**ISPPD Nanhi-Muskan (little Smile) Project**

 **Outreach Activities for Underprivileged Children**

**Overview and purpose**

Oral diseases pose significant health challenges that impact various aspects of life, with exceptionally high prevalence observed among vulnerable groups such as institutionalised children/orphanages. They are children under 18 years of age who have lost one or both parents and are often institutionalised, face unique circumstances characterised by isolation, environmental deprivation, and absence of parental guidance. Unfortunately, these children have been subject to sympathy, neglect, marginalisation, or even hidden away in the community and the situation was worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. The institutions responsible for their care often struggle to meet their basic needs, providing physical necessities like security, food, and shelter but lacking emotional support. Therefore, there is an urgent need to prioritise comprehensive oral healthcare for this overlooked population**.**

In order to promote the oral health of these children, ISPPD invites various institutions to take up activities focussed on this group. A national-level competition for recognizing Outstanding Oral Health Care Initiatives for underprivileged Children is being announced with the guidelines below.

**Guidelines**

**•** The activities should have been undertaken for underprivileged children at various childrens' homes/orphanages, etc., and are being run by various governmental or non-governmental organisations.

• Appropriate permission must be obtained from all relevant authorities or governing bodies. (e.g. Dept of Social Welfare/NGOs etc)

• The outreach initiative must be distinctive and should make a substantial impact, being well-received within the community.

• A plethora of activities could be undertaken like -

o oral health education sessions, IEC/SBCC activities

o Tooth brushing/F Mouth rinsing programs

o F Varnish and sealant programme

o curative services

o Other innovative oral healthcare activities

o General health check up

o Rehabilitation with/ without the help of NGOs, social workers etc

o Any other activities to improve their wll-being

• Activities should be initiated and executed by employees or students of dental institutions/ children dental clinics in India, showcasing dedication to volunteerism and teamwork and promoting oral health services within the community.

• Support in terms of Human resources/Consumables, etc, could be solicited from various departments of the dental college and local organisations/associations like NGOs/IDA/IAPHD/pharmaceuticals, etc.

• Strategies should be developed to make the program sustainable with continued activities even beyond the last date.

Due recognition should be given to ISPPD in this initiative's mass media / social media posts.

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