



Date: Sept 6, 2017

Wetaskiwin Regional Division #11
5515 47A Avenue
Wetaskiwin AB
T9A 3S3

Dear: Terry Pearson

Re: 2017-2018 Alberta Health Services – Oral Health Program for School Children

On behalf of Alberta Health Services (AHS) we express our appreciation for the support your school division provided the Oral Health program in the past few years. This letter outlines the Oral Health program for schools in 2017-2018.

The Alberta Health Services *Oral Health Action Plan (OHAP)* focuses on providing service to children from kindergarten to Grade 2. The goal of the plan is to prevent dental disease in children in selected schools through the provision of fluoride varnish and dental sealants. After receiving written parent/legal guardian consent, the following services will be provided in the selected school:

- Kindergarten, Grade 1 and 2: visual screening, two fluoride varnishes applied a minimum of three months apart
- Grade 1 and 2: placement of dental sealants where resources permit.
- Grade 3: check and repair of dental sealants placed by Oral Health staff in the previous year

Fluoride varnish is a solution which is painted on teeth and prevents tooth decay. A dental sealant is a thin plastic coating applied to molars and has been shown to reduce tooth decay by at least 60% in children's permanent teeth.

These services will be provided by qualified Alberta Health Services Oral Health staff. The Oral Health staff will collaborate with your school to send and receive parent/guardian consents and arrange dates for service. The goal is to minimize impact on teacher's time.

There are some changes in the schools selected for service in 2017-2018 designed to ensure that the program is reaching the OHAP target population of children. Schools are selected for service based on factors associated with dental disease. Recognizing the strong association between dental disease and socioeconomic indicators, AHS developed a material deprivation index derived from a number of key socioeconomic indicators from Statistics Canada. This information was then mapped to geographic areas of the province to assist in the selection of schools for services. Schools were added to the Oral Health Program if located in communities that ranked high in the index and services will not be provided anymore to schools that ranked very low. Oral Health staff will be communicating this change with the administrators of the newly selected schools and schools that will no longer be receiving services.

Thank you again for supporting access to preventive services for children at risk for dental disease. If you have any specific questions or concerns regarding the Alberta Health Services Oral Health program for school children in your area, please contact Dana O'Brien at **403 356-6327**.

Sincerely,



Dana O'Brien
Area Manager, Public Health, Central Zone
Oral Health Program
Alberta Health Services

cc: Dr. Steven K. Patterson, BSc, DDS, MPH, Associate Dental Public Health Officer;
Lee Fredeen-Kohlert, Director, Public Health and Children's Rehabilitation Services, Central Zone

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