

Mobile Dental Assistance (MDA)

Shelby County Ministry Planning Guide



The Shelby Baptist Association works in partnership with its member churches to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ through missions and ministries both locally and throughout the world. Our vision is to see each church work individually and collectively to make Christ known through authentic Christ-like discipleship, demonstrating the relevance of Jesus to a world in need of love and purpose. We are on a mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ by meeting the needs of those we encounter.

The SBA-MDA ministry offers the use of a mobile dental unit to her cooperating churches and other like-minded service organizations to provide basic and emergency dental care to individuals in need. The SBA-MDA unit will primarily be used in Shelby County, Alabama. Our goal is to provide compassionate care for people who cannot otherwise afford dental assistance. Meeting one's physical needs often opens the door to sharing the love of Christ and hopefully meeting his or her spiritual needs.

THE NEED FOR DENTAL CARE

Many people in Shelby County lack access to affordable dental care. Recently, there have been very few options for adults to receive care without incurring substantial debt. Alabama is one of only a few states that does not provide dental coverage for adult Medicaid recipients. Additionally, dental insurance is unavailable or unaffordable for many in our community. We have also realized that some may have limited dental coverage for an exam, but cannot afford the cost of extractions and/or restoration sometimes causing years of pain and negligence.

Considerations Before Planning Your Clinic:

- Who are you serving? Are there individuals already connected with your church that need dental care, or will you rely solely on SBA to provide all your patients?
- Realistically, you should be able to assist 12-18 patients in an 8-hour clinic. It depends on how many dental volunteers are serving and the type of services provided.
- You can also provide dental hygiene bags and other services such as food, clothing, health screenings, and more at your clinic.

Types of Services Offered at a SBA-MDA Clinic:

- The SBA-MDA unit is equipped to perform dental screenings, simple extractions, composite fillings, and dental cleanings to be completed by a volunteer hygienist or dentist.
- The types of procedures that are provided will be discussed with our dental professionals before the day of your clinic. They will complete a dental volunteer protocol before the clinic date that includes an application, copy of



professional license and/or insurance, and background check. Please let us know as soon as possible if you know a dental professional who would like to volunteer.

- It is important to note that not all dentists are comfortable performing all types of procedures in our mobile dental unit. Some dentists are very comfortable performing difficult extractions while others prefer to do restorative work if possible. We will have a conversation with the dentist before your clinic about their level of comfort and/or preference for procedures. We may or may not be able to provide all of a patient's needed care at your dental clinic, but we hope to start the process of eliminating the source of pain. We hope to create a treatment plan and connect the patient with affordable follow-up care.
- As this ministry develops, we hope to offer more resources. If you know of an available resource or dental provider who might like to work with us, please let us know.

Services NOT Offered at a SBA-MDA Clinic:

- No Nitrous Oxide or "Laughing Gas"
- No Root Canals
- No Dentures or Partials
- No Crowns or Bridges
- No Temporary Crowns
- No Implants
- No Night Guards

Preparing for Your Clinic:

1. Form Dental Ministry Leadership Team:

- Site Coordinator - One designated person will communicate with SBA about the MDA ministry at his or her site. He or she will meet with SBA staff before the event to determine site needs and logistics and will complete a survey after the dental ministry event.
- Volunteer Coordinator - One person will recruit and prepare church staff and volunteers for the ministry event. He or she will ensure that volunteers complete an SBA volunteer form, background check, and MinistrySafe certification (if required). He or she will maintain a record of volunteers who help at the dental ministry event.
- Hospitality Coordinator – One person will lead a team of volunteers to provide needed meals and refreshments for the ministry day.
- Evangelism & Prayer Coordinator – One person will guide the leadership team and church in praying for the dental ministry. He or she will also recruit and train volunteers to be ready to engage in prayer and gospel conversations at the dental ministry event. He or she will also lead the team to follow up with patients after the clinic.
- Children's Ministry Coordinator – If your church can provide childcare during the event, please let SBA know. When a patient is scheduled, we can tell him or her if childcare is available. If your church provides childcare or ministry to children, volunteers must be background-checked and MinistrySafe certified.

One church staff member or volunteer could coordinate more than one area of leadership, but a team of at least 2-3 people should plan your dental ministry event together.

2. Schedule the SBA-MDA Vehicle:

You must schedule the unit on your calendar when volunteers will be available. Volunteer dental professionals are more likely to be available on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sunday afternoons. Requests are best

accommodated when made 6 months to 1 year in advance. One consideration for scheduling each dental ministry event will be the availability of dental professionals. The SBA will work to coordinate the date you request but cannot guarantee a date until dental staffing is confirmed. Each clinic day should be scheduled for 6-8 hours unless approved by the Dental Ministry Coordinator. Contact Rebekah Parr at 205-669-7858 ext. 106 or rebekah@shelbybaptist.org to request the SBA-MDA ministry to be scheduled at your church or community outreach event.

3. Costs:

The budget of the SBA-MDA ministry provides all the necessary supplies and repairs on the unit, as well as the replacement and continual upgrade of equipment as needed. The SBA-MDA ministry budget also includes the costs of background checks, insurance, and fuel. The SBA church or local host organization is not required to offset these costs at this time, but you may choose to contribute to aid in helping those in need of this ministry assistance. The average cost per patient is approximately \$100-\$200.

4. Location and Setup Requirements

- The location of a dental clinic should be based on proximity to patients in need. Your clinic is an outreach opportunity for your church. Consider how patients will get to your clinic. The following are possibilities for places to minister aside from your church campus: shelters, senior adult complexes, low-income communities, community centers, parks, schools, etc.
- If water and power hookups (100-amp breaker) are not available, the unit carries its own water supply (although limited) and generators.
- The set-up location must be level. The unit is equipped with a leveling system to increase stability while work is being performed.
- The mobile unit is 37 feet in length. You will need approximately 75 feet for the unit to pull in and set up. The width of the unit is 11 feet when the extension is opened.
- You also need to consider the height of the unit. The dental unit stands 13.6 feet tall. Keep this in mind if there are overpasses, awnings, electrical lines, or low-hanging trees in the area you wish to set up.
- We will NOT set up on a street unless it is closed to traffic.
- If we are setting up anywhere other than your church, permission is needed from the landowner. Some locations may require a certificate of insurance which is available upon request.



Unit Dimensions: Box=28 ft. (37 ft with gooseneck); Truck = 19.2 ft; Total length=52 ft

- Auxiliary facilities are needed to supplement the unit. The following additional spaces will be needed at the location of your clinic:
 - Restrooms
 - Private room with electrical connection for a portable dental care station (space must be near the mobile dental unit and handicap accessible)
 - Open area for registration near electrical connection – (1-2 tables / 2-3 chairs)
 - Waiting area – (2+ tables / 15-20+ chairs)
 - Kitchen area – Area to prep food for volunteers
 - Area for childcare/children's ministry (if provided)
- There are no handicap ramps/entrances to the mobile unit. Patients will need to be able to access 6 steps to enter and exit the unit or use the portable equipment to receive dental assistance.
- Each clinic day must be 6-8 hours long. The Dental Ministry Coordinator must approve shorter or longer clinic days.
- You need to advertise your clinic, but SBA-MDA will schedule all patients for dental care. Appointments ensure that patients will be seen.
- The portable dental care station that will be set up in your facility will allow a hygienist to clean teeth and dental professionals to provide care to those with mobility challenges that prevent them from entering our dental unit. This setup includes a patient chair, light, portable suction, and provider stool. Electricity is required to power the portable suction and light.



5. Clinic Schedule & Volunteers

- Typical Full Day Clinic Schedule: 8:00 am – 4:00 pm
- Volunteer Schedule: 7:30 am – 4:30 pm
 - Morning Shift – 7:30 am – 12:00 pm
 - Afternoon Shift – 12:00 pm – 4:30 pm
- Typical Sunday Clinic Schedule: 1:00 – 7:00 pm
- Sunday Volunteer Schedule: 12:30 – 7:30 pm
 - First Shift: 12:30 – 3:30 pm
 - Second Shift: 3:30 – 7:30 pm

Patients will be asked to arrive 15 minutes before the start of their clinic and wait until they are called for dental assistance. The dental team will decide the order in which patients are served based on the type of care needed AND the order in which they arrive. Patients will pre-register with SBA and then be assigned to your church location based on where they live and appointment availability. Patients will be instructed to arrive at the beginning of their clinic if they want to be served, and they must be prepared to stay all day if necessary. SBA will try to plan morning and afternoon shifts of care for patients, but this is not guaranteed.

Your church has a wonderful opportunity to build relationships with those who come for dental assistance through your Christ-like love and hospitality. We plan to schedule 10-20 people for dental care at your clinic depending on the number of dental professionals that can volunteer. We primarily serve those with emergency

dental needs at this time. Patients may need to bring their children or family members with them.

Church Staff or Volunteers Needed:

- Dental Ministry Leadership Team (see Section 1): Members of this team may also serve in the areas described below.
- Welcome / Registration: 1-2 volunteers are needed to check in patients and other volunteers. If we are not partnering with a medical provider, registration volunteers will also check each patient's vitals when he or she arrives. SBA-MDA will have all the resources needed for registration. Volunteers in this area will maintain patient information and monitor individuals coming and going from the registration table. A patient or volunteer must check out with the registration table before he or she leaves.
- Hospitality: 1 or more volunteer(s) are needed to provide refreshments and maintain a "kitchen area." This volunteer ensures those working on the dental unit have water and take a break as needed. At a minimum, bottled water is provided for all patients and volunteers, and a meal is offered to volunteers serving more than four hours.
- Evangelism / Prayer: At least 1-2 volunteers per shift are needed to engage in prayer and gospel conversation with patients. Please be sensitive to the Holy Spirit in how you engage with patients. Most will be open to conversation and/or prayer while others will not. Some patients will come to us in pain and may be more open to conversation and prayer in a follow-up phone call or visit. Plan to have Bibles, gospel tracts, and information about your church available for interested patients.
- Childcare (optional) – At least 2 volunteers per shift are needed if childcare is provided. They must follow MinistrySafe guidelines.
- Medical/Dental – 3-4 volunteers are needed per shift. To provide an optimal level of care, we need at least 1 dentist, 1 dental assistant, and 1 hygienist per shift. A trained medical volunteer could check vitals more efficiently near the registration area. Professional volunteers who provide care must submit copies of their license(s) and insurance (if applicable) before volunteering with SBA-MDA.

Resources Needed:

- Christian music for the waiting area
- Bibles & Christian literature / Gospel tools
- Information about your church
- Bottled water and drinks
- Continental Breakfast / Lunch / Snacks
- Hygiene Kits (may include a toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, lip balm, encouraging note, etc.)

If you need resources or training, please contact the SBA-MDA Coordinator before your event.

Requirements for Volunteers:

- All health professionals work under their own personal liability and under the "Good Samaritan Act." We also have an umbrella insurance policy.
- All volunteers must have a clear background check conducted by the Shelby Baptist Association within a year of the ministry date. If the volunteer is working with children, he or she must also have a current MinistrySafe certification.

- All volunteers must come with a good attitude, a servant's heart, and a desire to glorify the Lord through this dental ministry opportunity.
- All volunteers need to be trained and prepared to share the Gospel before the day of ministry. You can use an evangelism strategy that is familiar and comfortable to you.

Our goal is to explicitly share the Gospel with each patient. We want them to know that God not only wants to meet their physical need, but more importantly wants to meet their spiritual need to be saved and reconciled to Him through faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. We also hope to connect many with a church family for discipleship and support.

Suggested Timeline for Dental Clinic

Phase One - 6 Months Before Clinic Date

- Pray for guidance and targeted population of outreach.
- Read Planning Guide
- Return Request for Dental Unit form to SBA-MDA Coordinator
- Form Dental Ministry Leadership Team
- Begin the process of enlisting volunteers.

Phase Two - 3 Months Before Clinic Date

- Ask Sunday School classes or small groups within the church to prepare hygiene kits, pray, and give to support the dental ministry.
- Decide on food/snacks, childcare, counseling, etc.
- Continue to enlist volunteers.

Phase Three – 1 Month Before Clinic Date

- Begin to publicize the dental clinic within the community.
- SBA-MDA will make appointments.
- Submit a list of volunteers to SBA-MDA Coordinator to ensure everyone has been background checked and receives adequate training.

Phase Four – 2 Weeks Before Clinic Date Send reminders to volunteers

- Confirm volunteers.
- Make sure hygiene kits are ready for distribution and resources are available.
- Make any last-minute preparations.
- Continue to pray for the clinic. Pray that the Gospel is communicated and dental needs are met.

Phase Five - 2 weeks **post Clinic Date**

- Follow up with patients within 3-4 days after the clinic. Call, visit, or send them a card in the mail.
- Send thank you cards / letters to dental volunteers.
- Complete and send Clinic Evaluation to SBA-MDA Coordinator.
- Start planning and securing a date for your next Dental Clinic

Dental Ministry Contact:

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