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## **R120,000 DONATION BRINGS ORAL HEALTH TO DEPRIVED WESTERN CAPE COMMUNITIES**

The University of the Western Cape (UWC) has unveiled its brand new Dental Mobile Unit which will bring oral health services to deprived communities in the region, following the donation of R120 000 from PPS, the specialist financial services provider to graduate professionals.

According to Gerhard Joubert, Head of Group Marketing and Stakeholder Relations at PPS, the donation was essential for the university to continue the positive work already achieved in its various outreach programmes. “The Department of Community Oral Health at the UWC has over the last 15 years delivered essential oral health services to a number of deprived and underserved communities in the Western Cape and we were very happy to assist with funding to ensure that this is able to continue.”

Joubert says the programme has so far managed to reach thousands of people since it was established, with statistics from the outreach programme showing that an average of between 120 – 150 patients are treated per weekend.

Professor Attie Louw of the Department of Community of Oral Health says that the donation was essential as the equipment used by the Dental Mobile Unit was now 15 years old. “Maintenance had become extremely cumbersome as it was difficult to obtain spares. This impacted not only on the ease of use of the equipment but also made the entire process much more difficult for the staff and students who were using it.”

“It also had a significant impact on the spectrum of procedures that we are able to perform, with the result that we were not able to assist as many people as we wished to. The refurbishment of the clinic will make a significant contribution towards the continuation of a high quality service to those communities who most need it.”

Professor Louw says a national oral health survey data indicates that more than 50% of tooth decay in the country, particularly in the Western Cape, goes untreated. “This situation may be even worse in underserved areas, which highlights the necessity of programmes such as these to continue and be supported. As a result, we are extremely grateful to PPS for providing this much-needed funding to ensure that we are able to continue serving communities who rely on this service to ensure their good dental health.”