

RE: Windsor-Essex County Health Unit Oral Health Report

I have practiced dentistry in Windsor since 1980 as a licensed Pediatric Dental Specialist. I am no longer in full time practice but I continue in my role as the Dental Director at the John McGivney Children's Centre and as a dental care provider in the Windsor- Essex County Health Unit.

It is very difficult in private dental practice to accumulate supportive data for clinical observations. The Oral Health Report 2018 provides the data to support our clinical observations for the declining dental health of children in Windsor-Essex County.

Currently, pediatric dental specialty care is provided in the operating room at Windsor Regional Hospital, on a daily basis for children with limited cooperation and advanced dental decay.

Over the last few years we have not only seen an increase in the number of children requiring hospital dentistry but a marked increase in the severity of their dental disease.

As a pediatric dentist, I can only comment on our pediatric population. There is a severe problem with early childhood dental decay in Ontario and the data presented to you supports an even greater problem in Windsor-Essex County. As a society, it is unconscionable that we have children living with dental pain and infection. This affects their development, school attendance and performance. As a province, the cost of hospital dentistry and in-office specialty care is enormous.

We simply must do better.

Dental decay is a multifactorial disease and arresting this problem requires a multifaceted approach. Please provide your support for the preventive initiatives of the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit.

Thank you for the opportunity of providing information for your discussions.

Sincerely,

Dr. Thomas Oper