

Dental Services in Ontario

Concern has been expressed about the difficulty persons with developmental disabilities encounter across Ontario in accessing oral health (dental) care. Most individuals and their caregivers believe that oral health is an important part of overall health. The need for an integrated provincial strategy to build capacity and coordinate primary and dental care services throughout the lifespan of individuals with a developmental disability was also a recommendation of the Select Committee on Developmental Services.

In response, OASIS has compiled a sampling of the oral health services and resources available to assist members in helping individuals and families who are in need. Members are also encouraged to contribute to this compilation by adding any resources or information you encounter.

General

- Most municipalities/regions have low-cost or free dental services available through public health offices
- People can access dental services at any dental office in Ontario, and can seek financial assistance through MCSS. However, not all dentists may be able to provide specialized care some individuals may need
- Healthy Smiles program provides free to low-cost dental services to children from low income families in Ontario (sliding scale). Some services extended to entire family
- There are many dental clinics, through Accessibility Directorate of Ontario (office of Ministry of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure) that is responsible for AODA implementation) that provide low cost or mobile services across Ontario for people with disabilities, low income, shut-in or seniors.
- Some dental clinics provide services through community agencies
- Access to Dental Care for Persons with Developmental Disabilities in Ontario (Koneru and Sigal, www.cda-adc.ca/jcda , March 2009, Volume 75, no. 2) provides a useful overview of the difficulties encountered in securing dental services

Advocacy/Education

Oral Health, Total Health (OHTH) is a Federal Non-Profit Organization led by the students and faculty from numerous Faculties of Dentistry with a mission to advocate, educate and improve the oral health care for persons with special needs.

Oral Health, Total Health delivers on three goals:

- To educate and encourage dental students, residents and dental hygiene students to provide oral health care for persons with special needs within their clinics upon graduation.
- To raise awareness and educate community access workers and caregivers to provide oral care for these individuals.
- To provide funding for clinics and initiatives that promote universal access to oral health care for persons with special needs. Our current goal is to raise \$2 million for the Dentistry clinic for Persons with Special Needs at Mount Sinai Hospital. This program is the largest of its kind in Canada and one of the best programs for persons with special needs in the world; however, funding is necessary for it to continue providing its fundamental services for this population.

Clinics or Community-Based Dental Services

Mt. Sinai Dental Clinic

The Department operates a special clinic providing dental treatment to intellectually and physically challenged adults, in collaboration with other medical departments such as the Wasser Pain Management Centre. The Graduate Program in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery is now at the Department of Dentistry at Mount Sinai Hospital.

The current wait for an initial consultation is approximately 6 months, and then there is a 12 month wait for dental care under anesthesia.

Vision

Mt. Sinai Dental Clinic strives to provide the best possible dental care to persons with special needs, regardless of the severity of their problems in a way that will educate students and residents so that they can view them as people in need of our care and who deserve the best service we can provide.

Program Objectives

1. *To offer necessary dental care to individuals with special Needs*
 - Mount Sinai Hospital's (MSH) Dentistry Clinic for Persons with Special Needs is the largest clinic of its kind in Canada and one of the best programs for persons with special needs in the world
 - The dental care is provided by a team that includes undergraduate and graduate dental students and staff dentists
 - Patients with special needs travel up to 8 hours to be seen within the MSH Dental Clinic stating that they simply could not find care in their local communities. The demand for care continues to grow. The current wait for an initial consultation is 6 months and a further 12 months if dental care under a general anesthesia is needed putting patients at greater risk of dental disease.

2. *To provide an educational experience to dental students and hospital dental residents so that they would then welcome and treat this patient group in their practices in the future*
 - Since 1975, the MSH Dental Department in conjunction with the Discipline of Pediatric Dentistry at the Faculty of Dentistry, University of Toronto has offered a unique dental program for persons with special needs
 - Every year, each undergraduate dental student from the University of Toronto (U of T) rotates through the MSH Clinic providing hands on dental care for patients with special needs six times prior to their graduation
 - Within each rotation, each dental student treats up to 6 patients with various mental and/or physical disabilities, thereby gaining a wide range of experience throughout the program
 - The MSH Clinic also accepts six dental graduates from across North America to partake in the Hospital Dental Residency Program; Providing a one-year experience at the post-graduate level in hospital dentistry and dentistry for patients with special needs

<http://www.ohth.ca/donate/mount-sinai-hospital-dentistry-clinic/>

Community Dentistry through University of Western Ontario

School of Dentistry at Western serving individuals in the London area through community agencies

<https://www.schulich.uwo.ca/dentistry/docs>

North Simcoe Muskoka

Public health and mobile units serving low income individuals

<http://www.nsmhealthline.ca/listServices.aspx?id=10076>

Northwestern Health Unit

Provides dental services to children via Healthy Smiles program and individuals on social assistance (ODSP/OW) at offices across northern Ontario, from Kenora to Fort Frances:

<http://search.211north.ca/bresults.asp?OL1=Northwestern+Health+Unit>

Healthy Smiles Program Ontario

- Provides dental care to children from low-income families up to age 18
- 5 mobile clinics in Ontario, including northern Ontario through Dryden (serves Kenora and area)

Public Health Offices (Including Toronto and Those Above)

- Free or low cost dental services at any of the 34 public health offices across Ontario for low income families, ODSP/OW recipients and their families

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/dental/hso_phu.aspx

<http://www.altimadental.com/access-us/>

Altima strives at all times to provide services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. Altima is also committed to ensuring that, persons with disabilities receive services of the same quality that others receive and that, to the extent possible, accessible services are delivered in a timely manner.

1 Yorkdale Road, Toronto

30 locations in Ontario: <http://www.altimadental.com/dental-centres/>

Mobile Clinics (Most through Healthy Smiles Program)

- City of Toronto – through community agencies, including: Newtonbrook United Church,
- Streets to Homes, EVA Phoenix, St Jamestown, Sherbourne Community Health Centre
- GTA (not government funded): <http://www.qsdentalhygiene.com/>
- Niagara: https://www.niagararegion.ca/living/health_wellness/dental/mobileclinic.aspx
- Peel Region: <http://www.peelregion.ca/health/dental-health/what-wedo.htm>
- Hamilton: <http://www.hamilton.ca/HealthandSocialServices/PublicHealth/CommunityHealthBus/>

- Ottawa: <http://ruralrootsdhs.com/site/>
- Peterborough: <http://www.pcchu.ca/clinics-classes/clinics/dental-clinics/>
- Simcoe/Muskoka:
<http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/HealthUnit/Services/Clinics/Dental/MobileClinicSchedule.aspx>
- York/Simcoe: <http://www.toothpicksdental.com/>
- Senioropolis: <http://ontario.senioropolis.com/Directory-category.asp?Category=Dental%20Services>