

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# Health Unit to Expand Dental Services for Low-Income Families Thanks to Healthy Smiles Ontario Funding

### *New Funding to Support Both Mobile and Fixed Dental Clinics*

**Friday, October 1, 2010, Peterborough**



Peterborough County-City Health Unit dental hygienist Tracey Stevens gives a check up to a local boy.

Together with MPP Jeff Leal, the Peterborough County-City Health Unit announced that it will receive \$1,089,554 from the Healthy Smiles Ontario program to expand dental services for children and youth from low-income families.

"Today is a great day for the public health of our community because it means we can now provide both choice and better access to preventive and treatment services for children and youth from low-income families," said Dr. Rosana Pellizzari, Medical Officer of Health for the Health Unit. "We know that

maintaining good oral health is key to one's overall health so the improved level of dental care provided by today's investment will benefit our community for years to come."

With \$522,000 of the new funding, the Health Unit will become one of six health units in the province to develop a new mobile clinic to bring both preventive and treatment services to rural areas. The remaining \$567,554 will be used to establish a fixed dental clinic in downtown Peterborough. The Health Unit welcomes proposals from both private dental service providers and community agencies for shared clinic space in the downtown area and has provided RFP details on [www.pcchu.ca](http://www.pcchu.ca).

This program will reach families who face multiple barriers by bringing comprehensive preventive and treatment services (including diagnostic x-ray capacity) out to rural parts of Peterborough County where there is no public transit. In addition, the public health model used in these new clinics will enable clients to easily access the Health Unit's many other programs, such as child and family health, chronic disease and injury prevention, immunization, and sexual health.

## Communications Office

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The new Healthy Smiles Ontario program will provide preventive dental care at no cost to children and youth who:

- Are 17 years and under.
- Are members of a household with an Adjusted Family Net Income of \$20,000 per year or less
- Don't have access to any form of dental coverage.

By making regular trips to a dentist or dental hygienist, kids will be able to prevent cavities and other dental problems that can contribute to diseases later in life. The program will give kids access to services like check-ups, cleaning, fillings, x-rays, scaling and more.

There are approximately 12,100 low-income residents in Peterborough City and County, representing 9.1% of the total population.

For further information about the Healthy Smiles Ontario program, call 1-866-532-3161 or visit [www.ontario.ca/healthysmiles](http://www.ontario.ca/healthysmiles) .

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### **For further information, please contact:**

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