

Dentistry for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

Currently, there are no comprehensive dental treatment options in Rock County for individuals with developmental disabilities.



Why it matters in Rock County?

- According to the ARC Wisconsin, people with disabilities in Wisconsin have great challenges obtaining regular dental care, resulting in many preventable extractions, high rates of periodontal disease, and other poor health outcomes related to inadequate dental care.
- Wisconsin data indicates that 29% of adults with disabilities reported having at least one permanent tooth removed over the past year, and 26% said they had not visited a dentist within the past year.
- Approximately 13.9 % of Rock County residents have a disability.

The State of Wisconsin is currently facing a shortage of dentists who specialize treating individuals with developmental disabilities. This reality is reflected in Rock County in which there is no dental home for individuals with developmental disabilities. Currently, most patients are advised to go to the Children's Hospital of Wisconsin's dental clinic. However, this clinic can only serve individuals until they are 24 years of age.

In 2022, HealthNet of Rock County will begin serving individuals with developmental disabilities in our dental clinic. HealthNet of Rock County's new building will have a private, sensory-sensitive room with an air-gliding chair to assist individuals into the dental chair. The room will also come with wheel chair hooks and locks to ensure that, if the dental chair is not suitable for the patient, dental work can still be performed on individuals in their wheelchair.

Starting in 2022, HealthNet of Rock County will also be working on an externship with the Children's Hospital of Wisconsin. Each new dentist that is hired at HealthNet of Rock County will get a paid two-week externship with Children's Hospital of Wisconsin's Special Needs Dental Clinic before starting employment at HealthNet of Rock County. This will ensure that each dentist working in our clinic will be adequately trained, prepared, and enthused to serve the dental needs of individuals with developmental disabilities.