

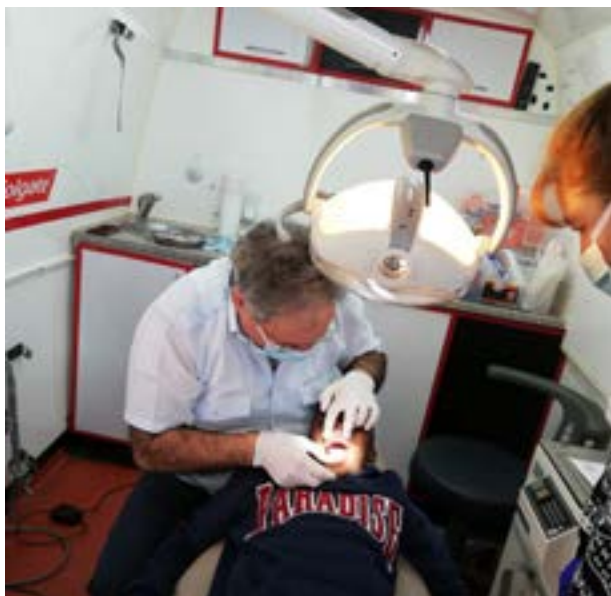
The South African Dental Association and Colgate dedicate 67 minutes on Mandela Day, 2019

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The South African Dental Association (SADA) in collaboration with Colgate and volunteering dentists, hosted by Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital, commemorated the life of former President Nelson Mandela by spending the whole day providing oral hygiene instruction and screening to the children in the hospital. The theme of the outreach project was '67 Teeth of Kindness'.

President Nelson Mandela's legendary love for children saw him using his influence to make life better for the little ones. To mark this year's Mandela Day, SADA and Colgate decided to visit Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital and spend time with the children in honour of Tata Mandela.

In South Africa, over 60% of primary school children suffer dental decay and more than 80% of these children remain untreated for the disease. The aim of this community outreach project was to educate the children about the importance of taking care of their oral health and to contribute to reducing the high percentage of children suffering from dental decay. Over 50 children were screened and given toothbrushes and toothpastes.



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As the South African Dental Association, we felt the need to fill the gap we identified in the Nelson Mandela Children's Hospital .. which, illogically, does not offer dental services.

While we understand that the hospital offers quaternary services, we still felt that oral health is important at every stage of treatment for any disease condition. In fact, good oral health practices may improve the prognosis of many disease states. Which is why we requesting our member dentists to volunteer.

We were pleased to see a resounding number of dentists who responded to our call and were more than willing to take time off their busy schedules to assist us in providing this much needed service.

We thank each and every one of our members who helped us commemorate the 10th anniversary of International Nelson Mandela Day. "We have now formed a link and a bond with the Hospital which will help us to ensure that we bring oral health services to the children on a continuous basis" said Dr Nthabiseng Metsing, Head of Professional Development at SADA.

In addition to the SADA outreach project, the Minister of Health, Dr Zweli Mkhize, visited the hospital as part of his 67 minutes for Mandela Day.

It was a privilege for the volunteering dentists, employees of SADA and Colgate to take time on Mandela Day to make a difference to the lives of these children.

