

Victorian Prevention and Health Promotion Achievement Program for schools and early childhood education and care services

Consultation paper - Questions for **organisations**
currently working with schools and early childhood
education and care services

Consultation process

Written feedback should be submitted to claire.l.tobin@health.vic.gov.au by Friday 25 November 2011.

Information and insights gained during the consultation process will inform the development of the final Achievement Program model and criteria.

There are two sets of questions within the consultation package – one set for schools and early childhood education and care services and another set **for organisations** that currently work with these settings to promote health. Please ensure you are completing the questions appropriate to you. Both response templates can be found online at www.health.vic.gov.au/prevention/achievementprogram

About you

You do not need to complete this section if you do not wish to do so, however your responses will help us to identify emerging themes within stakeholder groups and obtain clarification or further input if necessary.

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Questions for **organisations** currently working with schools and early childhood education and care services

What work does your organisation do with schools and early childhood services to promote health?

In 2003-04 Dental Health Services Victoria (DHSV) introduced its flagship oral health promotion program *Smiles 4 Miles*.

Smiles 4 Miles is an Award Program for early childhood services that aims to influence the oral health practices of pre-school aged children and their families through a settings-based approach.

In 2011 the *Smiles 4 Miles* Award Program is available in 50 local government areas and is currently reaching 480 early childhood services and approximately 27,500 children across Victoria. Figure 1 below demonstrates the reach of the Award Program in kindergartens and figure 2 demonstrates the reach of the Award Program in childcare services.

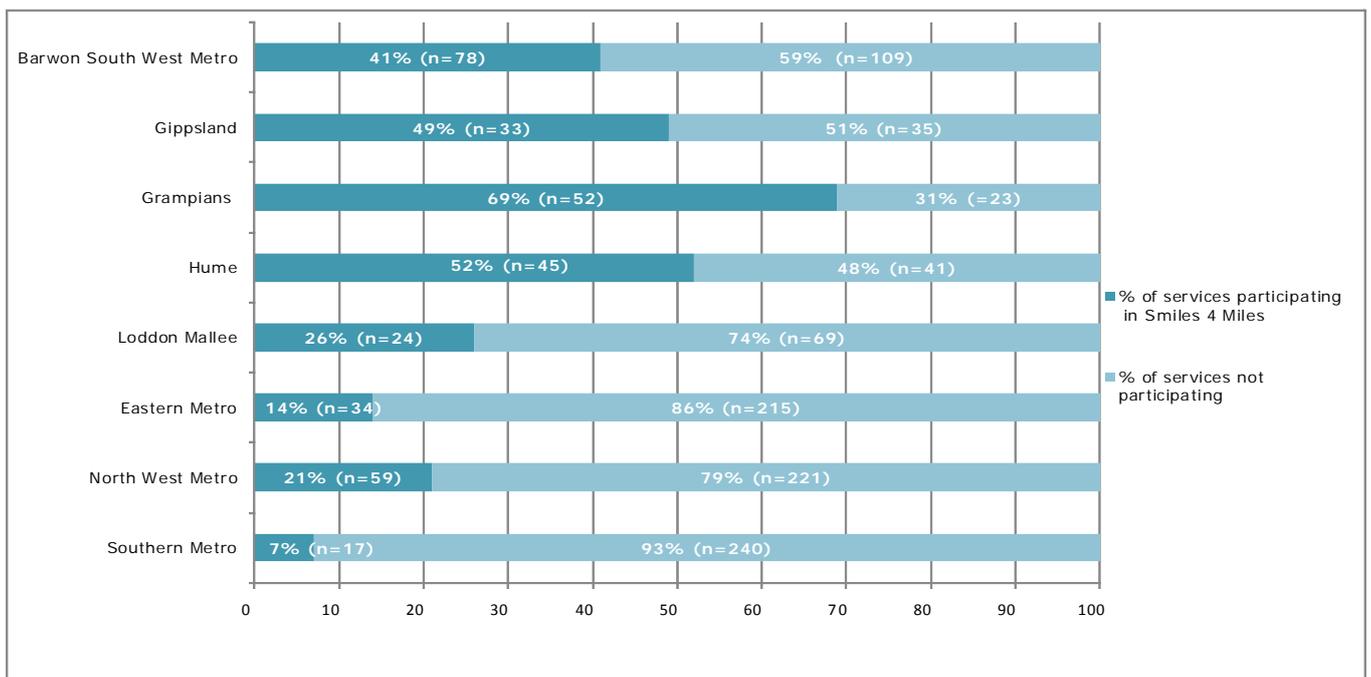


Figure 1: Reach of Smiles 4 Miles within kindergartens (%) per Department of Health region.

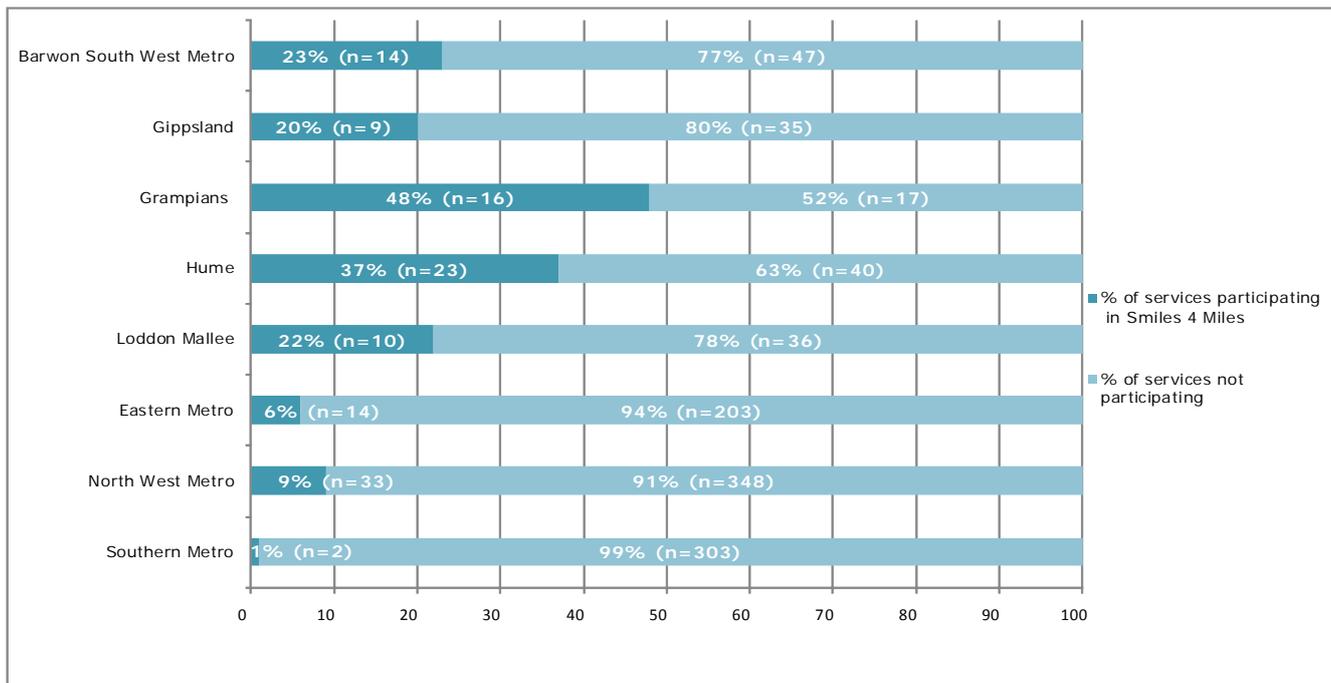


Figure 2: Reach of Smiles 4 Miles within child care centres (%) per Department of Health region.

The role of DHSV in the *Smiles 4 Miles* program is state-wide and centred on building local capacity through supporting, training and resourcing coordinators (locally-based health professionals) and on increasing participation in evidenced-informed oral health promotion through partnerships with community and health services, including community health centres, primary care partnerships and local councils.

At a community level, partner community and health services develop local oral health promotion plans, train and support staff in early childhood services to implement *Smiles 4 Miles* and advocate for inclusion of oral health within catchment plans.

Early childhood services deliver the *Smiles 4 Miles* Award program and work to meet the program's seven Award criteria annually. For early childhood services to obtain the *Smiles 4 Miles* Award, the following criteria must be fulfilled:

- ◆ Early childhood survey, which provides baseline information and demonstrates a commitment to the program, completed.
- ◆ A nutrition policy developed or reviewed in consultation with parents/committee/auspice body.
- ◆ Early childhood staff attend a *Smiles 4 Miles* training session.
- ◆ Drink well & Eat well surveys (lunch bag surveys- minimum of two each) completed.
- ◆ Curriculum activities supporting the three key messages – Drink well, Eat well and Clean well.
- ◆ Parent engagement activities around the three key messages implemented.
- ◆ Information regarding public dental services available to children provided to parents.

Figure 3 below summarises the key components of the *Smiles 4 Miles* Award Program including expected program impacts.

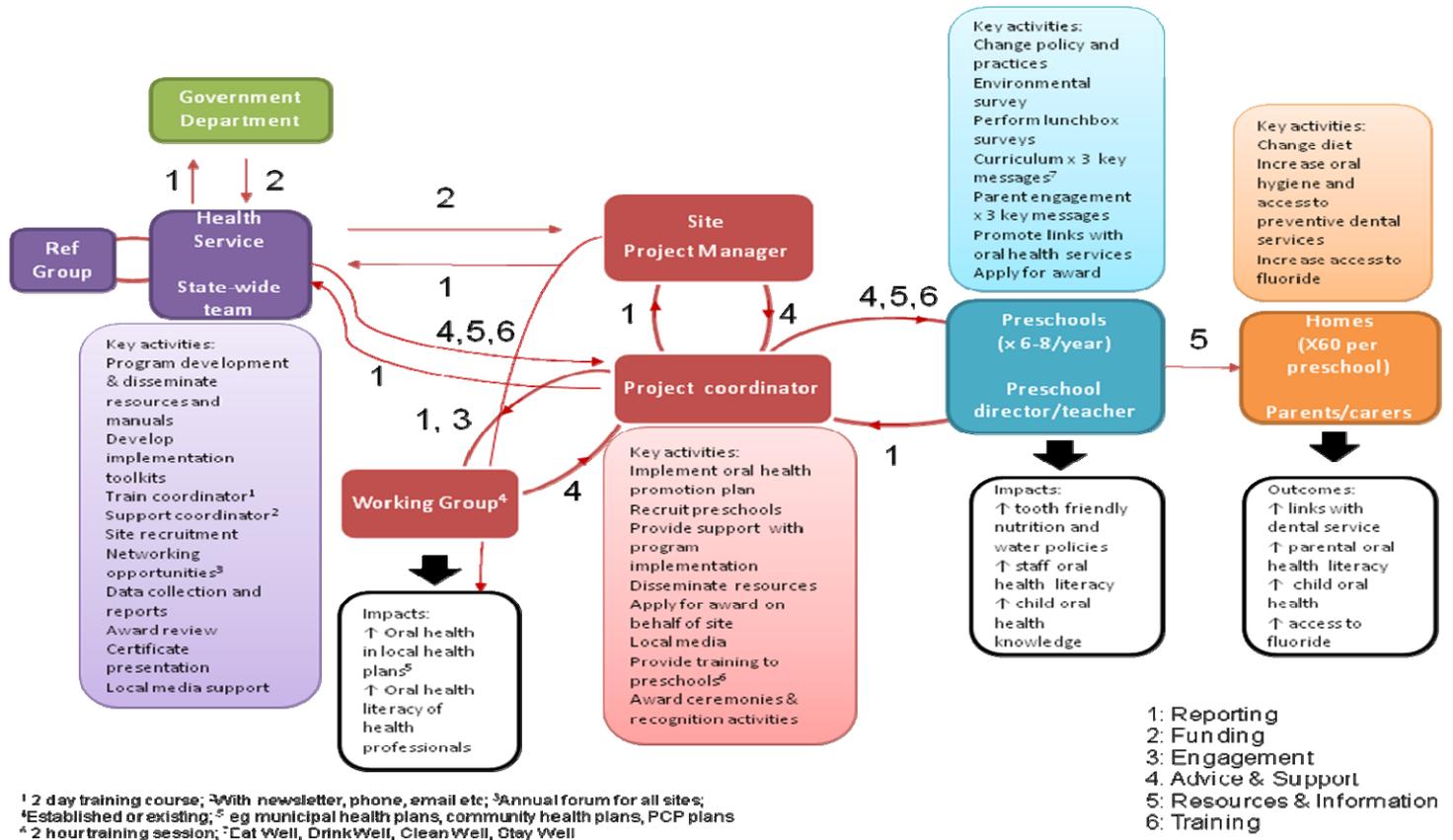


Figure 3: The Smiles 4 Miles intervention map above demonstrates the key components of the program. DHSV’s role is highlighted in purple. It is important to note that a capacity building approach at a state and community level enables the reach of the program to be amplified.

In addition to the Smiles 4 Miles Award program, DHSV has a suite of health promotion resources available free of charge in Victoria. The resources include tip cards and information sheets for parents, how to brush charts, stickers and swap cards. The resources focus on the messages of Eat Well, Drink Well, Clean Well, Play Well and Stay Well.

Does your organisation use a ‘whole setting approach’ to health promotion with schools/early childhood services?

The Smiles 4 Miles Award program uses a ‘whole of setting’ approach. The program model is based on the Health Promoting Schools Framework. Figure 4 demonstrates how the Smiles 4 Miles program activities fit into the Health Promoting Schools framework.

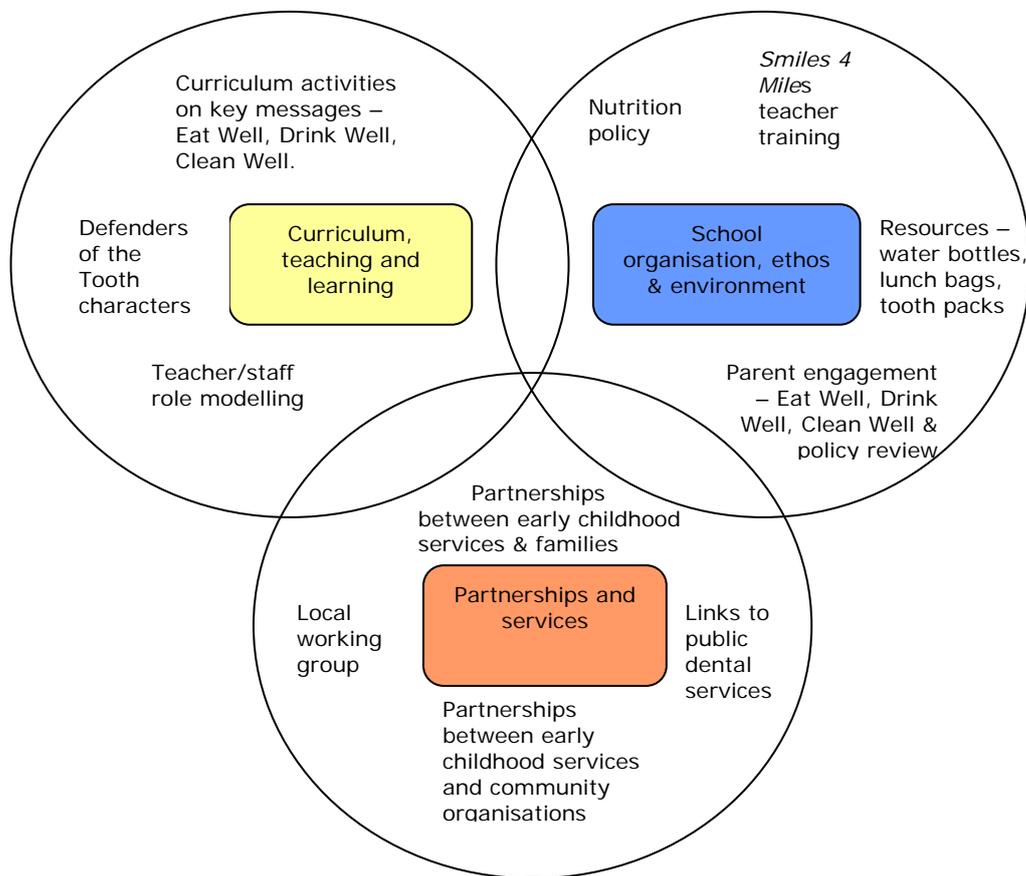


Figure 4: The Health Promoting Schools Framework and the Smiles 4 Miles Award program

What capacity does your organisation have to support schools and early childhood services to utilise a ‘whole setting approach’?

DHSV has established capacity to support early childhood services to utilise a ‘whole setting approach’ in the priority area of nutrition and oral health. This capacity includes a dedicated statewide *Smiles 4 Miles* team which includes a dietitian, a dental assistant (both with experience in health promotion) and two health promotion officers and is supported with the evaluation expertise of APHIRST – OH. The *Smiles 4 Miles* team has established partnerships with 32 community and health services (supporting 360 early childhood services) and direct relationships with 120 early childhood services across Victoria.

DHSV currently provides seed funding and support to community and health services participating in the *Smiles 4 Miles* program. The purpose of the seed funding and support is to build capacity to implement evidence informed oral health promotion programs at a community level. Examples of support include:

- ◆ a step-by-step *Smiles 4 Miles* program manual for health professionals
- ◆ a two-day training program for newly appointed *Smiles 4 Miles* health professionals
- ◆ e-mail and telephone support
- ◆ *Smiles 4 Miles* newsletter each quarter
- ◆ support and feedback on annual *Smiles 4 Miles* oral health promotion plans and reports
- ◆ a suite of oral health resources to assist *Smiles 4 Miles* health professionals and early childhood services in conveying the key oral health messages and
- ◆ continuing professional development and networking opportunities through the *Smiles 4 Miles* annual forum.

DHSV also provides direct support to approximately 120 early childhood services where local support is no longer available.

DHSV has experience in developing programs and supporting settings for health promotion including schools. While schools are not a current setting focus, DSHV has a suite of resources for schools including an online interactive learning centre for school-aged children and a manual designed to support and guide primary school nurses to promote the importance of good oral health, prevent oral disease and support early detection and intervention.

How could your organisation work within or interface with the Achievement Program?

The *Smiles 4 Miles* Award program aligns with the Achievement Program in the area of ‘nutrition and oral health’. Table 1 below shows how *Smiles 4 Miles* relates to the example award criteria for healthy eating and oral health for early childhood services.

Example award criteria for healthy eating and oral health for early childhood services (refer page 10 of consultation paper)	Review of <i>Smiles 4 Miles</i> against benchmarks
Healthy policies	<p>To achieve the <i>Smiles 4 Miles</i> Award, early childhood services review their nutrition policy (with the support a local health professional) and in partnership with the early childhood service community.</p> <p>DHSV could integrate menu assessment reviews (by the Victorian Health Eating Advisory Service) into the Program for child care services.</p>
Healthy physical environments	<p>All children attending a <i>Smiles 4 Miles</i> service receive a transparent water bottle enabling access to tap water indoors and outdoors. They also receive a lunch bag (for everyday food) and a tooth brush and tooth paste (which could support oral hygiene practices in appropriate settings).</p> <p>To achieve the <i>Smiles 4 Miles</i> Award, early childhood services complete Eat Well, Drink Well surveys (review of lunch box contents). This provides an opportunity to assess how active the nutrition policy is and reinforce healthy eating messages to parents by communicating collective results to parents.</p> <p>To achieve the <i>Smiles 4 Miles</i> Award, early childhood services complete the early childhood survey. The survey is a review of the healthy eating environment within the early childhood service and is used by the service and local health professional to determine potential opportunities and challenges.</p>
Curriculum and learning	<p>To achieve the <i>Smiles 4 Miles</i> Award, early childhood services provide opportunities for learning around the programs key messages – Eat Well, Drink Well and Clean Well.</p>
Family and community links	<p>As part of the nutrition policy review cycle, families are provided with the opportunity to provide feedback on the nutrition policy (templates provided).</p>

	As part of the <i>Smiles 4 Miles Award</i> , families are provided with information on the key messages of Eat Well, Drink Well and Clean Well (e.g. tip cards, displays, newsletters, information sessions). Written resources are available in six languages other than English.
Health social environment	<p>Early childhood services are encouraged to include statements about the positive social environment in the nutrition policy.</p> <p>As part of <i>Smiles 4 Miles</i>, teachers and early childhood staff are encouraged to act as positive role models for children.</p> <p>As part of the <i>Smiles 4 Miles Award</i>, families are provided with information on the key messages of Eat Well, Drink Well and Clean Well.</p>
Service partnerships for health and wellbeing	<p>A local community or health service works with early childhood services in their area to achieve the <i>Smiles 4 Miles Award</i>. The local community or health service facilitates a working group to support the program's implementation which can include establishing local links to public dental services and maternal and child health services.</p> <p>As part of the <i>Smiles 4 Miles Award</i>, local community or health services provide training to early childhood services on the program and its key messages.</p> <p>As part of the <i>Smiles 4 Miles Award</i>, families receive information on their local public dental services and the importance of regular dental checks.</p>

Table 1: *Smiles 4 Miles Award criteria and the example award criteria for Healthy Eating and Oral Health in schools and early childhood services*

Early childhood services involved in the *Smiles 4 Miles* program could receive prior recognition of participation for this priority area. That is, by achieving the *Smiles 4 Miles Award* criteria, the early childhood service will have an advanced standing for the criteria in the Achievement Program for *Healthy Eating and Oral Health*.

DHSV is currently updating the step-by-step *Smiles 4 Miles* manual for health professionals and is developing a step-by-step *Smiles 4 Miles* manual for early childhood services. While these manuals are under development there is the potential to include content related to the Achievement Program.

How well does your health promotion work with schools and early childhood services align with the eight health priority areas?

The *Smiles 4 Miles Award* Program and other health promotion work of DHSV aligns with the health priority area *Healthy Eating and Oral Health*. Other health promotion at DHSV that aligns with the priority area includes:

- ♦ A range of partnership work with DEECD to support oral health within Maternal and Child Health (MCH) services. Some of this work includes the redevelopment of the manual *TEETH: Oral Health Information for Maternal and Child Health Nurses* (2011) as well as developing a

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pilot project to distribute oral hygiene products and information to families through MCH services and to evaluate the impact this has on toothbrushing frequency.

- ◆ A range of oral health promotion resources, centred on the three key messages, is available free to Victorian communities/organisations including schools and early childhood services.
- ◆ *Healthy Families, Healthy Smiles*, recently funded by Department of Health, will promote the oral health of Victorian children aged 0-3 years using a capacity building approach, targeting relevant health professions and early childhood services staff. The project will focus on families at higher risk of poor oral health. Currently in the development phase, there is potential for *Healthy Families, Healthy Smiles* to support and complement the Achievement Program given the capacity building nature of the project. DHSV would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further.
- ◆ Dental Health Services Victoria frequently works with other peak bodies and government departments. An example of this is a recent partnership project with Nutrition Australia (NA) to redevelop NA’s ‘Fundraising Ideas for Healthy Kids manual’ (2011). This manual considers the complementary nutrition and oral health messages and features a case study from a *Smiles 4 Miles* early childhood service.
- ◆ DHSV collaborated with the Cancer Council Victoria and Diabetes Australia – Vic to link the *Smiles 4 Miles* and *Kids-‘Go for your Life’* Award programs and would be willing to consider building on this relationship, and where appropriate establish further partnerships, to support the delivery of this theme of the Achievement Program.

Additional comments

Dental Health Services Victoria supports the development of the Victorian Prevention and Health Promotion Achievement Program for schools and early childhood services and notes:

- ◆ The inclusion of oral health is essential for a comprehensive health and well-being program.
- ◆ Alignment of oral health and nutrition is logical as good nutrition is integral to good oral health.

DHSV emphasises that the *Smiles 4 Miles* program is an important, established flagship program of the organisation. DHSV supports the Victorian Prevention and Health Promotion Achievement Program’s approach of assisting schools and early childhood settings to unify existing program activities in a coordinated way and is very keen to see the *Smiles 4 Miles* program enhanced and extended through the implementation of the Achievement Program.

DHSV is willing to consider dedicating resources to developing appropriate oral health resources for additional settings where required.

DHSV has experience in successfully integrating oral health initiatives into other health promotion programs. For example, the criteria for the *Smiles 4 Miles* Award, matched the first 5 criteria for the *Kids-‘Go for your life’* program in early childhood services. It may be appropriate to offer advanced standing in the Achievement program for *Smiles 4 Miles* awarded settings.

We look forward to working with the Victorian Government to ensure oral health is improved through the implementation of the Victorian Prevention and Health Promotion Achievement Program for schools and early childhood services.

Evaluation

You do not need to complete this section if you do not wish to do so, however your responses will help us to assess how effective our consultation methods have been from your point of view and assist us in planning future consultations.

Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements (tick or cross one box only per statement):

The information provided was informative and appropriate

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

The questions were appropriate

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

Providing our input has been easy

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

I am confident my organisation's views will be considered

Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree

Thank you for your participation.