



January 18, 2019

Re: 2018 Oral Health Report

Dear Members of Council,

The Homeless Coalition of Windsor Essex County is comprised of more than 40 organizations who provide direct service to people experiencing homelessness. The Windsor Essex County Health Unit continues to work closely with our community partners in fulfilling our community's mission to end chronic homelessness. We are pleased to offer this letter of support regarding the 2018 Oral Health Report by the Windsor Essex County Health Unit.

The Homeless Coalition recognizes the importance of the recommendations outlined in the Oral Health Report and wishes to emphasize the impact that oral health has on vulnerable people in our community, including people experiencing homelessness. People experiencing prolonged homelessness face many barriers, including access to basic dental services due to lack of money or insurance to cover the cost as well as often having difficulty making and meeting appointments. Missing and decayed teeth and painful oral health issues are realities for marginalized people in our community, especially people experiencing chronic homelessness. The Oral Health Report is clear that oral hygiene affects overall health, which means the inaccessibility of dental services for people experiencing homelessness puts them at an increased risk for the decline of their overall health.

The Oral Health Report also indicates a strong association between low income households in our community with having “dental health concerns,...” “dental emergencies, and problems getting dental health services.” All of this speaks to the importance and urgency of addressing the Oral Health of our community.

The Homeless Coalition Executive advocates for readily accessible oral and dental treatments to address the overall oral health of all community members, including people experiencing homelessness and we strongly support the important work currently underway by the Windsor Essex County Health Unit.

Sincerely,
Homeless Coalition of Windsor Essex County Executive