

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cuts to Toronto's Mobile Dental Program for Low Income Seniors Reprehensible Says Dental Regulatory Authority

Toronto – Any cuts to the city's mobile dental program for low-income seniors in long-term care facilities is reprehensible says the Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario (RCDSO). In fact, RCDSO urges expansion of the existing program to residents in all of the long-term facilities across the city.

This is the core message in the College's deputation to the Toronto Budget Advisory Committee on February 17. RCDSO is the dental regulatory authority in the province. It is the only organization in the province mandated to protect the public interest when it comes to oral health care.

"To ignore oral health problems can lead to needless pain and suffering and complications that can seriously diminish the quality of life of seniors. Vulnerable seniors deserve better," says Dr. Cam Witmer, RCDSO president. Currently only 2,900 of the 12,700 residents in homes across the city eligible for program receive the service.

"Every senior in the city's long-term care facilities needs access to dental services on an annual basis. Oral health means more than sound teeth. Oral health is integral to overall health. More and more studies show that dental disease is a contributing factor to heart, lung and gastric illness. For example, poor mouth care can contribute to oral cancer, either mouth, gum, throat or lip cancer," explains Dr. Witmer.

"A wise expenditure of money now will mean enormous savings on financial and social costs down the road," says Dr. Witmer.

RCDSO will make a deputation to the City of Toronto's Budget Advisory Committee on Monday, February 17. Toronto dentist Dr. Eric Luks, immediate past president of the RCDSO, will speak on behalf of the College.

RCDSO was established in 1868 under the first dental act to be adopted in the world. Its mission is to protect the public's right to quality dental services by providing leadership to the dental profession in self-regulation.

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