

denture cleaning, and oral examinations. Additionally, as a result of the success of the Dentists for Della program, rotations at GWVNH have been added to the first, third, and fourth year curriculum. The rotation during the first year takes place during the Community Oral Health Promotion course and serves to introduce dental students to public health, geriatrics, and patient care. The rotations during the third and fourth years involve providing needed treatment for the residents. All treatment provided on these rotations is paid for via fundraising by Dentists for Della.

RESULTS

Since the inception of the student rotations, Dentists for Della has provided approximately \$40,000 worth of needed dental work for residents at GWVNH. Procedures include yearly examinations, dental prophylaxis or cleanings, denture adjustments and repairs, and restorative dentistry such as fillings. Not only has Dentists for Della provided the residents at GWVNH with oral health care, improving their quality of life, the program has also impacted many students personally and professionally by providing meaningful exposure to public health dentistry and geriatric oral health.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Dentists for Della is a program that not only provides additional training for dental students in geriatrics and addressing medically complex patients, it also fills an important gap in healthcare for the residents of Georgia War Veterans Nursing Home by providing an oral health safety net. Additionally, the program introduces students to the different roles a dentist can play in the community as well as increases student awareness of public health.

Implications for public health

As the population ages, the demand for oral health care providers who are competent and willing to address the needs of the elderly will increase. Programs and interventions that

not only address the needs of the aging population but also train oral health providers to provide competent and compassionate care for the nation's elderly should be prioritized.

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