



# LONDON FOR ALL

## A ROADMAP TO END POVERTY



## Health

### 3.4 Expand local no-cost dental programs for Londoners living with low income

#### **Health Centres to help deliver new Dental Program for Low-Income Seniors**

On April 11, 2019 the Ontario government announced its commitment of \$90 million dollars to support a dental program for low-income seniors so they can access dental care. Seniors with an annual income of less than \$19,300, or senior couples with a combined annual income of less than \$32,300, will qualify for the program, which is scheduled to start in late summer 2019.

Community Health Centres and Aboriginal Health Access Centres will deliver the new dental program for seniors in the community. Because Alliance members offer comprehensive primary health care, they can also provide wrap-around services to ensure low income seniors get the care they need – help with transportation, interpretation and connecting them to other health and social services all under one roof. This new investment provides preventative care and will reduce dental visits to hospital emergency rooms.

Thanks to the Community Health Centres, the Alliance for Healthy Communities, and Ontario Oral Health Alliance for advocating in support of this new program, Dental Care for Low Income Seniors, as promised by the Provincial government in the 2018 Provincial election.

#### **SOAHAC Dental Clinic**

The SOAHAC Dental Clinic provides FREE dental care to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) adults and children who are covered for services under Non-Insured Health Benefits, Ontario Works, or ODSP. They also provide services to Indigenous (FNMI) children and youth from 0-17 years old who are covered under Non-Insured Health Benefits, Healthy Smiles Ontario, or Children's Aid Society. The SOAHAC Dental Clinic is currently located in the Middlesex London Health Unit (MLHU) and was transferred to SOAHAC in 2019.

### **Parkwood Hospital Dental Clinic**

The Parkwood Hospital Dental Clinic provides services to all individuals in care at Parkwood Institute. Individuals can continue obtaining services at the dental clinic after release from Parkwood Hospital.

### **Dental Outreach Community Services (DOCS)**

Dental Outreach Community Services (DOCS) host clinics at Western University and in the community. Screening services only in the community with follow up at Western University.

### **Healthy Smiles Ontario**

Healthy Smiles Ontario provides free dental care for eligible children and youth aged 17 and under. Children, youth and/or families with other insurance are not excluded; however they are required to access their other dental insurance prior to accessing Healthy Smiles Ontario. Healthy Smiles Ontario has three streams: the Core Services stream; the Emergency and Essential Services stream; and the Preventive Services stream.

### **Dental Screening Programs**

Mandatory dental screening at all schools in TBDSB and LDCSB for grades JK/SK and Grade 2. These screenings indicate low, medium and high risk. If schools rank in medium risk then a grade 9 screening is added. If schools rank in high risk then screening is done in grades 2, 4, 6, and 8.

### **Middlesex London Health Unit**

Fluoride varnish program is provided by the LMHU to daycares, JK/SK and is expanding to Indigenous Centres.

Dental Preventative Program (dental screening, fluoride, cleaning) is provided at LMHU for anyone up to 17 years of age.

In progress:

- MLHU is working on a partnership with Fanshawe for a Smile Clean program offered to parents of Healthy Smiles children for a \$30 visit if on social service.

- **London Community Dental Alliance**

The London Community Dental Alliance (LCDA) is a collaborative of social service and health care providers, dental and hygiene professionals and students, academic institutions, as well as community volunteers dedicated to improving oral health for people living on low income. Members of LCDA have come together to create an affordable, accessible dental clinic in order to alleviate the lack of access to dental services for people living on low income. The London InterCommunity Health Centre, as a member of the LCDA, has been instrumental to develop the Alliance, clinic model and business plan, as well, raised funds in support of the initiative.

The London Community Dental Alliance is planning to open a dental clinic at the Glen Cairn Community Resource Centre to provide free / low-cost dental services to low income households. The cost of dental coverage is out of reach for many marginalized individuals and families, resulting in up to 100 Londoners per month visiting emergency rooms for dental care. The LCDA Dental Clinic will fill an often overlooked gap in our community – increasing overall health and wellness at the same time reducing stress on our hospitals.