



Community Oral Health Service

The Community Oral Health Service has replaced the former School Dental Service. The emphasis for oral care is now more focused on prevention of tooth decay and providing parents with advice to support their children's good oral health.

New facilities have been built throughout the region in central locations to provide our service. Children from your area will now receive their **free dental care** at the new **Community Oral Health Service Dental Clinic on the second floor of the School of Dentistry, 310 Great King Street, Dunedin**. Southern District Health Board Registered Dental Therapists will be providing the care for your children just as they did formerly in the School Dental Clinics attached to schools. Car parks are provided in the School of Dentistry car park. When you receive your child's appointment you will also receive a card for free parking.

We are encouraging parents and caregivers to attend appointments with their children as it is known that children whose parents attend dental appointments with them have much better oral health outcomes.

The reasons for this include:

- You can be more involved in decisions about your child's/children's treatment
- Informed consent for treatment can be given on the spot and often minor treatments can be completed within that visit e.g. fissure sealants, fluoride treatment and small fillings. This may mean fewer visits.
- We can give you information and tips to help you promote good oral health habits at home.
- You have an opportunity to ask us any questions you may have regarding your child's/children's oral health.

An appointment for your child/children will be posted to your home address. It is important that you do attend with your child/children so if the appointment time you are sent does not suit, please feel free to phone the clinic to arrange a more suitable time, phone **4716080**.

We are also encouraging children to be enrolled with our service from birth as research shows that children who have their first dental visit before their first birthday, have improved oral health outcomes. To enrol your child, phone the Community Oral Health Service **0800 672543 (0800 oralhealth)**. This number is free to call from cell phones and landlines.

We look forward to working with you to help your child/children maintain healthy teeth and a happy smile.

Community Oral Health Service, Dental Team