



Dental therapist Antoinette Garito. (Joe Mastroianni)

Taking the bite out of dental bills

A Sunbury dentist believes many families don't know that they can access bulk-billed oral health services for their children.

Sunbury Community Health provides dental care to youngsters between the ages of two and 17 whose families are eligible for funding through the federal government's child dental benefit scheme.

Oral health services manager George Alexander says he wants to make sure Sunbury and Macedon Ranges families know that there

are low-cost services available to them.

"The scheme is important because it expands the availability of healthcare systems to those who don't hold Healthcare cards," Mr Alexander said. "There is enormous demand for children's dental services.

"But there are statistics that suggest a very small percentage of Australian families avail themselves of dental and medical services because they think they can't afford it.

"The aim for us is to get the message out

that under this scheme, families with children who need dental care can access it – and it is bulk-billed."

Mr Alexander said the challenge is to encourage people to prioritise dental health

Under the scheme, eligible children and teenagers can get free dental checks, fissure sealants and fillings, X-rays, extractions and root canals. Information: bit.ly/IGDYFqi

Esther Lauaki