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Commission Establishes Program to Enhance Children's Dental Health

Children and Families Commission to Assist with Funding for a Pediatric Dental Residency Program in Orange County

IRVINE – As part of the Children and Families Commission of Orange County's goal of increasing access to children's dental services in Orange County, today the Commission approved funding guidelines that will assist resident dentists who provide service to children up to age 5. The program will focus on working with pediatric dentists and dental anesthesiologists from local dental school programs such as USC, UCLA and Loma Linda University.

"As part of our children's dental initiative in Orange County, we are pleased to be able to increase access to dental health practitioners to the county's children. With the Pediatric Dental Residency program we will increase the number of children being examined and treated by pediatric dentists," said Sally Snyder, Chair of the Children and Families Commission of Orange County.

The program will be administered by *Healthy Smiles for Kids of Orange County* and provide resident pediatric dentists with loan re-payment assistance. Full-time resident participants can earn up to \$30,000 per year in tuition loan assistance which will be paid directly to their lender. A per deim program was also created which will allow resident dentists who provided professional dental assistance, on an hourly basis, to be able to earn up to \$7,500 per year in loan re-payment assistance.

"In Orange County we value innovative approaches to providing health care to children. That is why we are so pleased to be able to partner with such prestigious dental schools and positively impact children's dental health, and create healthier smiles, for the children of Orange County," said Snyder.

The Children and Families Commission of Orange County oversees the allocation of funds from Proposition 10 that adds a 50-cent sales tax on tobacco products sold in California to fund education, health and child development programs for children from the prenatal stage to age five and their families. For more information, please visit www.occhildrenandfamilies.com.

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