

Oral Health Services Available to Newcomers to Hamilton

City of Hamilton Public Health Services

October 14, 2016

Introduction

This document outlines the oral health services available to newcomers to Hamilton. Available oral health services are divided into two main sections based on type of eligibility criteria: **Refugee Status-Based**, and **Income-Based**. In addition to these two key variables which determine eligibility for programs, the age of the client is a third key determinant of eligibility for some programs. Some programs provide dental services in specific locations only, while others provide coverage at a dentist of the prospective client's choice (the dental service provider must be registered with the program benefit payer to receive reimbursement for services provided). Location, eligibility and specific dental services covered by particular programs are described where such information is available.

Following the description of oral health services available to newcomers to Hamilton, **Service Gaps Identified in Newcomer Oral Health Services in Hamilton** noted during the compiling of this document are described.

Last, a **Newcomer Oral Health Services in Hamilton Navigation Tool** is supplied to help health care providers determine the most suitable dental health service for their eligible Hamilton newcomer patients. Health care providers using the navigation tool are directed to look to the corresponding program description in the body of this report for more details regarding eligibility and services available for particular programs.

Refugee Status-Based and Income-Based Oral Health Services in Hamilton

REFUGEE STATUS-BASED

Coverage tied to a specific dental clinic

Pro bono or reduced rate dental services at private community clinics

For a limited time, some private community dental clinics may provide services at no or reduced costs to specific newcomer populations, at their discretion.

For example:

The Tooth Corner

521 Hwy 8

Unit #3

Stoney Creek ON, L8G 1G4

For more details, see toothcorner.com or call 905-664-3358.

The Tooth Corner, which opened a Stoney Creek office on April 4, 2016, has established a dedicated toll-free line (1-888-22-SYRIA) with Arabic-speaking staff. It has organized Syrian refugee days at some of its offices, providing dental care and transportation for 10 to 20 refugees at each session.¹ The duration of the availability of this special program is unclear.

Lily Dental

1451 Main St E

Hamilton, ON, L8K

For more details, call 905-548-9991.

Lily Dental offers reduced rate dental services to Hamilton newcomer populations.

Jackson Square Dental Centre

2 King Street West

Hamilton, Ontario

L8P 1A1

For more details, call 905-524-2976 or e-mail jacksonsqaredental@gmail.com.

Jackson Square Dental Centre offers reduced rate dental services to Hamilton newcomer populations.

Urban Core Community Oral Health Program

Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre
71 Rebecca Street
Hamilton, ON
L8R 1B6

Eligibility

Eligible clients are those who identify experiencing barriers (e.g. financial, language) to accessing oral health services in the community and complete an intake appointment. Special accommodations are in place to address needs for Syrian newcomers.

Note: Refugee status or recent immigration are not required to be eligible for services. Low income and experiences of financial barriers to accessing oral health services in the community are sufficient to be eligible, for instance.

Dental services provided

The Community Oral Health Program provides preventive dental services at no cost to the client, including: cleaning and polishing, oral health check-ups (e.g. counseling, referrals and follow-up), topical fluoridation, pit and fissure sealant, and application of desensitizing agents. These services are provided by an Arabic-speaking parodontal practitioner. The program does not provide emergency dental services or dental treatment.

How to Apply

Prospective clients should call 905-522-3233 to book an intake appointment at Urban Core.

Coverage not tied to a specific dental clinic – Federally funded program

Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP)

The IFHP reimburses community dental providers who are pre-registered with Medavie Blue Cross for covered services.

Eligibility

IFHP is available to resettled refugees, protected persons in Canada (e.g. those who have received a positive decision on their asylum claim or pre-removal risk assessment), refugee claimants, victims of human trafficking, and detainees under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*.²

Dental services provided

IFHP dental coverage provides for emergency care for dental conditions involving pain, infection or trauma. It does not provide on-going regular or routine dental care. The most recent update to the IFHP benefit information was on September 1, 2016.³

The IFHP benefits are limited to the services in the following table:

TREATMENT	PRE-AUTHORIZATION REQUIRED	CRITERIA or LIMITATIONS
Oral Exams	NO	Emergency examinations are covered no more than once every six months per dental office.
X-rays	NO	One panoramic radiograph limited to once per lifetime. Periapical and Bitewing radiographs to a maximum of 16 radiographs per lifetime (any combination). **X-rays must be clear, discernible and properly labelled. Digital X-rays are acceptable. Intraoral photographs in addition to X-rays are accepted but must be labelled with macros noted on teeth with decay.**
Caries, Trauma, Pain Control	NO	
Writing or Dispensing an Emergency Prescription	NO	
Amalgam/ Composite Restorations	YES	Covered for severely affected teeth. Incipient lesions or those not visible on an X-Ray are not covered. Restorations will be paid on a continuous surface basis only. Molar teeth are limited to the cost of an equivalent bonded or non-bonded amalgam restoration.
Extractions (simple/uncomplicated)	NO	Simple/uncomplicated extractions do not require pre-authorization. Limited to GP rate except for Oral Surgeons and Pedodontists.
Extractions (complicated)	YES	All complicated extractions require X-rays for justification. Limited to GP rate except for Oral Surgeons and Pedodontists.
Denture Relines	NO	Limited to one upper and one lower per lifetime (LT).
Complete and Partial Dentures	YES	Complete dentures are limited to one upper and one lower per lifetime (LT). Partial dentures are limited to one upper and one lower per lifetime (LT). Partial dentures to replace only posterior teeth are not covered. **All dentures, Complete and Partial, are limited to the cost of transitional denture(s).**
Denture Repairs	NO	Limited to one upper and one lower per lifetime (LT).

General Anaesthesia	YES	Limited to 4 units for children under age 13. Limited to 8 units for age 13 and over. Limited to GP rate
---------------------	-----	--

Dental care services not covered include:

- root canal treatments,
- orthodontics,
- intravenous sedation and nitrous oxide,
- prophylaxis and fluoride,
- facility fees,
- specialist fees (unless specially approved for Oral Surgeons and Pedodontists),
- restoration of incipient lesions or those not visible on an X-ray are considered routine care and will not be covered, and
- scaling and root planning.

How to apply

Eligible persons can apply online at <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/outside/arriving-healthcare/individuals/apply-how.asp>, or by mail, for IFHP.

INCOME-BASED

Coverage tied to a specific dental clinic

Dental Health Bus

Calendars describing locations and hours are available at <https://www.hamilton.ca/public-health/clinics-services/dental-health-bus>, or by calling 905-546-CITY (2489).

Eligibility

The dental health bus is a mobile outreach clinic that provides emergency dental services free of charge to residents of the City of Hamilton with limited finances and no form of dental coverage. The dental health bus is funded by the City of Hamilton. Clients may be required to show proof of residence in Hamilton. Although newcomers with IFHP coverage would technically be ineligible due to their possession of dental coverage, the dental health bus provides dental services to this group.

Dental services provided

Emergency dental services provided include x-rays, dental fillings, uncomplicated extractions or teeth removal, and antibiotics for dental infections. Eligible clients are referred from the dental health bus to oral surgeons for more complicated procedures, and to the Public Health Services Dental Clinic for preventive services.

How to apply

There is no application form for the dental health bus. Services are provided on a first-come, first-served basis, but higher urgency dental concerns are prioritized.

Public Health Services Dental Clinic

Public Health Services
Robert Thomson Building
110 King Street West, 3rd Floor
Hamilton, Ontario L8P 4S6
dentalclinic@hamilton.ca

Eligibility

The Public Health Services Dental Clinic provides free dental services to eligible clients. Eligible clients are Hamilton residents with low incomes and without dental insurance. A copy of a prospective client's most recent tax return is required to demonstrate low income, unless he or she is an unemployed dependent child. Hamilton residents approved by the Special Supports Program are not eligible for services through the Public Health Services Dental Clinic. Hamilton residents receiving Ontario Works are eligible for one course of dental cleanings per 12 months at the clinic.

The low income threshold used during screening for prospective adult clients for the Public Health Services Dental Clinic is the after-tax 2008 Canadian Low Income Cut-Off (LICO):

People in household	LICO Cut Off (annual income in \$)
1	22 171
2	27 601
3	33 393
4	41 198
5	46 727
6	52 669
≥7	58 673

Dental services provided

Services provided to eligible clients at the Public Health Services Dental Clinic include dental exams, x-rays, dental fillings, extractions or removal of teeth, and dental cleanings. Dentures are not provided at the clinic.

How to apply

Application forms are available at:

<https://d3fplf1m7bbt3.cloudfront.net/sites/default/files/media/browser/2014-12-12/phs-dental-clinic-application-form.pdf>. Applications must be reviewed and approved by Public Health Services prior to service provision. Approved clients are eligible for services for a one-year period, and must reapply annually if they wish to continue to receive services.

Public Health Services Preventive Dental Clinics

Location	Hours
East Children's Preventive Dental Clinic 247 Centennial Parkway North, Unit 8 Hamilton, Ontario	Tuesday and alternating Fridays 9 am to 12 noon 1 to 4 pm
Mountain Children's Preventive Dental Clinic 891 Upper James Street Hamilton, Ontario	Thursday and alternating Fridays 9 am to 12 noon 1 to 4 pm
Public Health Services Dental Clinic Robert Thomson Building 110 King Street West, 3rd Floor Hamilton, Ontario	Children with coverage from Healthy Smiles Ontario can access the Public Health Services Dental Clinic for their preventive services at any time

Eligibility

The Public Health Services Preventive Dental Clinics provide free dental hygiene services to Hamilton children and youth with low income. Children <18 years of age automatically qualify for clinic services if they have already obtained coverage through Healthy Smiles Ontario. If children from low-income families are not already enrolled in the Healthy Smiles Ontario program, they can be screened for the financial criteria of the Preventive Services Only Stream of Healthy Smiles Ontario at the Public Health Services Preventive Dental Clinics:

The child/family would suffer “financial hardship” if providing the necessary emergency and/or essential dental services would result in any one of the following:

- Inability to pay rent/mortgage if dental treatment is sought; and/or
- Inability to pay for household bills if dental treatment is sought; and/or
- Inability to buy groceries for the family if dental treatment is sought; and/or
- The family will be required to seek help from a food bank in order to provide food if dental treatment is sought.

Children meeting the above criteria can receive preventive services at the clinic.

Dental services provided

Services provided to eligible clients include dental screenings, teeth cleaning and scaling, fluoride treatments, and dental sealants.

How to apply

There is no application form for the Public Health Services Preventive Dental Clinics. Eligible clients with Health Smiles Ontario coverage may book appointments at the clinic directly. Children <18 years of age from low-income families who have not already qualified for Healthy Smiles Ontario can be screened for eligibility at Public Health Services Preventive Dental Clinics. Call 905-546-2424 ext. 3566 to book an appointment.

Urban Core Community Oral Health Program

Hamilton Urban Core Community Health Centre
71 Rebecca Street
Hamilton, ON
L8R 1B6
905-522-3233

Eligibility

Eligible clients are those who identify experiencing barriers (e.g. financial, language) to accessing oral health services in the community and complete an intake appointment. Special accommodations are in place to address needs for Syrian newcomers.

Note: Refugee status or recent immigration are not required to be eligible for services. Low income and experiences of financial barriers to accessing oral health services in the community are sufficient to be eligible, for instance.

Dental services provided

The Community Oral Health Program provides preventive dental services at no cost to the client, including: cleaning and polishing, oral health check-ups (e.g. counseling, referrals and follow-up), topical fluoridation, pit and fissure sealant, and application of desensitizing agents. These services are provided by an Arabic-speaking parodontal practitioner. The program does not provide emergency dental services or dental treatment.

How to Apply

Prospective clients should call 905-522-3233 to book an intake appointment at Urban Core.

Low Cost Dental Services for Adults and Children

The University of Toronto Faculty of Dentistry Clinic offers reduced-cost services provided by supervised student dentists. For more information, see <https://www.dentistry.utoronto.ca/patient-clinics/about>, or call 416-979-4927. The University of Western Ontario's Schulich Dental Clinic also offers reduced-cost services provided by supervised student dentists. For more information, see http://www.schulich.uwo.ca/dentistry/dental_clinics/index.html, or call 519-661-3326.

For reduced-cost services from a dental hygienist, some colleges with oral health education programs have reduced-cost oral hygiene clinics with services provided by supervised dental hygiene students. In the Hamilton area this is available at the Southern Ontario Dental College (formerly the Ontario Dental Education Institute) Public Clinic in Ancaster. For more information, see <http://www.sodentalcollege.com/Institution/clients.html>, or call 905-304-4706.

Coverage not tied to a specific dental clinic – City of Hamilton funded program

Special Supports Program

Eligibility

The Special Supports Program provides free dental services to eligible clients at a dentist of their choice. A Special Supports Dental Approval Letter must be provided by clients to their dentist to receive covered services.

The following are not eligible for Special Support Funding: sponsored immigrants; persons with refugee status and covered under other programs; self-employed persons; and persons residing in homes for special care, hospital, or chronic or long-term care facilities.

The following table describes eligibility criteria and how to apply for and receive benefits for eligible persons:

Requirements	Eligibility	How to Receive Benefits
Children (<18 years of age) who receive or whose parents receive Ontario Works (OW), Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), or Assistance for Children with Severe Disability (ACSD)	Children are automatically enrolled into Healthy Smiles Ontario when they or their family receive OW, ODSP, or ACSD	Eligible children will have received a Healthy Smiles Ontario dental card and information about the program in the mail before January 2016. The HSO dental card can be presented to dental service providers for services.
Adults (≥18 years of age) receiving OW (applicants, spouses and dependents)	Adults receiving OW are eligible for emergency dental treatments and dentures through OW	A Dental Benefit Eligibility Card for the month of treatment must be provided to the care provider, which is sent to the client monthly with the OW cheque or direct banking deposit statement.

		Denture predeterminations must be sent to the Special Supports Program for approval.
Adult (≥18 years of age) ODSP applicants and spouses	ODSP client dental services are covered under the Ministry of Community and Social Services Fee Guide	A dental card for the month of treatment must be provided to the care provider, which is sent to the client monthly with their ODSP assistance. Clients and dentists can call 905-521-7280 to speak with the client’s ODSP Case Manager for more information.
Low income seniors ≥65 years of age, low income adults 18-64 years of age, and ODSP dependent adults ≥18 years of age	Eligibility for the Special Supports dental program is determined based on a ‘needs test’ which considers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income - Canada Pension Plan (CPP), Old Age Security (OAS) other earnings, pensions, etc. • Assets - cash, bank accounts, Registered Retirement Saving Plans (RRSP), stocks, bonds, secondary property, etc. • Allowable living expenses - rent/mortgage, utilities, etc. • Family Size • Dental services requested 	Phone Special Supports at 905-546-2590 for more information. The Special Supports application form is available at: https://www.hamilton.ca/social-services/support-programs/special-supports-program . ODSP dependent adults do not need to apply to determine eligibility, and can contact the program for an Approval Letter for covered services. An Approval Letter is provided to eligible clients to present to dentists for covered dental services. Denture predeterminations must be sent (in addition to the application form if the client is not an ODSP dependent adult) to the Special Supports Program for approval.

Services provided

Services covered by the Special Supports Program are described in full in the Ontario Works Adult, Low Income, ODSP Adult Dependent Discretionary Adult Emergency Dental Treatment Plan Schedule of Benefits and Fees.⁴ Items that may be covered (see Schedule of Benefits for criteria, restrictions, and limitations) include: examinations, x-rays, fillings, restorations, root canals (anterior teeth), extractions, some surgeries, general anesthesia, sedation, and dentures. Items that are not covered include: cleaning and scaling, root canals (posterior teeth), crowns and bridges, and orthodontics of any kind.

Under this plan, dentists can treat eligible clients for the maximum of three symptomatic teeth per emergency visit (any combination of fillings, root canals on the anterior teeth only (1.3-2.3) and/or extractions) without pre-authorization. The plan is limited to four emergency or treatment visits per 12

month calendar period. Pre-authorization is required for any further treatment (plan-covered services only) deemed necessary beyond these four emergency visits.

How to apply

Call 905-546-2590 or visit <https://www.hamilton.ca/social-services/support-programs/dental-denture-services> for more information, and <https://www.hamilton.ca/social-services/support-programs/special-supports-program> for application forms.

Coverage not tied to a specific dental clinic – Province of Ontario funded program

Healthy Smiles Ontario

On January 1, 2016, the following six publicly funded dental programs were combined into the new Healthy Smiles Ontario program:

- dental benefits for children under Ontario Works,
- dental benefits for children under the Ontario Disability Support Program,
- dental benefits for children under the Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities program,
- the Children In Need Of Treatment program,
- the Healthy Smiles Ontario program, and
- preventive oral health services provided by local public health units.

Healthy Smiles Ontario provides free dental care for eligible children and youth aged 17 and under.

Healthy Smiles Ontario has three streams:

1. the **Core Services Stream**,
2. the **Emergency and Essential Services Stream**, and
3. the **Preventive Services Only Stream** (delivered through Public Health Unit clinics).

The Healthy Smiles Ontario Schedule of Dental Services and Fees for Dentist Providers details the full basket of dentist services covered by the Healthy Smiles Ontario program.⁵ The Healthy Smiles Ontario Schedule of Services and Fees for Non-Dentist Providers describes the services provided by dental hygienists, denturists, and physician anesthetists covered by the Healthy Smiles Ontario program.⁶

Eligibility and how to apply

Healthy Smiles Ontario Core Services Stream⁷

Children and youth meeting the following criteria are eligible for the **Core Services Stream**:

- 17 years of age or younger, and
- Resident of Ontario, and
- Adjusted Family Net Income (AFNI) at or below the level at which they would qualify for at least 90% of the maximum Ontario Child Benefit.

- 1 dependent child in household: AFNI ≤\$22 070
- 2 or more dependent children in household: AFNI ≤\$22 070 for first dependent child + \$1670 per additional dependent child⁷

Children receiving financial assistance or health benefits under Ontario Works, or the Ontario Disability Support Program, or Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities, are automatically enrolled in HSO starting January 1, 2016. The benefit period is standardized – August 1st to July 31st.

Applications to the Core Services Stream can be obtained at <http://www.ontario.ca/healthysmiles> and submitted online or mailed (see website for details).

Healthy Smiles Ontario Emergency and Essential Services Stream⁷

Children and youth meeting the following criteria are eligible for the **Emergency and Essential Services Stream**:

- 17 years of age or younger, and
- Resident of Ontario, and
- Meet both clinical and financial eligibility criteria (see below).

Clinical Eligibility for the Emergency and Essential Services Stream:

A child/youth is identified with an emergency or essential dental condition, where:

Emergency: The patient presents with pain, infection, haemorrhage, trauma, lost restorations or pathology.

AND/OR

Essential: The patient presents with trauma, lost restorations, caries into the dentine, periodontal conditions, or pathology that, without treatment, will lead to haemorrhage, pain or infection.

The table below defines terms used in the clinical eligibility criteria:

Pain is defined as a condition(s) which is/are presently causing pain or has/have caused pain in the week immediately preceding
Infection is defined as abscesses or swellings, and/or acute gingival conditions requiring immediate attention (e.g. necrotizing ulcerative gingivitis and any suppurative gingival conditions that would cause abnormal or extreme gingival conditions)
Haemorrhage is defined as a sudden or serious loss of blood associated with trauma or accidents
Trauma is defined as injury to hard or soft tissues
Under this program, caries is defined as open carious lesions into the dentine, and if left untreated, the child might be deemed to be in a state of dental neglect and thus eligible for referral to a Children’s Aid Society under the <i>Child and Family Services Act</i> . The lesions should be obvious enough that the parent or guardian can readily see them
Periodontal conditions are defined as conditions of the periodontium (gingiva and/or bone) structures which are not reversible by adequate oral hygiene, and require clinical instrumentation or treatment

Pathology is defined as any specific pathological condition of the hard or soft tissues where further investigation is recommended; or developmental anomalies or pathology of a potentially serious nature

Financial Eligibility for the **Emergency and Essential Services Stream**:

The child/family's income is equivalent to a level at which they would be in receipt of the Ontario Child Benefit:

OR

The child/family would suffer "financial hardship" if providing the necessary emergency and/or essential dental services would result in any one of the following:

- Inability to pay rent/mortgage if dental treatment is sought; and/or
- Inability to pay for household bills if dental treatment is sought; and/or
- Inability to buy groceries for the family if dental treatment is sought; and/or
- The family will be required to seek help from a food bank in order to provide food if dental treatment is sought.

To apply for the Emergency and Essential Services Stream, a child and/or youth must meet clinical and financial hardship criteria (defined above), which will be assessed in most cases, by the local Public Health Unit (PHU).

Families, and/or youth applying on their own behalf, can apply for the Emergency and Essential Services Stream either through a public health unit or at a dental provider's office. PHUs and/or providers are asked to assess the child/youth for clinical eligibility and to assist the child/youth and/or family to complete and sign the Emergency and Essential Services Stream application form (available at: <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/dental/>), which includes attesting to financial hardship, and submit it to the Program Administrator.

Eligibility is assessed and confirmed by the Program Administrator as quickly as possible. Application forms submitted that do not require any clarification or additional information will be processed within 15 minutes when received by fax during Accerta's Contact Centre business hours (Monday to Friday 8am-8pm). The provider may proceed with treatment once enrolment has been confirmed by fax or telephone to the provider. An HSO dental card will be mailed to the client.

Under the Emergency and Essential Services Stream, children and youth will have access to services for 12 months from the date of enrolment.

Dental services covered for eligible clients in the Core Services and Emergency and Essential Services Streams

Clients deemed eligible for the Core Services or Emergency and Essential Services Streams are eligible for the full basket of dental services covered by the Healthy Smiles Ontario program. This basket includes⁸, but is not limited to:

Examinations and assessments

Examinations/assessments enable dental providers to determine the health of the mouth and to screen for signs of disease.

Type of exam	Frequency of coverage
First Dental Visit	Any child age 3 and under will be covered for their first dental visit
New Patient Exam	1 per 5 years
Recall (check-up) Exam	1 per 6 months
Specific Exam)	1 per 12 months
Emergency Exam	Unlimited

X-rays (radiographs)

Dental providers use x-rays to diagnose cavities or infection.

Type of X-ray	Frequency of coverage
Periapical	Up to 8 per 12 months
Bitewing (to diagnose cavities)	Up to 2 per 6 months
Occlusal	1 per 12 months
Panoramic	1 per 24 months

*required x-rays are always covered in emergency situations.

Preventive services

Preventive services help prevent cavities and gum disease.

Service	Frequency of coverage
Polishing	Up to 2 times per year
Fluoride	Up to 4 times per year
Sealants	Limited to permanent (adult) molars
Scaling (cleanings)	For children 11 years and younger, up to 15 minutes per year. For children 12-17 years of age, up to 30 minutes per year. *A child/youth may be eligible for more time if a dental provider determines it is needed

Restorative services

Restorative services repair broken teeth or teeth that have cavities.

Service	Frequency of coverage
Temporary Fillings	Unlimited
Permanent Fillings	There are some age restrictions for primary (baby) teeth—ask your dental provider.
Crowns (caps)	Some types of crowns are only covered for permanent (adult) teeth in special circumstances—ask your dental provider.

Endodontic services

Endodontic services treat infections and relieve pain.
Root canals are one of the most common endodontic services.

Service	Frequency of coverage
Root canals	There are some age restrictions for primary (baby) teeth—ask your dental provider. Only covered once per tooth.

Periodontal services

Periodontal services treat gum conditions, including gum disease and conditions resulting from certain medical treatments or medications.

Service	Frequency of coverage
Periodontal surgery (gum surgery)	Depending on the type of surgery, there may be limitations—ask your dental provider.

Prosthodontic services

Prosthodontic services replace missing teeth.

Service	Frequency of coverage
Dentures	Some types of dentures are only covered for permanent (adult) teeth—ask your dental provider.
Bridges	Only for the replacement of permanent (adult) front teeth.

Oral surgery services

Oral surgery services include removing teeth or any abnormal tissue in the mouth.

Service	Frequency of coverage
Extractions	Unlimited

Anaesthesia

Anaesthesia services help to relax patients or put them to sleep during a dental procedure so that they do not feel any pain or discomfort.

Service	Frequency of coverage
Unconscious or conscious sedation (patient is fully asleep or awake)	From 15 minutes to 2.5 hours per 12 months (depending on the type and amount of dental treatment needed). *A child/youth may be eligible for more time if a dental provider determines that it is needed

Healthy Smiles Ontario Preventive Services Only Stream⁷

Children and youth meeting the following criteria are eligible for the **Preventive Services Only Stream**:

- 17 years of age or younger, and
- Resident of Ontario, and
- Meet both clinical and financial eligibility criteria (as described in the *Healthy Smiles Ontario (HSO) Program Protocol, 2016*, or as current).

The Preventive Services Only Stream (PSO) is delivered through public health unit clinics only. Children are identified as being clinically eligible for the PSO Stream through public health unit screening

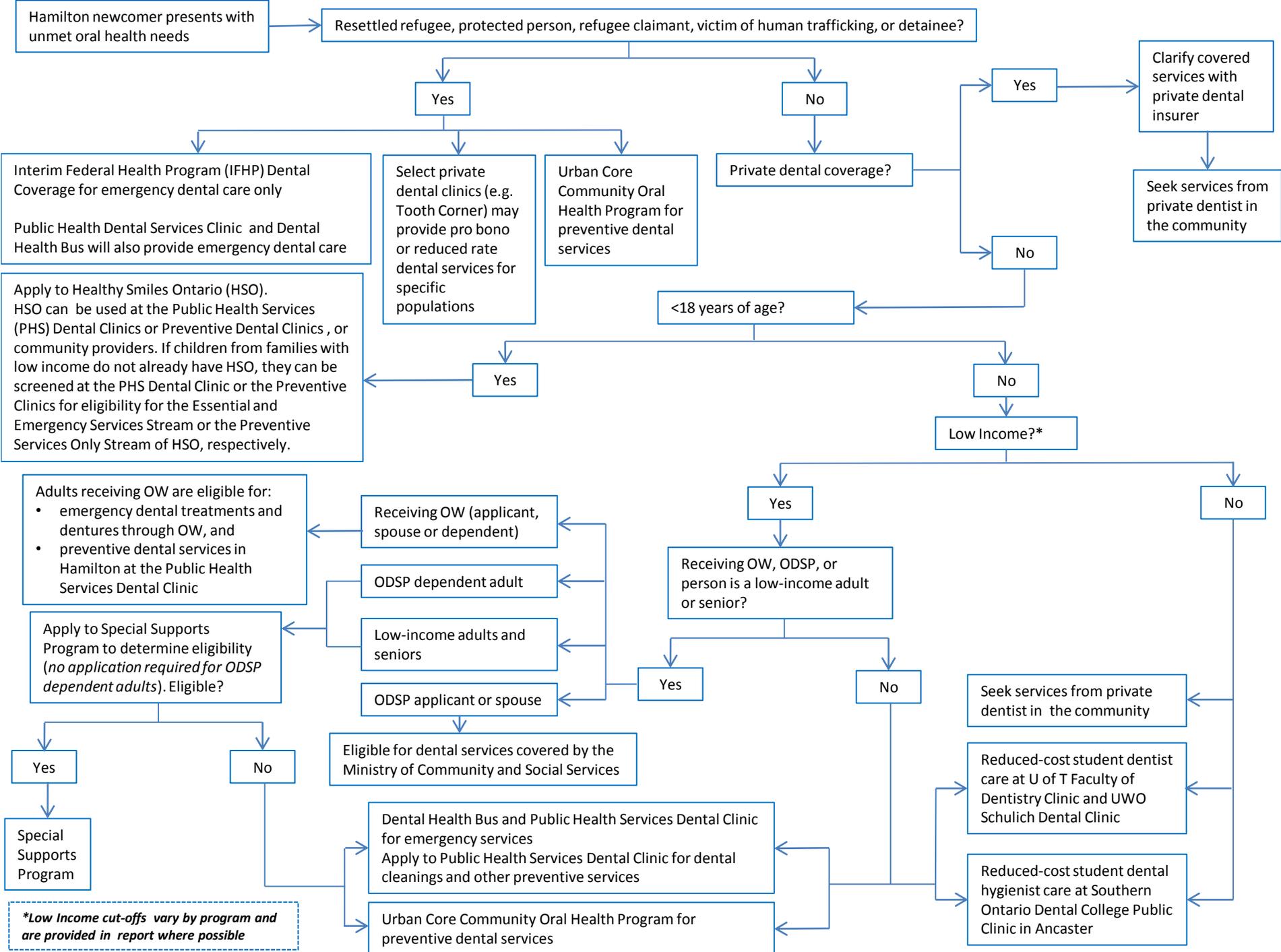
activities. Clinical eligibility criteria essentially require risk for dental disease; full criteria are available in the *Healthy Smiles Ontario (HSO) Program Protocol*.⁹ The financial screening criteria are the same as those described above for the Emergency and Essential Services Stream. Public health units will notify parents/guardians that their child is eligible and will assist with enrolment into the PSO stream. Only professionally applied topical fluoride, pit and fissure sealants, scaling, and interim stabilization therapy are covered under the PSO stream. PSO stream only clients are not eligible for the full basket of HSO services.

Service Gaps Identified in Newcomer Oral Health Services in Hamilton

The following gaps were identified in the current oral health services available to newcomers to Hamilton:

- **Possessing IFHP coverage may disqualify newcomers from more comprehensive dental service programs.** Newcomers with IFHP dental coverage are technically ineligible for other more comprehensive publicly funded dental programs.
 - IFHP offers a limited range of services and does not cover cleanings or preventive dental services.
 - Newcomers with IFHP have been permitted an exception to receive services at the Dental Health Bus and the Public Health Dental Services Clinic.
- **Income thresholds for public programs exclude many who cannot afford coverage.** Low income thresholds for eligibility for the Special Supports Program, Public Health Dental Services Clinic, Public Health Preventive Dental Services Clinics and the Healthy Smiles Ontario program (especially the Core Services Stream, the most comprehensive stream) exclude a significant subset of newcomers with low incomes and oral health needs.
- **Reduced rates for services at some private dental clinics may still be prohibitively costly for some clients.** Clients not meeting income thresholds for public programs may not be able to afford the reduced rate dental services offered by some private or academic clinics.
- **Only a few programs cover dentures.** Dentures are not provided at the Dental Health Bus, the Public Health Dental Services Clinic, or the Public Health Preventive Dental Services Clinics.
- **Root canal coverage is either very limited or not offered by the programs described.** Root canals for posterior teeth are not covered by any program, and only select programs cover root canals for anterior teeth.
- **More complicated dental services are generally not covered by the programs described.** With some exceptions, clients must pay for care provided after referrals to oral health specialists (e.g. oral surgeons). Also, clients with more complex medical needs may not be appropriate candidates for Public Health Dental Services.
- **Service access requires patients with poor mobility to leave their residences for care.** Most programs can only provide care to clients capable of leaving their residences.
- **Some dental providers are reluctant to provide services to clients with only IFHP or HSO coverage.** IFHP and HSO reimburse dental providers for services at lower rates than private dental insurers.

Newcomer Oral Health Services in Hamilton Navigation Tool



References

- ¹ Hamilton Community News. Dental firm the Tooth Corner expanding to Stoney Creek looks to help Syrian refugees [Internet]. Published 2016 April 8 [cited 2016 September 19]. Available from: <http://www.hamiltonnews.com/news-story/6457169-dental-firm-the-tooth-corner-expanding-to-stoney-creek-looks-to-help-syrian-refugees/>
- ² Government of Canada. Determine your eligibility – Interim Federal Health Program [Internet]. Ottawa, ON: Government of Canada; 2016 [cited 2016 September 19]. Available from: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/outside/arriving-healthcare/individuals/apply-who.asp>
- ³ Medavie Blue Cross. Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP) – Important information for all dental care providers [Internet]. Moncton, NB: Medavie Blue Cross, September 2016 [cited 2016 September 19]. Available from: <https://www.medavie.bluecross.ca/cs/BlobServer?blobcol=urldata&blobtable=MungoBlobs&blobheadervalue2=abinary%3B+charset%3DUTF-8&blobheadername2=MDT-Type&blobkey=id&blobwhere=1187213522445&blobheader=application%2Fpdf>
- ⁴ City of Hamilton. Ontario Works Adult Low Income, ODSP Adult Dependent Discretionary Adult Emergency Dental Treatment Plan Schedule of Benefits and Fees [Internet]. Hamilton, ON: City of Hamilton; 2016 [cited 2016 September 19]. Available from: <https://d3fpllf1m7btt3.cloudfront.net/sites/default/files/media/browser/2016-02-23/discretionary-adult-emergency-dental-treatment-plan-march12016.pdf>
- ⁵ Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Healthy Smiles Ontario schedule of dental services and fees for dentist providers [Internet]. Toronto, ON: Queen’s Printer for Ontario; 2016 [cited 2016 September 19]. Available from: http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/dental/docs/hso_services_fees_dentist.pdf
- ⁶ Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Healthy Smiles Ontario schedule of services and fees for non-dentist providers [Internet]. Toronto, ON: Queen’s Printer for Ontario; 2016 [cited 2016 September 19]. Available from: http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/dental/docs/hso_services_fees_nondentist.pdf
- ⁷ Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Healthy Smiles Ontario operational guide for dentist providers [Internet]. Toronto, ON: Queen’s Printer for Ontario; 2016 [cited 2016 September 19]. Available from: http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/dental/docs/HSO_Operational_Guide_for_Dental_Providers.pdf
- ⁸ Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Services covered by Healthy Smiles Ontario [Internet]. Toronto, ON: Queen’s Printer for Ontario; 2016 [cited 2016 September 19]. Available from: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/services-covered-by-healthy-smiles-ontario>
- ⁹ Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Healthy Smiles Ontario (HSO) Program Protocol, 2016 [Internet]. Toronto, ON: Queen’s Printer for Ontario; 2016 [cited 2016 September 19]. Available from: http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/oph_standards/docs/healthy_smiles_ontario.pdf