

# Dentsply Sirona supports dentists as they deliver much-needed dental care to kids in Guatemala

**Dentsply Sirona continues to support dental missions around the world, helping to deliver dental care to kids of Tecpán and Chivarabal in the region of Chimaltenango, Guatemala where access to care remains limited.**

**Ballaigues/Charlotte, October 30, 2019.** Despite advancements made in oral health throughout the globe, the state of oral health in certain parts of the world remain sub-standard. In many developing countries, access to oral health care is limited and teeth are often left untreated or are extracted because of pain or discomfort.

Organizations like Project Somos, a Canadian based non-profit, work to improve the gap by educating kids and families in the Tecpán area of Guatemala about the importance of nutrition, overall hygiene as well as dental hygiene.

Sponsored by Dentsply Sirona, more than 40 kids, 3 to 8 years old, received dental care during the 2-day dental mission held on September 25 and October 2 at the Maxillofacial Centre in Antigua, Guatemala.

For most, the trip to the dentist would be their first, since they come from impoverished areas where running water or even electricity is scarce.

“These are children who live in homes similar to shelters with dirt floors, so their hygiene isn’t up to the same standards that we are accustomed to,” said Julien Dumont, Global Development Manager at Project Somos.

Guatemala is one of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere with high rates of malnutrition and infant mortality.<sup>1,2</sup> About half of children under five suffer from stunted growth and poor health due to chronic malnutrition, according to the World Food Programme.<sup>3</sup>

In indigenous communities near Project Somos, preventive dental care is not something most can afford. By the time they go to the dentist, it’s usually too late.

“In our learning village, we give each kid a toothbrush and toothpaste and we have them brush their teeth after every meal – we build this kind of habit so it becomes automatic for them,” said Julien Dumont.

### A trip to the dentist

On site were three dentists, Dr. Luis Ramirez, DDS, owner of the Maxillofacial Centre, Dr. Kenneth Pineda, member of the San Carlos University Council in Guatemala City - Faculty of Dentistry, Dr. Ana Lucrecia Arias Ramirez, owner of Odontologia Clinica Integral Dra., and three nurses and an assistant.

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### About Dentsply Sirona

Dentsply Sirona is the world’s largest manufacturer of professional dental products and technologies, with over a century of innovation and service to the dental industry and patients worldwide. Dentsply Sirona develops, manufactures, and markets a comprehensive solutions offering including dental and oral health products as well as other consumable medical devices under a strong portfolio of world class brands. Dentsply Sirona’s products provide innovative, high-quality and effective solutions to advance patient care and deliver better and safer dental care. Dentsply Sirona’s headquarter is located in Charlotte, North Carolina. The company’s shares are listed in the United States on NASDAQ under the symbol XRAY.

Visit [www.dentsplysirona.com](http://www.dentsplysirona.com) for more information about Dentsply Sirona and its products.

All patients received a panoramic X-ray or OPT, and a clinical examination to determine the rate of decayed, missing or filled teeth.

While few needed tooth extractions, dental decay was the most frequent diagnosis – the main reason being lack of oral hygiene, bad eating habits and little to no education, according to Dr. Ramirez. Overall, most of the children were treated for cavities with fillings, some were given fluoride applications, and some received root canal treatments.

“We are pleased to have the opportunity to help support Project Somos and the amazing work they are doing for children and families who desperately need oral care in this part of Guatemala,” said Daniel Nobs, Sr. Clinical Education Manager, Consumables, Dentsply Sirona. “As a company, it is our responsibility to improve access to oral health care and reduce disparities in oral health.”

To help ease any anxiety, while performing the examination, the dentists would tell each child what they were doing and demonstrate how to properly brush their teeth.

“More often than not, because of lack of resources and education, people here go to the dentist when there is no other option than extraction,” said Julien Dumont. “These two days have helped build a new belief around visiting the dentist and reinforced the importance of daily dental hygiene not only for the kids but also for their families and the rest of the community.”

For more information about Project Somos, visit

<https://projectsomos.org/>.

#### Sources:

<sup>1</sup> Retrieved from UNICEF: <https://data.unicef.org/country/gtm/>

<sup>2</sup> Retrieved from World Bank: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/guatemala/overview#1>

<sup>3</sup> Retrieved from World Food Programme: <https://www.wfp.org/countries/guatemala>

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## IMAGES

are available for > [Download](#) on the website.



*Fig. 1: Most of the children were treated for cavities and a few needed tooth extractions. In photo, Dr. Luis Ramirez, owner of Maxillofacial Centre in Antigua, Guatemala, assesses a child's oral health.*



*Fig. 2: The inspiring and hardworking team treated more than 40 kids during the 2-day dental mission organized by Project Somos and Dentsply Sirona.*



*Fig. 3: Dr. Ana Lucrecia Arias Ramirez checks the teeth of a child from the Chimaltenango region of Guatemala. For most, this trip to the dentist was their first.*

