



HÔTEL-DIEU GRACE HEALTHCARE

ESTD 1888

917 Lesperance Rd.
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January 2019

Dear Mayor McNamara and Council,

Dental health is an important part of good overall health. Unfortunately, many residents in Windsor-Essex County lack the support they need to maintain good dental health and they face barriers to getting dental services.

In Windsor-Essex County the rate of dental day surgeries for caries-related (cavities) issues was almost 3 times greater in Windsor-Essex County compared to Ontario in 2016. Annually, there are 1,323 day surgeries for caries-related (cavities) issues performed on average in Windsor-Essex County. Of these, 572 day surgeries per year on average were performed on adults with caries-related issues (WECHU, 2018). In fact, cavities are one of the most common, chronic, infectious diseases among Ontarians; yet these same dental health issues are largely preventable (MOHLTC, 2012).

In 2018, the Windsor Essex County Health Unit investigated oral health needs for [children](#) and adults. It was identified that both children and adults have significant oral health needs.

Based on this information the WECHU is providing the following recommendations:

1. Partnerships.

Form a local dental health community coalition and collaborate with the Erie-St. Clair Oral Health Coalition, to expand dental health education and outreach programs.

2. Advocacy.

Advocate for increased funding for dental health services and expansion of publicly-funded dental programs for adults and seniors.

Advocate for workplaces to provide a living wage and/or some type of dental insurance coverage to their employees.

3. Community Water Fluoridation.

Promote and support policies for residents of Windsor-Essex County to have access to community water fluoridation (CWF) and advocate for provincial coordination of CWF.

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4. Comprehensive, community-based approach to healthy living programs and services.

A lack of access to dental health care is putting additional strain on the health care system. More needs to be done to help people in our community achieve and maintain good dental health.

As a hospital that treats vulnerable individuals, including mental health clients and children, we see the pain, morbidity and need to serve those people with dental-health related conditions. We encourage you to support the recommendations of the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit as noted above.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Andrea Steen, MD, CCFP
Chief of Staff, V.P. Medical Affairs & Quality
Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare

References

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. (2012). *Oral Health: More Than Just Cavities*. Retrieved from http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/ministry/publications/reports/oral_health/oral_health.pdf

Windsor-Essex County Health Unit. (2018). *Oral Health Report, 2018 Update*. Windsor, Ontario.

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