For years, the Ontario Dental Association has made it clear that it wants to work with the province to make sure Ontarians get the proper dental care they need. The seniors’ dental plan described in the recent provincial budget falls short of that on substance and details.

While the ODA believes there should be a dental program for Ontario’s low-income seniors, the suggestion from the province appears to be that seniors should be forced to leave their current dentist and travel, sometimes long distances, to get treatment at a government-run institution with a dental team they don’t know and who doesn’t know their dental and medical history.

The budget also doesn’t address the ongoing issue of the severe funding gap in existing public dental care programs. The fact is, there are currently four major programs for vulnerable Ontarians (children, families, people with disabilities, and those with complex medical conditions) and none of them are funded properly.

ODA President Dr. David Stevenson said, “Ontario’s dentists have been working hard to find a funding solution with the province. Quite frankly, this government knows dentists are reaching the breaking point and we are disappointed at this missed opportunity.”

The ODA is asking the province to work with it to find solutions for all government dental care programs so that we can meet the needs of Ontario’s low-income families and seniors in a way that works best for them.

About the ODA
The ODA has been the voluntary professional association for dentists in Ontario since 1867. It represents more than 9,000, or nine in 10, dentists across the province. As Ontario’s primary source of information on oral health and the dental profession, the ODA advocates for accessible and sustainable optimal oral health for all Ontarians by working with health-care professionals, governments, the private sector and the public. It provides the public with dental care tips at www.youroralhealth.ca.

(Source: Ontario Dental Association)