

DH calls on public to maintain oral health in support of World Oral Health Day and launches Primary Dental Co-care Pilot Scheme for Adolescents to promote lifelong tooth protection

On the occasion of World Oral Health Day, the Department of Health (DH) today (March 20) urged the public not to neglect the prevention of dental diseases in their daily lives, as managing one's own oral health is the most cost effective way to retain teeth and achieve oral and general health. In addition, the Primary Dental Co-care Pilot Scheme for Adolescents (PDCC) commenced its services today.

The World Dental Federation has designated March 20 of each year as World Oral Health Day, with this year's theme being "A Happy Mouth is a Happy Mind. Spread Happiness Everywhere." The DH's Oral Health Promotion Division (OHPD) has launched a new promotional video on its [YouTube channel](#) to encourage the public to maintain good oral health and to remind them of the importance of "Love Your Teeth, Check-ups Annually". By maintaining good preventive oral care, people can retain their teeth to a considerable extent in old age

"There is an intimate relationship between oral health and general health. Tooth decay and periodontal disease share many common risk factors as cardiovascular disease and diabetes. For example, smokers are more likely to develop cardiovascular and periodontal disease. To maintain good personal oral and general health, members of the public are encouraged to start with daily habits, such as toothbrushing and interdental cleaning thoroughly every day, having regular oral check-ups, maintaining a healthy eating habit, and refraining from smoking or drinking alcohol to minimise the risk of related diseases," said the Consultant in-charge, Dental Services of the DH, Dr Kitty Hse.

"The DH has carefully chosen this meaningful day to launch the PDCC today. Through the co-payment arrangement, the PDCC subsidises adolescents to seek dental check-ups at private dental clinics, thereby fostering their partnership with dentists to maintain a good habit of regular dental check-ups and prevent dental diseases," she added.

Eligible adolescents can receive subsidised services once every calendar year. While the Government provides a subsidy of \$200 each time, participants have to pay a co-payment fee as determined by the dentists they select. The co-payment for the subsidised services recommended by the Government is \$200 each time. Currently, there are around 270 registered dentists participating in the PDCC to provide services in over 370 service locations, where 67 per

cent of the co-payment amount has been set at \$200 or less and the minimum co-payment amount has been set at \$50 (as at March 19). The scope of subsidised services of the PDCC includes:

- i. Dental check-up;
- ii. Oral health risk assessment;
- iii. Dental scaling;
- iv. Personalised self-care advice on oral care;
- v. Fluoride application as risk-based follow-up; and
- vi. Check-up report.

To enhance the transparency of dental service fees other than the co-payment fee, the DH required dentists to disclose the fees for X-ray examinations, tooth fillings and tooth extractions as charged under the PDCC. All clinics participating in the PDCC will display the designated logo (see annex) outside their clinics or in visible areas for easy identification.

Adolescents aged between 13 and 17 (or will turn 13 in the calendar year when applying to join the PDCC) who hold a valid Hong Kong identity card and have registered for the [Electronic Health Record Sharing System](#) (eHealth) are eligible to join the PDCC. For details, please visit the DH's [thematic website](#) and promotional video clips. Participants may check [the list of registered dentists participating in the PDCC](#) and contact the relevant clinic to make an appointment. The list also sets out information about the dentists, such as addresses, telephone numbers, professional qualifications and co-payment fees.

Adolescents participating in the PDCC and their parents can check their relevant records, including the date of the consultation and the co-payment amount, through the eHealth mobile application (eHealth App). Later this year, they will also be able to access their electronic oral health records and oral care advice from the dentists through the eHealth App to better understand and monitor their own dental health.

Dr Hse emphasised that receiving preventive dental services is more effective in safeguarding oral health and more cost-effective than paying for curative dental services later. For more information about oral health and the PDCC, please visit the [OHPD's website](#), the [Facebook fan page](#) of "龅牙™ Love Teeth HK", the [YouTube channel](#) and the [PDCC website](#). The DH has issued letters through the Education Bureau to all secondary school students and parents in Hong Kong to introduce the PDCC, and has promoted the PDCC to targeted students at the Student Health Service Centres and School Dental Clinics.