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HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
NEWS RELEASE



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **New Dental Center Expands Care in Northern Kent County**

**GRAND RAPIDS** – Almost 50 million Americans live in areas where there are not enough dentists, according to the Pew Charitable Trusts. Gaining access to dental care is also an issue for nearly 72 million children and adults who rely on Medicaid or other public insurance. The issue disproportionately affects seniors, minorities, people who are economically disadvantaged and those who live in rural locations.

To continue to address this important issue, the Kent County Health Department (KCHD) and My Community Dental Centers (MCDC) are pleased to announce the opening of a second Kent County MCDC dental center, located in Cedar Springs.

On Friday, July 28, 2017, MCDC and KCHD will unveil a new state of the art facility for members of the media. A news conference is scheduled for 10:30 am at the center located at 14111 White Creek Avenue, Cedar Springs. Members of the media will be able to tour, photograph and obtain B-Roll of the new six chair dental center in operation. Journalists will also be able to interview staff of MCDC and KCHD.

The Mouth is the first line of defense against disease and sickness. Poor oral health has been associated with diabetes, stroke, heart disease and many other serious health complications.

“When dental health is ignored or neglected a person’s overall health suffers” says Dr. Zachary Brian DMD, MCDC, Cedar Springs. “With the pain comes societal costs. People tell us that their job opportunities have been limited and many times they have gone to emergency rooms when the pain has become too intense. Emergency rooms are unable to do anything for the underlying causes but carry a high price tag for individuals and taxpayers through increased healthcare costs.”

In 2014 MCDC opened a dental center at the KCHD South Clinic in Kentwood. More than 15,000 patients have made nearly 32,000 visits since.

“Many of those patients tell us that they are from northern Kent County and have been forced to travel to find affordable dental care,” says Adam London, Administrative Health Officer at KCHD. “Studies have found that people often list income and transportation barriers as factors that inhibit their ability to see a dentist. This new MCDC facility in Cedar Springs will help address both of those issues for many people.”

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KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 265 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and three satellite clinics located in Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit [www.accesskent.com/health](http://www.accesskent.com/health).