



**Northwestern  
Health Unit**

[www.nwhu.on.ca](http://www.nwhu.on.ca)

For Immediate Release

December 8, 2011

### **Healthy Smiles Ontario Mobile Dental Office Completes Fort Frances Visit**

The Northwestern Health Unit's new Healthy Smiles Ontario mobile dental van rolled into Fort Frances in September, bringing smiles galore. Under the new Healthy Smiles Ontario program, children 17 years and under who met the program's eligibility requirements received dental treatment.

The Northwestern Health Unit negotiated a special pilot project status for the Healthy Smiles Ontario program, as a result services can also be provided to individuals who receive benefits under Ontario Works (OW), Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP), Children in Need of Treatment (CINOT) and the Federal Non-Insured Health Programs (NIHB).

The community of Rainy River is the next planned stop for the mobile dental van, and dental services started this week.

The 33 foot-long "smile mobile" is a fully equipped dental facility fitted with a dental chair, x-ray and sterilizing equipment and other features, making it a dental office on wheels. It is also wheel-chair accessible.

Dr. James Arthurs, Medical Officer of Health, stated, "We are pleased to be able to offer a high standard of dental services through this state-of-the-art mobile dental office to eligible children of the area. As we travel throughout the region, we feel this will bring much-needed preventive and treatment services to people who have previously had problems accessing care due to the difficult geographic circumstances of northern Ontario."

Many area children do not have access to basic dental care, and dental decay is one of the most common chronic childhood diseases. With the implementation of the mobile dental office, eligible clients will be able to receive a range of dental treatment that will help reduce the risk of serious dental health problems in the future.

The dental van will be in the community of Rainy River commencing December 7, 2011. To find out if you are eligible to access the dental services, call 1-855-40SMILE or visit the Northwestern Health Unit's website at [www.nwhu.on.ca](http://www.nwhu.on.ca).

-30-

For more information:

Dawn Sauvé, Program Manager Dental Health

Northwestern Health Unit

(807) 223-3301 ext. 231

(888) 404-4231 (toll-free)