

**Report to
Rapport au:**

**Ottawa Board of Health
Conseil de santé d'Ottawa
11 December 2017 / 11 décembre 2017**

**Submitted on December 4, 2017
Soumis le 4 décembre 2017**

**Submitted by
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Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE File Number: ACS2017-OPH-HPP-0005

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON DENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN OTTAWA

OBJET: MISE À JOUR SUR LES SERVICES DE SANTÉ DENTAIRE À OTTAWA

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit:

- 1. Receive, for information, an update on dental health services in Ottawa; and**
- 2. Approve that Ottawa Public Health work in partnership with the Champlain Local Health Integration Network on a solution to increase emergency pediatric dental care capacity in Ottawa.**

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que le Conseil de santé de la circonscription sanitaire de la Ville d'Ottawa :

- 1. Reçoive, à titre d'information, une mise à jour sur les services de santé dentaire à Ottawa ;**
- 2. Approuve le travail en partenariat de Santé publique Ottawa avec le Réseau local d'intégration des services de santé de Champlain pour élaborer une solution visant à augmenter la prestation des soins dentaires pédiatriques d'urgence à Ottawa.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Oral health affects everyone. Dental disease alone can lead to serious health conditions, such as respiratory infections, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and low birth weight babies. To address this, Ottawa Public Health (OPH) prevents dental disease before it starts through health promotion and education; surveillance and screening; and community outreach.

In addition to our focus on health promotion and prevention, OPH provides some dental treatment services for eligible residents at four clinics. OPH's provincially funded dental clinic at the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health marked its first year of successful operation in the Fall of 2017. Indigenous clients of the new clinic are using the services, returning for follow up visits and reporting that they have the intention to improve their oral health habits. At OPH's St. Laurent dental clinic, capital improvements are required to increase accessibility and modernize the clinic to meet provincial accessibility standards. OPH will be submitting a request for one-time 100% provincial, capital funding to address this need. Services at these clinics are offered under a wide variety of programs for low-income residents, including the province's recently launched Healthy Smiles Ontario Program.

In 2016, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) launched the Healthy Smiles Ontario Program, which brought together several provincially funded programs for eligible children and youth. This new, integrated program has been successful, but OPH has identified some gaps in treatment. Low-income children and youth requiring a general anesthetic for dental care, due to extensive tooth decay, are waiting longer for care in Ottawa than in many other urban centres in Ontario. To address this challenge, OPH is proposing to work with the Champlain Local Health Integration Network to develop a local solution to increase emergency pediatric dental care capacity.

RÉSUMÉ

La santé buccodentaire concerne l'ensemble de la population. Les maladies dentaires peuvent à elles seules entraîner de graves problèmes de santé, notamment des infections respiratoires, des maladies cardiovasculaires, le diabète ou une insuffisance du poids des bébés à la naissance. Face à ces risques, Santé publique Ottawa (SPO) prévient les maladies dentaires avant qu'elles ne surviennent grâce à la promotion et à l'éducation en matière de santé, à des activités de surveillance et de dépistage, et à son approche communautaire.

En plus de se consacrer à la promotion de la santé et à la prévention, SPO propose dans quatre cliniques certains services de soins dentaires aux résidents admissibles. La clinique dentaire de SPO aménagée au Centre de santé autochtone Wabano, financée par le provincial, a célébré sa première année de réussite à l'automne 2017. Les clients autochtones de cette nouvelle clinique font appel à ses services, y retournent pour des visites de suivi et manifestent leur intention d'améliorer leurs habitudes d'hygiène buccodentaire. À la clinique dentaire St-Laurent de SPO, des améliorations majeures sont nécessaires afin d'accroître l'accessibilité et de moderniser l'installation pour la rendre conforme aux normes provinciales d'accessibilité. SPO entend soumettre une demande ponctuelle de financement en capital intégralement provincial afin de répondre à ce besoin. Les services offerts à ces cliniques le sont dans le cadre d'une grande variété de programmes destinés aux résidents à faible revenu, notamment le programme Beaux sourires Ontario, récemment lancé.

En 2016, le ministère de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée lançait le programme Beaux sourires Ontario, qui réunit plusieurs programmes de financement provincial destinés aux enfants et aux jeunes admissibles. Ce nouveau programme intégré est une réussite, mais SPO a observé certaines lacunes en matière de traitement. Les enfants et les jeunes de familles à faible revenu nécessitant une anesthésie générale, en raison de nombreuses caries dentaires, attendent plus longtemps pour obtenir des soins à Ottawa que dans bon nombre d'autres centres urbains de l'Ontario. Pour résoudre ce problème, SPO propose une collaboration avec le Réseau local d'intégration des services de santé de Champlain, en vue d'élaborer une solution locale permettant d'accroître la capacité des soins dentaires pédiatriques d'urgence.

BACKGROUND

Oral health affects eating, speaking, and self esteem.ⁱ Dental disease can lead to serious health conditions, such as respiratory infections, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and low birth weight babies.ⁱⁱ Pain and infection can affect the capacity to

learn and negatively affect employment opportunities. It can also lead to severe disabilities and even death for severe casesⁱⁱ.

Across Canada, people from low-income families have approximately twice the dental problems of higher-income Canadians.ⁱⁱ In Ottawa, 16% of residents rate their oral health as fair or poorⁱⁱⁱ. Furthermore, Canadians without dental insurance are more than three times as likely to report using dental services only for emergencies compared to those with insurance (34% vs 9%) and are less likely to have seen a dentist in the past 12 months (51% vs 84%).ⁱⁱⁱ

In Ottawa, emergency room visits for dental conditions best seen in private practice^{1 iv} increased by 14% over the past 5 years, from 1,682 annually in 2011 to 1,918 annually in 2016^v. Furthermore, the proportion of children identified with oral pain, infection and open decay in Ottawa school dental screening increased from 5.4% in 2014 to 6.3% in 2016.

Dental health is an important public health issue in the Indigenous community. The First Nations Oral Health Survey reported that among preschool First Nations children in Canada aged 3–5 years, the majority (86%) had experienced one or more cavities in their primary (baby) teeth and just over 61% of these children had untreated tooth decay in their primary teeth^{vi}. Access to care is an important determinant of oral health among the First Nations community.⁶ Similar problems have been identified in the Inuit community^{vii}.

OPH Dental Health Programs and Services

OPH continues to provide health promotion, education, screening, community outreach and treatment for adults and children covered under various public programs.

Health Promotion and Education

Along with its community and City of Ottawa partners, OPH works to increase access to dental services for low-income residents and those without private dental insurance. For example, when children visit OPH clinics for treatment, OPH works with parents to increase their understanding of the causes and progression of tooth decay.

OPH provides dental education and resources such as lesson plans to teachers in schools, and works with Early Years Centres, English as a Second Language classes, and Healthy Growing Clinics to provide education sessions for parents with young

¹ Such conditions are sometimes called “ambulatory care sensitive dental conditions”. They include problems such as dental cavities, eroded teeth and gingivitis.

children before they start school. Other OPH programs, such as those working in Healthy Growth and Development, Tobacco Prevention and Sexual Health, also promote oral health with their clients. Additionally, information is available on our Parenting in Ottawa website and scheduled chats on dental health occur on Facebook.

Surveillance and Screening

OPH undertakes screening of children in elementary schools to identify children with oral pain, infection and open decay, working in all four publicly-funded school boards. All children in junior/senior kindergarten and Grade 2 are screened. For schools with higher levels of dental disease, grades 4, 6, and 8 are also screened. The proportion of children with urgent dental needs identified in the school-based dental screening has increased from 5.4% to 6.3% over the period 2014-2017 (see Figure 1 – School-based Dental Screening 2014-2017). To identify and treat problems at an earlier stage, OPH also screens young children in daycares in areas with higher levels of dental health problems.

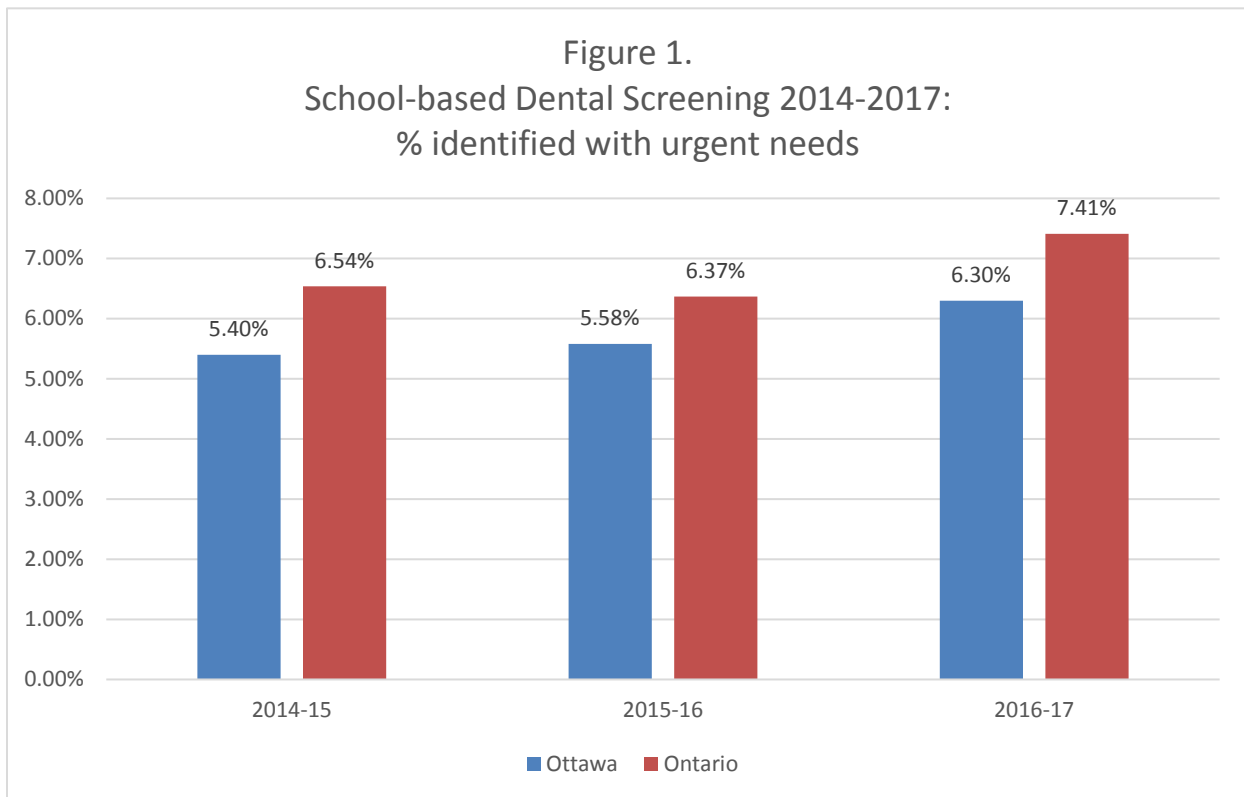


Figure 1 depicts a graph showing school-based dental screening from 2014 to 2017 for Ottawa compared to Ontario

Community Outreach

In addition to the school and daycare screening, OPH also provides early identification of dental health issues through community outreach. OPH provides monthly clinics in Community Health and Resource Centres (CHRC) to screen young children, adults and seniors and provide education to improve daily oral health habits. These clinics offer dental screenings; dental health information; fluoride varnish applications to strengthen tooth enamel; denture cleaning; assist clients to navigate the dental health system to access treatment services; and promote and enroll new clients to dental programs. Additionally, OPH regularly visits family shelters, YMCA, and Reception House for newcomers to offer services such as linking those with urgent dental needs to treatment.

DISCUSSION

Recommendation 1 - Receive, for information, an update on dental health services in Ottawa

Improving Access to Dental Health Services

Children and Youth

The Healthy Smiles Ontario (HSO) Program was launched on January 1, 2016 and brings together several provincially-funded dental programs into one integrated program. HSO is 100 per cent provincially funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to ensure that all children and youth under 18 years of age have access to dental treatment. HSO provides access to dental services, including checkups, tooth cleaning and other preventive care as well as clinical treatment such as fillings and extractions. In Ottawa, more than 6,600 children and youth accessed treatment at the OPH dental clinics, with approximately 21,000 visits provided in the period January 2016 to October 2017. Service is also available in private dental offices that accept the program.

Children and youth are eligible for HSO if:

- 1) their parents are enrolled on the Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Plan;
or
- 2) they have urgent dental problems, e.g., as identified through the school dental screening, and they are not covered under social assistance and they declare that they cannot access dental treatment due to financial hardship.

For children with urgent dental needs, HSO provides access to provincially-funded dental

care for 12 months, which allows for the urgent problem to be treated as well as to provide subsequent preventive care to mitigate further oral disease. OPH continually works to engage private dentists to accept children covered under the HSO program and strives to build strong partnerships with dentists. In addition, OPH has a service contract to coordinate the dental plan for the Ottawa Children's Aid Society. (see Appendix 1 – Dental Programs and Services for Low Income Children and Youth)

Adults and Seniors

OPH provides publically-funded dental treatment programs for low-income adults receiving social assistance. Services are provided at one of the four OPH-operated dental clinics or through private offices that accept clients (see Appendix 2 – Programs and Services for Low Income Adults)

In addition, OPH has received annual funding from the City's Older Adult Plan for urgent and preventative treatment for low-income seniors who are not covered by social assistance. OPH partners with Community Health and Resource Centres to identify older adults with urgent dental needs.

Adults who are not eligible for publically-funded dental programs are referred to other free or low-cost service providers, such as dental hygiene clinics at La Cité, the Canadian National Institute of Health and the Youth Services Bureau for treatment and preventive care at Algonquin College and the Ottawa Mission.

Indigenous Communities

The new 100 per cent provincially funded dental clinic opened in fall 2016 at the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health in partnership with OPH. In its first year of operation the clinic has had over 1,100 service visits by approximately 500 indigenous patients. This clinic was established to provide dental care to Ottawa's indigenous community in a culturally safe environment. Children and youth covered under the Healthy Smiles Ontario program are seen as a priority. As capacity allows, adults from First Nations, Métis, and Inuit can be treated if they are covered under the Non-Insured Health Benefits, Ontario Works or the Ontario Disability Support Program.

Outreach to engage Indigenous residents is done by regular visits to various centres such as the Timurlaat Inuit Child Care Centre; Makonsag Aboriginal Head Start Program; Akausivik Inuit Family Health Team; Tungasuvvingat Inuit Family Resource Centre; Minwaashin Lodge; Indigenous shelters and drop in sites; the Urban Aboriginal High School, and events such as Pow Wows and Wellness days.

Clients who have used the services of the Wabano dental clinic report that they were satisfied with the quality of services and felt their beliefs and values were respected. Program employees have been engaging with Indigenous partners to create culturally-appropriate branding and messaging. Culturally-specific education on health issues have been developed. Clients are returning for follow-up visits and are reporting that they have the intention to improve oral health habits.

Capital Improvement Requirements

In 2018, assuming approval of funding requests by MOHLTC, capital improvements are planned to increase and improve clinic operations. OPH will be submitting a request for one-time 100% provincial capital funding for two needs:

- a) Update the dental clinic at 2525 St Laurent Boulevard to ensure greater accessibility to people with disabilities; and
- b) Modernize the equipment reprocessing area.

Additionally, implementation of an electronic health record and digital radiography for dental care will increase clinic efficiency by streamlining operations.

Recommendation 2 - Approve that OPH work in partnership with the Champlain Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) on a solution to increase emergency pediatric dental care capacity in Ottawa

While the new Healthy Smiles Ontario program has improved access to basic care, a gap remains for children with urgent dental needs who are referred for higher level care from a pediatric dental specialist. Low-income children and youth who require a general anesthetic (GA) for dental care due to extensive decay are waiting longer for care. Wait times for pediatric dental surgery in Ottawa are longer than in many other urban centres in Ontario^{viii}. For children covered under private dental insurance or who have parents or guardians with the ability to pay the cost of treatment, there are several options available for general anaesthesia treatment in private dental operating rooms or at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO). However, for children and youth covered under the Healthy Smiles Ontario (HSO) program, private dental operating rooms do not accept the established fees under HSO. Therefore, there are no other options under the current programs, other than to refer to CHEO.

CHEO receives referrals from many areas, both within the City of Ottawa but also from the surrounding area, including across the Champlain Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) region. CHEO also has an agreement to treat children from Baffin Island.

Referrals are accepted for children 17 years of age and younger who have the simultaneous presence of two chronic diseases or conditions and for children five years of age and younger without a medical comorbidity. OPH will work with the Champlain LHIN, within the context of our new responsibilities and the new opportunities to participate in LHIN planning exercises, towards improving emergency pediatric dental care capacity in Ottawa.

Next Steps

OPH will work with the Champlain LHIN to develop a local solution to increase emergency pediatric dental care capacity in Ottawa. In addition, Ministry of Health and Long Term Care funding will be requested to address capital improvement requirements. Further, in 2018, OPH will assess new requirements embodied in the new Ontario Public Health Standards, Programs and Services, and adjust programming as required to achieve compliance.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

CONSULTATION

No public consultation was undertaken in preparing this information report. However, the information in this report was developed in consultation with the Chief of Dentistry at CHEO.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to receiving the information described in recommendation 1 of this report and implementing recommendation 2 of this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

Proposed updates at the 2525 St. Laurent dental clinic will ensure greater accessibility to people with disabilities and will meet the Ontario accessibility requirements.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendix 1 – Dental Programs for Low-Income Children and Youth

Appendix 2 – Dental Programs for Low-Income Adults

DISPOSITION

Upon Board approval, staff will move forward with a capital funding application to the Province for renovations at the St. Laurent Dental Clinic, as described in the report, and work with the Champlain LHIN to develop a local solution to increase emergency pediatric dental care capacity in Ottawa, as outlined in recommendation 2.

Appendix 1: Dental Programs for Low-Income Children and Youth

Program	Eligibility	Services	Location
Healthy Smiles Ontario - Core	Must meet the financial eligibility. Children on OW are automatically enrolled.	Basic level services, checkups, preventive care such as tooth cleaning, sealing teeth, fillings, extractions.	OPH clinic, private offices that accept the program
Healthy Smiles Ontario – Emergency and Essential Services Stream	Must have dental urgent need such a pain, infection, visible decay; parents declare it would cause finance hardship to obtain dental treatment.	Basic level services, checkups, preventive care such as tooth cleaning, sealing teeth, fillings, extractions.	OPH clinic, private offices that accept the program
Children’s Aid	Children in care of Children’s Aid Society	Basic level services, checkups, preventive care such as tooth cleaning, sealing teeth, fillings, extractions.	Private offices

Appendix 2: Dental Programs for Low-Income Adults

Program	Eligibility	Services	Location
Essential Health and Social Supports (EHSS)	Must meet the financial eligibility for EHSS (CSSD)	Emergency exams, fillings, extractions, denture services	OPH clinic
Ontario Works (OW)	Must be eligible for OW	Emergency exam, treatment for pain infections, fillings, extractions, denture services	OPH clinic
Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)	Must be eligible for ODSP	Basic level services, checkups, tooth cleaning, fillings, extractions, dentures.	Private offices which accept the lower fees paid
ODSP Overage Dependent Youth	Must be eligible under parents ODSP but aged 18+ No longer covered under ODSP dental plan	Emergency exam, treatment for pain, infection, fillings, extractions, denture services	OPH clinic
Older Adult Program – limited funding available	Dental urgent need, not on social assistance, financial inability to pay for treatment.	Emergency exam, treatment of pain, infections, fillings, extractions, denture services	OPH clinic, a few private offices accept referrals

ⁱ Oral Health- More Than Just Cavities. A Report by Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health April 2012 Available from http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/ministry/publications/reports/oral_health/oral_health.pdf. [Cited Nov 27, 2017]

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- ⁱⁱ Health Canada. Report on the Findings of the Oral Health Component of the Canadian Health Measures Survey 2007–2009. Available from <http://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/369649/publication.html> [Cited Nov 27, 2017]
- ⁱⁱⁱ Canadian Community Health Survey 2013-2014, Statistics Canada, Share File, Knowledge Management and Reporting Branch, MOHLTC
- ^{iv} Fransoo R, Martens P, The Need to Know Team, Prior H, Burchill C, Koseva I, Bailly A, Allegro E. The 2013 RHA Indicators Atlas. Winnipeg, MB. Manitoba Centre for Health Policy, October 2013
- ^v National Ambulatory Care Reporting System (NACRS) 2011-2016, Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, IntelliHEALTH ONTARIO, ICD–10–CA codes K02–K06, K08, K09.8, K09.9, K12, K13. Date Extracted: Nov 7, 2017
- ^{vi} The First Nations Information Governance Centre. Report on the Findings of the First Nations Oral Health Survey (FNOHS) 2009-10. (Ottawa: The First Nations Information Governance Centre, September 2012)
- ^{vii} Health Canada. Technical Report on the Inuit Oral Health Survey 2008 – 2009. 2011
- ^{viii} Wait Time Information System™ (WTIS™), Cancer Care Ontario. Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and Dentistry. [Extracted Nov 27, 2017]