

Newsletter

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Nnuku Banda

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Dear Friend,

On 21st November we held the 2nd Oral Health Conference in Cape Town. One thing that became clear from the conference was the unexpected far-reaching benefits of the supervised tooth brushing programme in the township of Khayelitsha, Cape Town. Not only has the oral health of children participating in the programme improved, but so has the self-esteem and wellbeing of the teachers leading the programme. This has positive benefits for the individuals and the community as a whole.

The conference was an opportunity for all teachers to share their experiences of the programme. I was touched when listening to their personal accounts and there was so much energy in the room, with a strong desire to strengthen the programme and spread it further across the region.

In April 2014 we visited Cape Town to check how our projects are progressing. I was able to meet with Mavis, our Township Tooth Fairy, who is teaching over 100 children about how to brush their teeth at after school clubs - a true inspiration.

Together with your support, we can make this happen!

Best wishes,

Dr Linda Greenwall, Founder — Dental Wellness Trust



IADR Outreach event

On 24/25 June the Dental Wellness Trust is working with the University of the Western Cape, Afrika Tikkun and Colgate to hold outreach events to coincide with the Cape Town IADR General Assembly.

Delegates at the event will go to Khayelitsha township and visit our projects before putting their skills to use by screening and treating children.

Visit the www.iadr.org or contact info@dentalwellnesstrust.org for more details.



Supervised tooth brushing programme has far reaching benefits

Over the last year 600 children have been taking part in the Dental Wellness Trust supervised tooth brushing programme in Khayelitsha, Cape Town. The programme is aimed at school children between the ages of 4-6 years old and teaches them how to brush and look after their teeth. Training for the teachers who supervise the programme has been coordinated together with Ikamva Labantu, an established South African charity which has experience of working with local communities.

There is a strong need for education about oral health in Khayelitsha where access to proper dental treatment is limited. Khayelitsha is one of the largest townships in Cape Town, where the oral health is low, and many people have little knowledge of basic oral hygiene. Both the children and adults suffer from severe tooth decay.

In November we held a conference for all teachers, trainers and healthcare workers to evaluate the progress of the programme. We received very positive feedback, and are now looking at how to expand the programme in the region.



DWT donates thousands of toothbrushes to the homeless

For the second year running, the Dental Wellness Trust teamed up with the Dental Directory to help improve the lives of homeless people in the UK. Throughout the year, the charity Crisis prevents or reduces levels of homelessness through education, employment, housing and health and wellbeing services. In partnership with the Dental Directory, the DWT donated hundreds of toothbrushes to Crisis at Christmas, ensuring that every visitor over the festive period received a toothbrush.

Leslie Morphy, Chief Executive of Crisis, said: *“Your generosity made a real difference to so many lives, and, with your continued support, we can together end homelessness...please extend our thanks to everyone at Dental Wellness Trust for their help and understanding for the many thousands of people who have no home”*



Frederick Lambert has joined us in Cape Town. Here, he explains what inspired him to pursue a career in public dentistry...

During my senior year at the College of William and Mary, I was on track to attend Princeton University for graduate study in organic chemistry; however, prior to graduation, I made the decision to defer graduate school for a year and return to Cape Town to explore the impact of science abroad and immerse myself in a community far removed from my own. Though I enjoyed research, I missed the human connection that comes with working directly with people.

While studying for a semester at the University of Cape Town, I discovered my interest in community service and health care. I was involved in two community service projects in the townships including working as a medical volunteer at mobile clinics in the townships.

I immediately appreciated dentistry's marriage of health care and artistry. It combines the treatment and diagnosis of disease with highly technical, hands-on procedures reminiscent of organic chemistry research. The strong connection between oral health and overall health was immediately apparent. I witnessed the detrimental effects of diseases such as AIDS and tuberculosis on oral health. Learning how to treat such cases and the response from the patients themselves was immensely rewarding.

In December 2013 I was accepted to the Harvard School of Dental DMD programme and was awarded a Master of Arts in chemistry from Princeton University. After leaving Princeton I decided to spend time prior to attending Harvard working as a volunteer intern in Cape Town for the Dental Wellness Trust. I was impressed by the powerful work that they have done in Khayelitsha working to develop preventative oral health programmes for school children. Additionally the DWT's research projects will provide both qualitative and quantitative information with regard to the effectiveness of the preventative oral healthcare programmes implemented. The opportunity to gain experience in both dental public health research and implementation of oral healthcare programmes in underserved communities is invaluable in shaping my career.



Visit to Cape Town, April 2014

In April Dr Linda Greenwall and Dr Alon Livny travelled to visit our projects in Cape Town.

Highlights included screening children and adults as part of the Rotary Family Health Days, training teachers in how to supervise tooth brushing and visiting Mavis Phahlindlela.



Inspired by our work in schools, Mavis started her own evening Live Smart health clubs. Over 100 children attend the clubs every day and Mavis teaches the children how to wash their hands, brush their teeth and how to stay safe in the township.

You can watch a video of the teacher training session at youtube.com/dentalwellnesstrust





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The Dental Wellness Trust is a London-based registered charity promoting dental wellness to less fortunate communities in the UK and abroad.

At the forefront of our work is the promotion of oral health, which is integral to one's general health and quality of life.

Registered Charity 1145361
Registered Company 7667384

Mega Molars, Luton



For the second year running, we are helping young dentists with education programmes for children in Luton. We will teach them about oral health and why they need to brush their teeth.

On 19 June and 3 July, we will be supporting the Mega Molars programme at 2 primary schools. If you would like to volunteer, get in touch with the DWT.

Fundraising Dinner - book your tickets now!

We are holding *The President's Dinner* in honour of the late Nelson Mandela.

The Dental Wellness Trust's fundraising dinner will be taking place at the prestigious surroundings of the Royal College of Surgeons, Lincoln's Inn Fields on Thursday 10th July. The dinner is being held to raise funds for our projects in South Africa.

Tickets cost £85 per person. This covers the cost of food and drink. There will be entertainment and special guests, as well as a silent auction. There is also an option of sponsoring a table for 10 people for £1000, which includes an advert in the dinner brochure.

Nelson Mandela shared our commitment to education for all. If you would like to book a ticket for this special evening, contact DWTdinner@dentalwellnesstrust.org.



Lulama Sigasane receiving a special award from Dr Linda Greenwall, recognising her valuable contribution and dedication to the promotion of wellness through oral health, through the supervised tooth brushing programme in Cape Town.



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Events

19 June - Mega Molars school visit, Luton
24/25 June - IADR Outreach Days, Cape Town
3 July - Mega Molars school visit, Luton
10 July - DWT Fundraiser: The President's Dinner, London