs. In so doing, it is my hope that more members of our dental family will come to realize the importance of making their own personal annual donation gifts to DCF.

Accordingly, here are some examples of charitable programs which DCF supports on an annual basis.

## **International Standards Organization (ISO) — Impacting Every Dental Practice**

DCF supports Canada's representatives at this international meeting of dental scientists and its ongoing working committees. ISO works to develop standards for dental materials, devices and equipment. The work of these individuals has a direct bearing on the quality of total care delivered to all Canadians through our offices and has an impact on every dentist, hygienist and laboratory, as well as the dental industry. Canadians have assumed leadership roles for many years in its work with ISO, including acting as secretariat for the filling and restorative materials subcommittee.

Why is the work of this group so important to DCF's mission? In recent years, the public has become increasingly concerned about the quality and safety of the devices and materials used in treatment. We need to know if the chemicals used are safe. We also need to know that the materials being placed in the mouths of patients meet biocompatibility requirements and that equipment meets safety standards. Will the x-ray machine and x-ray film operate within specified

limits? We need to know that instruments and equipment will allow dentists to provide quality dental care for their patients. Canada has a moral and an ethical responsibility to play a role in the development of international standards in this vital area.

## **Central Toronto Community Health Centre — Educational Publication**

A few years ago DCF supported the production of an educational publication for this Centre. The publication had a very strong visual component since it was targeted primarily at low-income groups, immigrant families and street people, where literacy skills are low. The brochure is a step-by-step instruction manual on personal dental hygiene. The project was so successful that it was endorsed by Health Canada and is now being used by community health centres across the country. This is a great example of an initial DCF grant having an impact on oral health care for thousands of Canadians.

## **McGill University Outreach Program — Montreal**

This program focuses on providing dental services through mobile units for the working poor, poverty-stricken families, shut-ins on government supplements, street people, terminally ill patients at home, and geriatric patients in public foster homes. In undertaking this mission, the Outreach Program has targeted such organizations as Sun Youth, Dans La Rue, Teen Haven, adolescent clinics at the Montreal Children's Hospital and St. Justine Hospital, the Old Brewery, the Salvation Army, community health centres, geriatric clinics, and palliative care units. The program is run by faculty and students from McGill's dental school as well as volunteer dentists, assistants and hygienists. DCF is proud to be supporting this project with the assistance of a contribution from Wrigley Canada.

## **Education and Research Grants/Awards**

As you know, university tuition and student costs have exploded in recent years to the point where the cost of a dental degree now exceeds \$100,000 for most graduates! Academic scholarships are awarded annually to 2 deserving students at

each Canadian faculty of dentistry. DCF also provides some grants to dental students in need of financial assistance. (DCF receives far more applications than it can even begin to support given current resources.)

DCF's biennial Research Award encourages research related to dentistry conducted by post-graduate students in Canada. The DCF/Warner Lambert Fellowships support excellence in teacher training for Canadian dental assisting, hygiene and university programs, as well as research by Canadian faculty.

DCF also provides grants for national conferences that support the continued development of oral health practice and the quality of care for Canadians. For example, DCF supported a national conference on competency-based dentistry in the fall of 2000.

### International Humanitarian Projects

Although we focus mainly on Canadian charitable projects, we do support some international projects, primarily through the DCF - William James Spence ICD (International College of Dentists) Humanitarian Project Fund. Through one recent project in the Dominican Republic, approximately 8,000 people were treated in Puerto Plata, in the northern part of the country. Treatments included prophylaxis, fluoride, sealants, fillings, dentures, endodontics and orthodontics. The educational component of the program was targeted at child and family health and was designed to assist healthy human development. Topics included family planning, nutrition, general health and disease prevention (including AIDS).

These examples reflect a small portion of the work of your charitable foundation. While these highlights tell you of past program accomplishments, we are most excited about the future of your charity and the vision for DCF that has been embraced by dental leaders across the country during the past year.



Dentistry Canada Fund  
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### Dynamic Vision for DCF

DCF has embarked on a 4-year strategic plan (1999-2003) that envisions significant growth in our programs. This growth is primarily focused on promotional outreach and entails the implementation of a Children's Charity Fund and geriatric/seniors initiatives. During the past year, DCF has initiated a "pilot" program of grants to support patient care at selected children's hospitals across Canada. This program is intended to focus on children who have disabilities or require major dental treatment due to trauma or disease. Imagine if your charity could appear on the Children's Miracle Network telethon making a donation on behalf of all of the dental family across Canada. What a terrific way to have dentistry portrayed to the Canadian public!

We are excited about these new initiatives and our projections for growth. Many of our supporters have also conveyed their positive comments about these developments, along with their donations and contributions. Each act of generosity symbolizes the importance our donors place on giving back, on helping foster and support our future dental leaders, on

supporting research programs that will advance the quality of future oral care, and on helping others less fortunate in our society. To our existing donors and supporters, a very sincere thank you for your contributions to our charitable endeavours. Your donation gifts sustain us and motivate us to do more.

As Sir Winston Churchill once wrote: "We make a living by what we get ...but we make a life by what we give."

I look forward to providing you with updates of DCF programs and success stories during the next year. ♦



*Dr. Smith is chair of the DCF board of directors. He maintains a private practice in Belleville, Ont.*

*For more information about the Dentistry Canada Fund, or to make a donation, please call us at (613) 236-4763 or toll-free at 1-877-363-0326, fax us at (613) 236-3935, or visit our Web site at [www.dcf-fdc.ca](http://www.dcf-fdc.ca).*

## Dentistry Canada Museum

### Donations Requested

Memorabilia from our rich dental heritage are now on display in the Resource Centre at the Canadian Dental Association headquarters and the Dentistry Canada Museum in downtown Ottawa.

Donations of museum quality dental artifacts and documents are being accepted and are very much appreciated. Items of value may be eligible for tax receipts.

*For further information on how you may participate in contributing to our rich dental history, contact*

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