



## Dental Public Health Activities Descriptive Summaries

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### Tufts Dental Facilities Serving Persons with Special Needs

The Tufts Dental Facilities Serving Persons with Special Needs (TDF) program is a statewide network of 8 dental clinics that serve people with mental retardation and developmental disabilities (MR/DD). The program also has a prevention-oriented community outreach component that reaches 200 communities, a hospital-based component that provides care in the operating room, and an educational component that provides training to dental students and GPR residents. TDF was established in 1976 as the result of a class action suit that sought to improve medical and dental services for people who lived in state institutions. Six of the clinics are on the grounds of state institutions and 2 are in the community, however all sites are available to people living in the community. The cost of the program is approximately \$4.5 million annually; approximately 66% of that amount comes from Medicaid reimbursement and the remainder comes from contracts with the state Department of Mental Retardation and the Department of Public Health. The program has an enormous impact on increasing access to dental care for people with MR/DD because the private practice sector is unable to adequately serve this population. The program is an excellent example of what can be achieved through collaboration between the state and the private sector, in this case, the Tufts School of Dental Medicine.

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