

The Easterseals NH Oral Health Center, which opened in 2008 and is sponsored by Northeast Delta Dental, is a full-service, state-of-the-art facility in the heart of Manchester. The Center makes a significant impact because it maintains its focus on serving individuals who are in need of a dental home but do not always have the resources to obtain these services. Last year, the Oral Health Center reached out to our local service members by hosting a Veterans' Appreciation Day, where we provided free dental treatment to more than 50 veterans that totaled \$27,000.



This is Jean's Story . . .

Jean Vallee joined the Air Force as a young man in 1973. After receiving an honorable discharge, he went on to work a variety of jobs in and around Manchester. He soon learned that affordable dental insurance was hard to come by so seeing a dentist with any frequency, or at all, was not an option for him.

That is, until recently when the Easterseals NH Oral Health Center sponsored a special Veterans' Appreciation Day on November 10, 2017, where free services would be provided. Jean heard about the opportunity from his Easterseals NH Military & Veterans Services Care Coordinator and she encouraged him to go.

Jean, who had not been to see a dentist in more than 20 years, jumped at the chance. He was dealing with numerous oral health issues and, without insurance, was unable to pay for the care he desperately needed. When Jean showed up for the appreciation day, he was happy to share a waiting room filled with fellow veterans. While waiting to see the dentist, they passed the time trading stories, playing cards, watching movies, and sharing food and drinks. He immediately felt welcome.

On that particular day, Jean enjoyed his first comprehensive exam and cleaning in two decades. The exam also turned up some larger issues that needed to be addressed. At this point, Jean had been working with the VA to obtain dental insurance through Northeast Delta Dental and he was successful in doing so, which has allowed him to get the necessary work done to get his mouth and his smile back in shape.

Since November, Jean has been back to the Easterseals Oral Health Center several times for work that includes a full set of x-rays, a complete upper denture, an extraction, and a lower partial denture. He is wholly grateful for the new dentures, as his previous set had cracked and was not longer wearable.

"You guys are great to help me out here," says Jean. "My smile looks a lot better and I'm feeling good."

At age 63, Jean is feeling like he has a new lease on life. He enjoys working as a crossing guard and as a clerk at a convenience store. His self-esteem has increased and he enjoys smiling again. He knows for certain that Easterseals has provided him with the dental home that was absent for the majority of his adult life. He looks forward to his visits and chatting with the staff.

"I didn't know Easterseals even had a dentist office but now that I know, I would highly recommend it" said Jean. "The services provided are great and the people are very caring."