

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Eileen Druckenmiller
(802) 447-5558
02-Sep-08



Group photo of staff and doctors from the FreeDental Clinic

Free Dental Clinic Was a Great Success!

WILMINGTON-"What a great day," states Dr. John-Michael Stewart, a Vermont dentist, who, as a Member of the International Team for Implantology (ITI), helped to arrange a free dental clinic in Wilmington on Aug. 20. "We treated over 80 people who needed dental care and no one was turned away."

The clinic was the first one in the country under a pilot program developed by the ITI to bring the skills of member dentists to those who can not afford dental care. Dr. Stewart, a dentist with Oral and Facial Surgery Associates in Bennington and Massachusetts, helped to organize the seven other dentists who also volunteered their time and talent.

The Wilmington offices of dentists Dr. Robert S. Ruhl and Dr. Louis A. Beaudette were the settings for the clinic. Dr. Chris Bevin and Dr. Eric Holmgren, oral surgeons at Oral and Facial Surgery Associates with Dr. Stewart, also participated, as did Dr. Justin Salem of Bennington, Dr. Ryan Goslin of Burlington, and Dr. Jeff Wallace from Townsend.

"We provided over \$127,000 worth of free dental care to those who needed it," said Dr. Ruhl. "It's a great feeling to know we were able to provide people with something that not only improved their health, but hopefully also their outlook and their self-esteem."

"Everyone was truly wonderful," added Dr. Stewart, "from the staff who volunteered, to our sponsors, to Straumann's, who provided lunch. That also includes the patients who came to us for care. Some people waited for hours in the afternoon to see a dentist, but no one complained and everyone eventually was seen by one of us."

The dental crew filled countless cavities, prepared patients for dentures, and performed over 330 tooth extractions during the busy day.

Many local businesses and dental supply companies contributed funds or supplies to help make the clinic a success. "We can't thank our sponsors enough," said Dr. Ruhl. "They really came through for us and the community."

Southwestern Vermont Medical Center served as the Platinum Sponsor. Silver Level Sponsors were North Adams Regional Hospital; North East Delta Dental; Brattleboro Memorial Hospital; the Bennington Banner and Brattleboro Reformer; and CLS Transportation Service.

Others contributing to the day included ACE Surgical Supply; Henry Schein Dental Supply; AirGas East; Social Lodge #38; F&AM in Wilmington; Straumann, the Lions Club in Wilmington and Halifax; the American Legion; Nelson Pickwell Post 15; Twice Blessed Thrift Store; and Biogenic Dental Lab.

"We hope the events of Aug. 20 will serve as an example for other ITI dentists across the country. Look at what great things can be accomplished when people work together," said Dr. Stewart.



Dr. Justin Salem, Dr. Christopher Bevin, Dr. Robert Ruhl and Dr. John-Michael Stewart are four of the eight doctors who volunteered for the Free Dental Clinic.



Dr. Christopher Bevin and Joleyne Kenyon work on a patient at the first-ever ITI Dental Clinic on Aug. 20 in Wilmington.



Dr. Justin Salem assisting a patient at the Free Dental Clinic