

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Date:** August 23, 2016**Contact:** Michael Orozco  
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Strategic Communication Solutions  
(808) 226-7470**Lānaʻi Community Health Center Receives \$97,000 Donation  
from the HDS Foundation for Dental Equipment**

The HDS Foundation has donated \$97,324 to provide dental equipment for the Lānaʻi Community Health Center's new dental unit, which includes three dental operatories. The dental unit, which is part of Lānaʻi Community Health Center's new 6,800-square foot healthcare facility, serves both adults and children.

With the support of the HDS Foundation, Lānaʻi Community Health Center is helping to improve access to oral health care by focusing on individuals and families with low- to moderate-incomes and providing care regardless of their ability to pay.

"This new, centrally located dental unit provides another convenient site for Lānaʻi families to receive the dental care they need," said **Mark Yamakawa**, HDS president and chief executive officer. "The dental clinic also enables Lānaʻi Community Health Center to strengthen its commitment to oral health outreach activities to schools and to expand community education about the importance of oral health."

"We have always wanted to create a healthier community, and it has been exciting to see this vision unfold because of the generosity of partners like HDS," said **Diana Shaw**, executive director of Lānaʻi Community Health Center. "Each new step we take is a way of honoring our founding mothers and continuing their legacy here on Lānaʻi."

The center's new facility, dedicated in June 2016, is located in the heart of Lana'i City, where most of the island's 3,100 residents live. In addition to housing the new dental unit, the new healthcare facility features four exams rooms, two behavioral health consultation rooms, a specialty consultation room, an optometry exam room, and a CLIA waived lab.

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A number of social and economic factors affect the health of Lana'i residents:

- The population of Lānaʻi consists of 32% immigrants and about 10% are isolated because of language barriers.
- While some individuals may be able to fly to Maui or Oahu to receive specialized, nearly 40 percent of Lana'i 's population—about 1,250 residents—live at or below 200% of the federal poverty level and may not have the resources to get specialized care.

According to data from State of Hawaii Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), the oral health status of island residents falls below the rest of the state in a number of metrics:

- Adults who did not visit a dentist within the past year: 38.3% of Lānaʻi residents compared to 26.1% for the rest of the state.
- Adults who did not have a teeth cleaning by a dentist office within the past year: 42.7% of Lānaʻi residents compared with the statewide average of 28.7%.
- Adults who had to remove their permanent teeth: 45.3% of Lānaʻi residents compared to 39.9% statewide.

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### **About Lānaʻi Community Health Center**

Lānaʻi Community Health Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization providing health care services to the entire of island of Lana'i, with a focus on individuals who experience social and economic disparities. It was founded by longtime Lānaʻi residents Jackie Woolsey and Phyllis McOmber, originally as the Lana'i Women's Center and it was incorporated in 2004.

In October 2007, the organization received its designation as a Federally Qualified Health Center. In August 2009, the organization changed its name to Lānaʻi Community Health Center to better reflect its mission: to take care of the whole community of Lānaʻi —men, women, and children. Today, Lānaʻi Community Health Center provides health services (primary care, dental, behavioral health and selected specialty services) to the community through both on-island and off-island partnerships.

### **About Hawaii Dental Service**

HDS is the largest dental benefits provider in the state, touching the lives of nearly a million residents in Hawaii, Guam and Saipan. It has the largest network of dentists, with more than 95 percent of Hawaii's licensed, practicing dentists participating with HDS.

As a nonprofit founded in Hawaii more than 50 years ago, HDS is committed to making quality oral health care affordable and accessible. Employers who offer HDS dental plans to their employees represent Hawaii's diverse industries, companies, unions, associations, and nonprofit organizations. HDS also offers dental plans for individuals and families.

HDS has been a part of Delta Dental, the nation's largest and most experienced dental benefits company, since 1966. This affiliation gives members access to a nationwide network of participating dentists.

For more information, please visit [www.HawaiiDentalService.com](http://www.HawaiiDentalService.com).