

Press Release December 06, 2008

CHS Healthcare

CHS Healthcare and the University of Florida Pediatric Dental Program Now Open in Southwest Florida

CHS Healthcare and the University Of Florida College Of Dentistry have opened this long awaited dental office. This pediatric dental practice will offer routine as well as specialty dental services in the 20,000 square foot building. It will be the first education facility for the UF College of Dentistry in Collier County and CHS Healthcare's fourth fixed site dental practice. It is a state-of-the-art pediatric dental facility providing advanced care and specialty services, such as sedation and hospital-based pediatric dentistry.

"Because of our long time partnership with the University of Florida and funding through NCEF, this opportunity has become a reality" said Richard Akin, President and CEO of CHS Healthcare, "We're delighted to be bringing a top-notch pediatric dental program to Southwest Florida which will help close the gaps in oral health in our community, and we expect children to be referred from all over Southwest Florida."

The new CHS/UF Pediatric Dental at Edison State College located in the NCEF Pediatric Dental Center building is an innovative collaboration between the Naples Children & Education Foundation (NCEF) who has provided funding to construct the building, the University of Florida College of Dentistry who will conduct the training program and provide the residents, CHS Healthcare who will operate the facility, and Edison State College Naples Campus on whose land the building is located. The program will eventually expand to provide specialized pediatric treatment to thousands of children in Southwest Florida.

In 2006, NCEF commissioned an independent study of the needs of children in Collier County. The purpose of the study was to provide information on the condition of children's health and education, identify gaps in services, and explore opportunities to invest the foundation's monies into the community in ways that would be efficient and proactive in meeting the organization's mission to improve the lives of underprivileged or at risk-children in Collier County.

In its first two years of operation the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile[®], a program of CHS Healthcare, gathered this empirical data which showed to our community a major epidemic of dental need in Collier County. It recommended NCEF support a community-wide oral health program to expand the availability of dental service to children. It is this need and the data supporting it that have made it possible for NCEF to support this partnership and provide the funds necessary to establish this program in our community.

Insurance, Medicaid, Medicaid Healthy Kids-CompDent will be accepted and for those without insurance the CHS/UF Pediatric Dental Center offers private payment with sliding fee scale (and proof of income).

CHS/UF is accepting new patients and scheduling appointments. To make an appointment at the new center, contact Jules Mijares at (239) 775-3052 or (239) 774-1850. For information on other CHS locations, both medical and dental, go to www.collier.org.

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