



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the School-Based Virtual Dental Home Program?

The School-Based Virtual Dental Home (VDH) Program brings **free dental care directly to your child's school**. It uses modern technology and a team of dental professionals to provide high-quality care in a safe, familiar environment—without the need for a trip to the dentist's office.

How does it work?

1. **Consent:** You fill out a simple permission form.
2. **On-Site Visit:** A dental hygienist visits the school and provides care using portable equipment.
3. **Virtual Review:** A licensed dentist reviews your child's records and x-rays remotely.
4. **Follow-Up:** You receive a report with your child's dental health status and any next steps.

Is it safe?

Absolutely. The program follows **strict health and safety guidelines**, and all dental professionals are **licensed and trained**. Equipment is sanitized between each use, and care is provided in a private, comfortable setting at school.

Why is Nevada County Public Health (NCPHD) providing this service in schools?

Access to affordable dental care continues to be an issue for many Nevada County families. Many families have reported not being able to access affordable and reliable dental care in their area. Also, **tooth decay is the most preventable chronic disease affecting children** and the reason for the most missed school days. Nevada County is at a higher risk for tooth decay because of having fewer affordable dental care providers and having no traceable amounts of fluoride in local community water systems.

Why is this service only being provided to Medi-Cal covered students?

Nevada County has a **shortage of Medi-Cal dental providers**, making it challenging for Medi-Cal covered folks to establish a dental home in Nevada County. The NCPHD VDH Program is helping to bridge the gap in dental care by meeting people where they are and providing services on site. The goal is to reduce dental health disparities and create a healthier community.

Who is providing the dental work?

NCPHD VDH program works with **Registered Dental Hygienists in an Alternative Practice (RDHAPs)** to provide services. The RDHAPs are licensed to perform dental work without the direct supervision of a dentist.

What if my child needs further dental care?

NCPHD works with California Northstate University (CNU) School of Dental Medicine. CNU's role is to review the records of children seen by the VDH program and **provide a consultation for next steps for**

that patient. The VDH team notifies the parent or guardian on the best path forward to ensure the child receives care.

Will my insurance be billed?

Yes! The RDHAPs who perform the dental services are Medi-Cal providers. They are able to provide services **by billing Medi-Cal for claims** in the same way a dental office would bill Medi-Cal for client services.

What if I don't have dental insurance but need dental care for my child?

If you do not have insurance, you are encouraged to visit [BenefitsCal.com](https://www.BenefitsCal.com) to see if you are eligible for Medi-Cal or another insurance option. **The dental program can still provide services** if you are in the process of applying for Medi-Cal coverage.

What if my child has an established dental home?

This program is for children who are having difficulty establishing a dental home or who are unable to attend regular dental appointments. If you have a dental home, **you are encouraged to continue to see your regular dentist every six months.**

How do I know if I have Medi-Cal dental?

If you have Medi-Cal, then you have dental coverage through Medi-Cal. Nevada County Medi-Cal plan is under **Partnership Health Plan of California**. You should have received a Partnership ID card in the mail with your child's ID number and issue date.