



GAUTENG PROVINCE

HEALTH
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA ADVISORY

MONDAY, 18 MARCH 2024

GAUTENG HEALTH EXPANDS ACCESS TO ORAL HEALTH SERVICES THROUGH ADVOCACY

The World Health Organisation 2020 Report on Oral Health has stressed that oral diseases pose a major health burden for many countries and affect people throughout their lifetime causing pain, discomfort, disfigurement and even death. Most oral diseases and conditions include dental caries, periodontal disease, oral cancer, HIV-related oral manifestations, malocclusion, oro-facial trauma, cleft lip and palate etc.

In developing countries such as South Africa, most oral diseases like dental caries, periodontal disease and tooth loss are associated with socio-economic status and daily living conditions which are directly linked to family income, educational attainment, employment status, housing, physical health, and mental health.

Children from previously disadvantaged communities are more vulnerable to oral health-related diseases. In Gauteng, over 60% of primary school children suffer from dental caries. More concerning is that over 80% of these children remain untreated for the disease due to the overburdened oral health system and poor health-seeking behaviour.

In an effort to expand access to oral health services at a school level, the Gauteng departments of Health and Education have joined hands with the Health Professions Council of South Africa, through the Professional Boards for Medical and Dental and the Dental Assisting, Dental Therapy and Oral Hygiene and the South African Dental Association to commemorate World Oral Health Day. Health professionals will conduct health education and awareness and oral screening of the learners.

Members of the media are invited to cover the event.

Details are as follows:

Date: Tuesday, 19 March 2024
Time: 09:00 – 15:00
Venue: Thusong Primary School, Kagiso, West Rand Health District.

The World Oral Health Day is observed on the 20th of March every year, with the aim to empower people with the knowledge, tools, and confidence to ensure good oral health. This year the theme is “A Happy Mouth is a Happy Body”.

Ends/

Issued by the Gauteng Department of Health

Motalatale Modiba, Head of Communication: 064 803 0808 or healthmediaenquiries@gauteng.gov.za	Tshepo Shawa, Spokesperson for the MEC for Health: 072 222 6333 or Tshepo.Shawa@gauteng.gov.za
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