



Media Release

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Federal, provincial programs available to help seniors with cost of dental care

Grey Bruce Public Health and Bruce County are collaborating to raise awareness about the critical link between oral health and overall health as well as available government-funded programs to help eligible seniors cover the cost of dental care.

The [Canadian Dental Care Plan](#) (CDCP) and [Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program](#) (OSDCP) are both designed to assist seniors who face financial barriers to receiving routine and restorative dental services.

“Research continues to show that a healthy mouth is key to good overall health and well-being,” says Jason Wepler, Manager of the Oral Health Program at Grey Bruce Public Health.

“Oral health problems, which are more prevalent in older adults, can negatively impact a person’s quality of life — as they can cause pain, anxiety, and discomfort, and impact eating, sleep, and self-esteem. Evidence also shows connections between oral diseases, which include tooth decay and gum disease, and other diseases in the body, such as Type 2 diabetes and diseases of the heart and lungs.”

However, about 40% of seniors aged 65 and older and more than half of seniors over age 85, report [not visiting an oral health professional](#) in the previous 12 months. Just over one in 10 Canadians aged 60 to 79 has untreated cavities, while nearly half of seniors in that age range have gum disease.

The rate of seniors in Grey-Bruce who visited an [emergency department](#) due to an oral health condition in 2022 was more than double the provincial average.

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“Cost can be a major barrier to accessing oral healthcare. The Canadian Dental Care Plan and Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program help to address this barrier by covering the cost of many oral treatments for eligible seniors,” Wepler says.

Grey Bruce Public Health and Bruce County are working together to help promote the two dental care plans to seniors in the area. A social media campaign will be launched to help inform residents of the two programs, including the eligibility criteria, covered services, and how to apply. Posters and other educational materials will also be posted in area communities.

“Good oral health is essential for overall well-being, especially for seniors. The Bruce County Long Term Care & Senior Services department encourages all eligible seniors to utilize these dental care programs,” says Megan Garland, Bruce County Director of Long Term Care & Senior Services. “Regular dental visits not only keep teeth and gums healthy, but also support overall health and enhance quality of life. Seniors in need of support with navigating these dental programs can email seniorservices@brucecounty.on.ca.”

PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL DENTAL CARE PROGRAMS

The Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program covers the cost of routine dental services, including check-ups, cleanings, x-rays, fillings, and treatment of gum conditions, for qualifying seniors aged 65 and older who meet income requirements and do not have other forms of dental benefits.

Services covered by the OSDCP are provided at [Grey Bruce Public Health dental clinics](#), located in Owen Sound, Walkerton, Markdale, and Wiarton.

Meanwhile, seniors with an adjusted net family income of less than \$90,000 and no dental insurance can also apply for the Canadian Dental Care Plan, which covers the cost of a range of oral health services.

Qualifying patients can receive services covered by the federal program at any private dental clinic that accepts CDCP clients. GBPH clinics do not provide services covered by the CDCP.

Seniors may qualify for assistance under both the federal and provincial programs.

Applications for the OSDCP are available at Grey Bruce Public Health, 101 17th St. E. in Owen Sound, South East Grey Community Health Centre, 55 Victoria Ave. in Markdale, or online at the following link: [Seniors Dental](#).

For more information about the provincial program, call GBPH's Oral Health team at 519-376-9420 and press 8. More information on the CDCP is available at Canada.ca/dental.

For More Information:

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