



Mary Ito

Nominator: Northumberland Oral Health Coalition

Mary Ito RDH owns Northumberland Dental Hygiene Clinic in Cobourg, Ontario. She is a dedicated dental hygienist who graduated from Durham College in 1992. That sounds pretty ordinary, but what Mary has accomplished since 1992 is anything but! She is a true dental hygiene superhero! As a founding member of the Northumberland Oral Health Coalition (NOHC) that started in 2005, Mary has been instrumental in advocating for the less fortunate in our society. She has always considered it crazy that a person without funds can get a painful open wound treated at the local hospital but cannot get a painful toothache fixed without paying out-of-pocket with money s/he doesn't have! To this end, she worked with NOHC to establish the first low-cost dental clinic in the county at the Port Hope Community Centre. In addition, Mary annually participates in Gift From The Heart (GFTH) Saturday and has been known to extend the offering of free dental cleanings to the days or weeks to follow for clients in need who she couldn't squeeze in to see on the day of the event. As a result of regularly lobbying her local elected officials for the need to improve access to dental care, she is on a first name basis with Northumberland County's local member of provincial parliament. One of NOHC's projects is supporting a dental table at a local church lunch program. Guests from the program are provided with the tools to maintain oral hygiene; many of these items are donated by Mary. The guests who require dental treatment, and most do, are referred to Mary's clinic first for dental hygiene care and then on to a dentist or clinic that will accept the provincial payment plans. Mary accepts all government funded dental plans and if the person cannot pay, she finds a way to help them do so through various community sources. Mary does have time for an unusual activity – she is the pipe major for the Cobourg Legion Pipes and Drums – a well respected organization. She is an accomplished bagpiper who often donates her time to play at community events such as weddings and funerals. The members of NOHC respectfully nominate Mary Ito, our dental hygiene superhero.



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