

**Communications Office**  
Peterborough County-City Health Unit  
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[www.pcchu.ca](http://www.pcchu.ca)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
Thursday, May 19, 2011, Peterborough

## **Health Unit Launches New Community Dental Health Centre**

***Clinic Represents Major Public Health Milestone  
for Peterborough City and County***



History was made today when the Peterborough County-City Health Unit opened the city's first-ever public health dental clinic, located in Peterborough Square on George Street under the town clock.

"Today's opening of the new Community Dental Health Centre is a significant milestone for the public health of Peterborough City and County," said Dr. Rosana Pellizzari, Medical Officer of Health. "This investment is a resource for the community and will provide everyone, especially low-income families, with more options and more access."

The new clinic is fully accessible and intended to serve as a gateway to clients' better health as families will also be provided with information related to nutrition, food access, tobacco-free living, parenting, and a host of other public health resources.

"The importance of dental health to overall quality of life cannot be overstated," said Dr. Pellizzari. "It is well documented in scientific research that oral health affects speech, nutrition, growth and development, learning, employment and self-esteem. Ignore oral health now and we all pay the price later."

Almost six out of ten Canadian children and adolescents have experienced tooth decay. That rate reaches 96% for Canadian adults. Canada loses over two million school days and more than four million work days each year due to teeth-related ailments. Many of those problems are avoidable.

The Canadian Health Measures Survey found that about 32% of Canadians do not have dental insurance. Canadians from lower income families have consistently worse outcomes in terms of oral health, untreated dental disease, lower rates of visiting a

NEWS RELEASE

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dentist, and higher proportions of avoiding dental visits because of costs.

Funded by the province's new Healthy Smiles Ontario Program, the new clinic will provide much needed preventive and treatment services to low-income families without dental insurance. To date, the Health Unit has registered 147 youth with the Healthy Smiles Ontario program. Residents interested in finding out if they or their children qualify for financial assistance are encouraged to call the Health Unit at 705-743-1000, ext. 265.

The first client at the Community Dental Health Centre will be seen on May 27, and the new clinic is fully booked until June 8. Prospective clients can call the Health Unit at anytime during regular business hours to book an appointment.

For further information about dental services provided by the Health Unit, please visit [www.pcchu.ca](http://www.pcchu.ca).

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

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