



For Immediate Release

For more information contact:

Cathy Lewis

Oral Health Improvement Coalition

cathysisco@aol.com

757.853.8500 x 124

**The Pankey Institute Dental Access Days
Strive to Make a Difference
Bringing Dental Care to Uninsured
Weekend of October 10**

Chesapeake, VA (September 16, 2009) – Even in the best of economic times, many uninsured people are forced to forgo necessary and basic dental care. In these bare economic times, even more individuals and families must endure tooth pain and unfilled cavities or continue to place long overdue cleanings at the very end of their “financially possible” lists. The Oral Health Improvement Coalition of South Hampton Roads (OHICSHR) (www.accesspartners.org/10.html), in concert with The Pankey Institute (www.pankey.org), will offer free dental care services the weekend of October 10 to South Hampton Roads residents who need dental care but have no dental insurance. The Pankey Dental Access Days, sponsored by local dentists and Pankey Institute Alumni Dr. Dag Zapatero and Dr. Albert Konikoff, will provide both local, licensed professionals and non-clinical volunteers a fully equipped venue to examine and treat patients. OHIC invites members of the media to attend Saturday, October 10th from 10am to 2pm at Oak Grove United Methodist Church, (mapquest directions here) in Chesapeake.

“We are so excited to watch the 18 wheeler pull into the parking lot of Oak Grove United Methodist Church! The Pankey Institute’s Dental Access Days (PDAD) program supplies the truck, fully equipped with 13 dental chairs, equipment and supplies to provide care to clinic participants,” says Cathy Lewis, OHIC volunteer. “We are prepared to examine and treat nearly 250 people.”

According to Sharon Stull, current President of OHIC: “In 2004, our community identified Oral Health Care as the Number 1 Health Care Need in our region. Unfortunately, since that time – the need has only grown!”

In these trying economic times, many people are in dire need of dental care, could be anyone regardless of education, socio-economic status or age. This vast collaboration organized by OHIC is ready to do its part in elevating access to dental care for everyone in need.

More about (OHIC South Hampton Roads):

OHIC (www.accesspartners.org/10.html) , established by individuals representing 27 organizations, works to help the most vulnerable populations of our community - the elderly, the children and the dentally uninsured - through access initiatives, educational awareness, prevention programs, and advocacy. The vision is for every citizen in South Hampton Roads to have optimal oral health, and the mission is to optimize oral health care services for all individuals. Contact: 757-853-8500 ext. 124; email at oralhealth@accesspartners.org.

More about The Pankey Institute:

Founded in 1972, The Pankey Institute is a nonprofit organization in Key Biscayne, Florida that promotes optimal oral health care through advanced continuing education for dentists (www.pankey.org). It was the first institute of its kind and remains among the most prestigious, attracting dentists from 42 nations to its educational programs. It is estimated that nearly 20,000 dentists and specialists have attended its courses and now serve millions of patients worldwide.

###