



DEC 13 2017

MR. SHANE THOMPSON  
MLA, NAHENDEH

**Oral Question 11-18(3): Dental Therapists**

This letter is in response to the oral question you raised on October 17, 2017 regarding Dental Therapists.

The goal of the Oral Health Initiative is to ensure oral health preventive programming and services being delivered are evidence-based and appropriately supported by the health and social services system.

The Department of Health and Social Services (Department) has been working with the Health and Social Services Authorities to update the Oral Health Program, to focus on preventive services delivered by an integrated oral health preventive health team.

This aligns with research which identifies that in order to ensure early preventive interventions are provided in an equitable manner, it is essential that delivery of oral health preventive activities are integrated through existing general health and wellness activities and community-based programming.

The NWT Oral Health Program provides four points of focused preventive interventions aimed at improving oral health outcomes in Northwest Territories (NWT) children and youth:

1. Prenatal Oral Health Services;
2. Early Childhood Oral Health Services;
3. School-based Oral Health Services; and,
4. Preventive Services.

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As part of the NWT Oral Health Program, standards are being developed for the delivery of oral health preventative services. The standards will define the core functions to be delivered by primary health care providers and oral health preventive service providers (dental hygienists/therapists); and guide the development of job descriptions for oral health preventive services providers within the integrated team setting. The integrated team includes: dental therapists, dental hygienists, community health nurses and community health representatives, working closely with the contracted dental professionals who visit communities on a regular basis. The size of the team located in the community will be according to the needs of the community.

Thank you.



Glen Abernethy  
Minister of Health and Social Services

c Mr. Tim Mercer  
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. David Hastings  
Legislative Coordinator  
Executive and Indigenous Affairs