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Our work at the Dental Wellness Trust has never been as important as it is today, during the Covid-19 pandemic. With schools closed we were determined that our charitable work would continue to help those most in need at this time. Before care homes even came into the spot light, we decided to provide much needed tooth brushes and toothpaste to those vulnerable members of society who would be struggling at this time. This could be due to lack of funding to the charities that support them as well as overstretched demand on them. Also, the lack of visitors to keep Covid-19 at bay means that essential personal hygiene necessities could not reach them.

Since the first week of lockdown we have been providing tooth brushes and toothpaste to a variety of places. We initially offered all our participating schools supplies to give out to families who were most in need; not just for the children but the adults too. We also contacted and provided brushes and paste to Crisis and Age UK.

We were fortunate to have had 2 donations just before lockdown from Dentaid and GSK. Originally these were to be used in our schools programme but with no indication of when schools may reopen, we redirected these donations to our current project. Dentaid donated over 3000 tubes of toothpaste that also contained a brush in every



box and GSK donated 500 tubes of Aquafresh. Without these donations we could never have reached so many vulnerable people so quickly.

Our work quickly spread to charities supporting adults with special needs living in care facilities, old age homes, care homes, hospices and many homeless charities that are providing hotel accommodation to those with nowhere to live. We even saw a request from The Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital which has become a trauma hospital for emergencies where bones may be involved. Patients are arriving with nothing and no visitors are allowed. The charity there has to provide everything, from clothes to personal care kits and they specifically needed toothbrushes and paste as the patients arrive from A&E.

We continue to deliver to as many places as we can and five weeks in, we are still going strong. Our supplies have thankfully been topped up by donations from a variety of other generous companies and individuals including 1000 brushes from Dr Jerome Sheba and other dentists from around the country.



The Dental Wellness Trust has set up **#covid19Dentalchallenge** calling as many dentists as possible to donate their spare brushes and paste to their own local care homes and hospices.

Another of our Trustees, Dr Hattie Wright, is currently redeployed to ICU in a major Hospital and has been able to train ICU staff in the importance of oral care during intubation. The mouth is the gateway to the body and with tubes reaching the lungs inserted, it is essential that oral hygiene is paramount in these desperately ill patients.

We also have a Crowdfunder page for donations to enable us to buy 10,000 more toothbrushes and paste. It is vitally important to keep oral hygiene at the top of people's agenda as Covid-19 is so contagious, especially through saliva.

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/covid19dentalchallenge>

Helping the Children of South Africa's Townships Stay Healthy During COVID-19

After being confined to cramped townships for many weeks and seeing their precarious livelihoods killed off by the restrictions, millions of people in South Africa are fearing hunger and facing worsening poverty as a result of Covid-19.

Communities are queuing undelivered aid, grocery stores have been looted up and people are facing even more financial hardship. What's more, children have resorted to making their own face masks (which is now compulsory to wear one) as a way of helping reduce the spread of the virus.



People living with poor oral health are at an increased risk of many health complications and potentially more susceptible to the effects of any virus – including COVID-19. Therefore, it's essential that those most in need have access to a toothbrush and toothpaste in order to keep their mouths clean and healthy.

Toothbrushes can be covered in all sorts of germs from your mouth such as bacteria and viruses which will remain on its surface – which is why toothbrushes need to be replaced regularly.



However, we only have a limited stock of supplies which is why more toothbrushes, toothpaste and other basic essentials are desperately needed.

Our mission is to raise £10k which will allow us to buy toothpaste/brush kits, soap and food as well as make face masks for the children of South Africa.

For every £10 donated, this will buy these basic essentials for one child for 1 week

virginmoneygiving.com/fund/DentalwellnesstrustSouthAfrica/COVID19

Personal Protective Masks for the children of the townships in South Africa.

Dental Wellness South Africa trustee, Karen Tollman and the Mamas of Khayaliticha have organized masks to be made for the children of the LiveSmart programme to help protect and prevent the rapid spread of Coronavirus

This innovative project is named Siphosethu after a school child that attended the LiveSmart programme, who passed away after being hit by a car while crossing the road.



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