

# MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

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## Canadian Dental Care Plan – an important program locally

The Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP) is a federal program currently offering dental care to eligible:

- children under 18 years old,
- seniors aged 65 and older, and
- people with disabilities who do not have dental insurance.

The federal government is set to expand the program to include people ages 18 to 64 in May. With this expansion, 6,350 people will become eligible making a total of 18,000 people in our region eligible for the CDCP. The program is accessible locally with 80% of dental care providers accepting CDCP clients. “We know dental care is expensive and the CDCP helps people stay healthy and out of pain. The upcoming expansion of the program is greatly needed in our area,” says Dr. Kit Young Hoon, Medical Officer of Health at Northwestern Health Unit (NWHU).

Statistics show that there is a high need for the CDCP in northwestern Ontario. The area’s tooth decay rates are twice the provincial average and emergency room visits for dental issues are nearly three times higher than Ontario’s rate.

In 2022, there were 791 ER visits for dental problems in the area, each costing at least \$513 per visit. Furthermore, many ER visits for dental problems offer only temporary relief, leading to repeat visits and higher costs for the healthcare system. The CDCP increases access to dental care, supporting positive oral health and preventing ER visits.

The CDCP expansion comes at a critical time for local residents. With funding from the Green Door Project (an emergency dental care program) ending in 2024, many working adults are now without dental care access. The full rollout of the CDCP can help provide care to adults who qualify, filling a critical gap in care.

For more information on the CDCP, visit: <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/dental/dental-care-plan.html>

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