



Oral Health Division Programs and Services

Durham Region Health Department
Health & Social Services Committee
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Oral Health Is ...

“Oral health is integral to general health...you cannot be healthy without oral health.”

1999, D. E. Shalala, US Secretary of Health and Human Services.

But unfortunately, oral health is often not valued until someone becomes sick.





Burden of Illness

1. World Ranking of Disease Prevalence:

- #1: Untreated caries of permanent teeth affect 35% of the population.¹

2. Cavities in Canada:

- 96% of adults have a history of cavities.
- 7% of 6 to 11-year-olds have or have had a cavity.
- 59% of 12 to 19-year-olds have or have had a cavity.
- The average number of decay-affected teeth in children aged 6 to 11 and 12 to 19 is 2.5.
- 6% of adult Canadians no longer have any natural teeth.
- 21% of adults with teeth have had a moderate or severe periodontal (gum) problem.



Burden of Illness

3. Treatment Needs and Impact:

- 34% of Canadians aged 6 to 79 years (with teeth) have identified treatment needs by dentists.
- An estimated 2.26 million school-days are missed annually due to dental-related illness.
- Tooth decay accounts for one-third of all day surgeries in children aged 1 to 5.
- 4.15 million working-days for adults are lost yearly due to dental visits or sick-days.²

4. Overall Impact:

- On average, 3.54 hours per year are lost per person in Canada due to dental diseases, including professional treatment.³



Programs & Services

1. Dental Clinic
2. School Screening
3. Health Promotion
4. Claim & Estimate Processes



Dental Clinic

Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program
Healthy Smiles Ontario



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Durham Region Oral Health Clinic



- Located at 200 John Street West, Oshawa.
- Seven operatories.
- Staff: Dentists, Dental Hygienists, Denturist, Dental Assistants, Clerks.
- The clinic is open Monday through Friday; 8 am to 4 pm.
- Capacity is limited, and at times, we face challenges in delivering dental services promptly.
- Collaboration with Social Services to provide dental care services to residents in the Region's Long-Term Care Homes (LTCHs).



Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program (OSDCP)

OSDCP Overview:

- OSDCP is a provincially-funded initiative.
- It offers free routine dental services to low-income seniors aged 65 and above.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Single seniors with an annual net income of \$22,200 or less are eligible.
- Senior couples (one or both aged 65 or older) with a combined annual net income of \$37,100 or less are eligible.
- Participants should have no access to any other form of dental benefits.

Estimated Reach:

- Approximately 9,800 seniors in Durham Region are expected to be eligible for treatment under OSDCP.



OSDCP

Program Initiation:

- Started seeing seniors in December 2019.

Service Continuation:

- Provided services throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic.

OSDCP Enrollment (as of January 2023):

- OSDCP enrollment reached 2,846 clients.

Usage Statistics - Jan-Dec 2021

- OSDCP (unique) clients: 963.
- OSDCP appointments: 3,023.

Usage Statistics - Jan-Dec 2022

- OSDCP (unique) clients: 1,460.
- OSDCP appointments: 4,869.

Usage Statistics - Jan-Dec 2023

- OSDCP (unique) clients: 2,016.
- OSDCP appointments: 7,421.



Healthy Smiles Ontario (HSO)

Program Integration (January 2016):

- In January 2016, the Province combined six publicly funded dental programs into the new HSO program.

HSO Overview:

- HSO is a government-funded dental program.
- It provides free preventive, routine, and emergency dental services.
- Eligibility: children and youth aged 17 and under from low-income households.

Program Commencement:

- Started seeing HSO recipients under the new program in 2016.



HSO

Usage Statistics - Jan-Dec 2021

- HSO appointments: 862.

Usage Statistics - Jan-Dec 2022

- HSO appointments: 775.

Usage Statistics - Jan-June 2023

- HSO appointments: 774.



Eligible Services

The Oral Health Clinic can be a *Dental Home* for low-income families

- Check-ups, including scaling, fluoride and polishing
- Repairing broken teeth and cavities
- X-rays
- Removing teeth or abnormal tissue (oral surgery)
- Anesthesia
- Treating infection and pain (endodontic services)
- Treating gum conditions and diseases (periodontal services)
- Removeable dentures including complete and partial will be partially covered
- Mouth guard



School Screening



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School Dental Screening

- Oral Health Division (OHD) provides school dental screening to meet the requirements of the Oral Health Protocol, 2021.
- Dental screening is offered to all children in elementary school.
- Dental screening identifies children with urgent dental needs.
 - OHD assists these children with accessing dental care.
- The oral health surveillance data collected from the dental screening program provides the opportunity to:
 - Better understand the oral health status of children in Durham.
 - Create programs to improve the health in areas of greatest need.



School Dental Screening

2018/19 - Last Full Year of School Screening

- Operated under standard procedures - selecting grades related to school dental intensity levels.
- Screened 25,907 children.
 - Urgent needs: 1,420 (5.5%) (3yr avg 4.8%).
 - Non-Urgent needs: 871 (3.4%) (3yr avg 3.8%).

2022/23 - Post-Pandemic Catch-Up Strategy

- Implemented a catch-up strategy (screening all elementary children in two years).
- Screened: 44,878 children.
 - Urgent needs: 2,086 (4.6%).
 - Non-urgent needs: 2,500 (5.6%).
- After the 2023/24 school year, the school screening program will return to standard operations.



Health Promotion



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Health Promotion

- OHD provides the Health Promotion program to meet the requirements of the Oral Health Protocol, 2021.
- Oral Health Promotion Programs:
 - Promote awareness of, access to, and utilization of HSO and OSDCP.
 - Improve oral health knowledge of children, seniors, and their guardians/caregivers.
- 2023 activities included:
 - Grade-specific classroom education to 38 schools.
 - Reached 6,974 children and 473 teachers.
 - Participated in four health fairs at LTCHs.
 - Conducted oral health caregiver training in eight “Train the Trainer” workshops for 45 LTCH staff.



Health Promotion 2023 Activities

- Responded to and participated in 77 local community events.
 - Engaged with 4,344 participants.
- Utilized social media for promotion and information sharing.
 - Posted 154 updates.
 - Twitter: 64,786 impressions and 574 engagements.
 - Facebook: 94,839 impressions, 92,982 reach, and 2,330 engagements.
 - Instagram: 92,529 impressions, 85,969 reach, and 1,068 engagements.



Claim & Estimate Processes



Claim Process

The work is divided into two main components.

1. Ontario Work Adult (OWAD)– Emergency Services

- The basic dental coverage that all adult recipients of OW receive including treatment (filling, extraction, or pain management) of two teeth per month without a pre-determination of benefits.

OWAD Claims		
Year	Claims Processed	Amount Paid
2021	3169	\$427,052
2022	3102	\$432,030
2023	2878	\$390,949



Claim Process

2. OW Discretionary Benefits

Patients may be eligible for supplemental discretionary benefits through the following routes:

- **Employability Program (EMPL):**
 - Allows eligible OW clients to participate in an education program geared towards gainful employment.
 - Allows extra dental benefits after completion of the program for 6 months to help them complete all dental treatment before they exit the program.
- **Learning, Earning and Parenting Program (LEAP):**
 - LEAP is for young parents (16 to 25 years old) on OW who have not obtained their high school diploma.
 - Allows eligible OW clients to have extended dental benefits while they are eligible for LEAP.



Claim Process

2. OW Discretionary Benefits cont'd

EMPL/LEAP Claims (processed together)		
Year	Claims Processed	Amount Paid
2021	72	\$17,154
2022	117	\$40,884
2023	96	\$27,927



Estimate Process

Estimate from Dental Provider (SUP)

- OW clients who require more than the basic coverage of two teeth treated per month (i.e., multiple extractions or dentures), will be considered if the OW client has their dental provider submit an estimate with codes, fees, and reason that treatment is required.
- The treatment plan from the provider must follow eligible services under the OWAD discretionary program.
- Some of these supplemental benefits are also available to people who are on the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP).

SUP Estimates and Claims			
Year	Estimates Received and Processed	Claims processed	Amount Paid
2021	1472	751	\$471,544
2022	1757	749	\$504,931
2023	1943	782	\$547,210



Inequality in Access to Oral Health Care



Inequalities in Dental Care

Public Spending Trends:

- In 2022, the private sector accounted for an estimated \$17.7 billion while the public sector spent only around \$1.1 billion on dental services in Canada.⁴

Disparities Across Communities:

- Disparities exist in third-party insurance, access to care, and oral health indicators among communities, provinces, household incomes, and immigration statuses.

Insurance Gaps:

- 53% of adults aged 60 to 79 lack dental insurance.
- 50% of Canadians in the lower-income bracket have no dental insurance.³
- In 2022, 35% of Canadians had no dental insurance. Among certain groups, including seniors, over half lacked insurance, requiring out-of-pocket payment for dental expenses.⁵



Inequalities in Dental Care

Access to Publicly Funded Programs:

- Health Canada notes that only 1 in 20 Canadians access oral health services through publicly funded programs.

Usage and Avoidance Statistics:

- Over one-third of Canadians (35%) reported not having dental insurance.
- Almost one in four Canadians (24%) avoided dental visits due to cost.
- More than one-third of Canadians reported not visiting a dental professional in the previous 12 months.⁵



Canada Dental Care Plan (CDCP)

- Aims to ease financial barriers for eligible Canadian residents with an annual adjusted family net income under \$90,000.
- Targets those without access to dental insurance.
- Application opened in phases.
- Started with seniors in December 2023.

Group	Applications open
Seniors aged 87 and above	Starting December 2023
Seniors aged 77 to 86	Starting January 2024
Seniors aged 72 to 76	Starting February 2024
Seniors aged 70 to 71	Starting March 2024



CDCP

Application process:

- Seniors aged 65 to 69 can apply online from May 2024.
- Adults with a valid Disability Tax Credit certificate and children under 18 can apply online from June 2024.
- All remaining eligible Canadian residents can apply online from 2025.
- Service delivery to seniors 65+ begins in May 2024.

Provider registration:

- Providers can register for the program in February 2024.

Payment and paperwork:

- Details regarding paperwork and payment rollout in spring are yet to be determined.
- Ministry of Health will release an update in February 2024.



Future Consideration

- Collaboration with Brock CHC
- Geographical expansion
- Office Hours expansion
- Screening Program expansion

We will continue our collaboration with Social Services

- LTCH residents
- OW clients



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Thank you!



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