

Childsmile: national child oral health improvement programme in Scotland



Scottish Government, NHS Scotland, University of Glasgow
www.child-smile.org

Source reference:
 Call for public health best practices conducive to reaching SDG 3.4: NCDs

Background/Introduction:

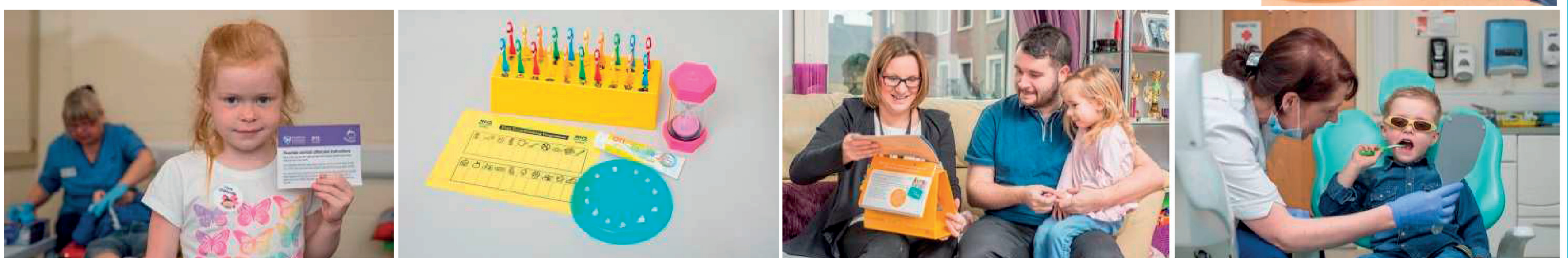
- Commenced as pilots in 2006, becoming integrated across Scotland in 2011
- Designed for children from birth and delivered by regional NHS Boards
- Theory-based, multidisciplinary, proportionate universalism approach, with level of support based on need
- Integration of child oral health into broader general health and NCD approaches

What does the practice do?:

- Aims to improve the oral health of children in Scotland and reduce inequalities both in dental health and access to dental services
- The programme's theory of change model links intended inputs and activities to outputs and longer-term outcomes via logic models

Programme components:

- Home interventions involving Health Visitors & Dental Health Support Workers
- Links to local community support organisations, including via social prescribing
- Supervised toothbrushing programme in nurseries and schools
- Fluoride varnish applications in nurseries and schools
- Health improvement activities within Dental Primary Care
- Provision of toothbrushing resources for home use
- Advocacy for upstream policies related to health improvement
- Theory-based evaluation with both process and outcome approaches

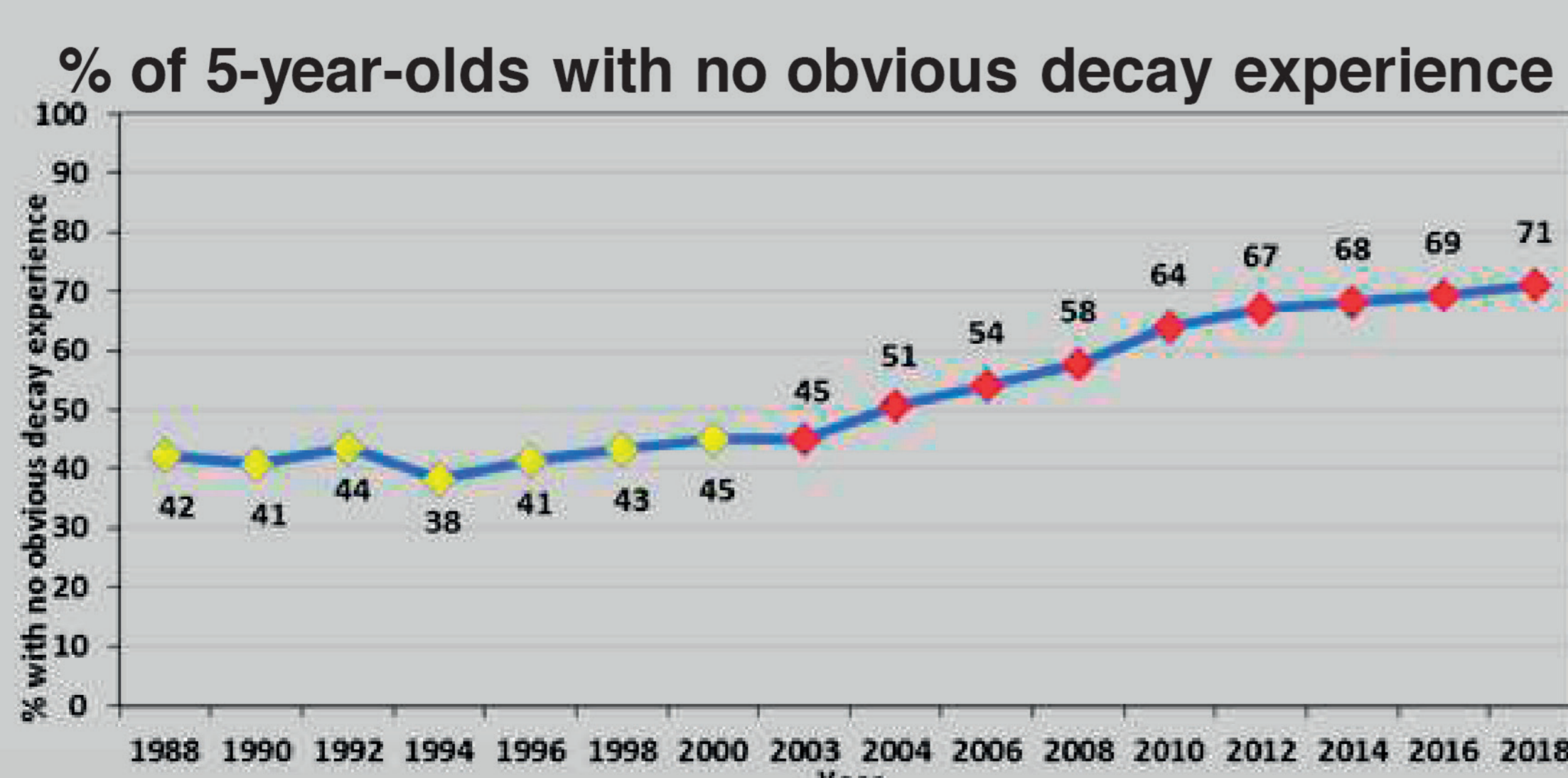


Outcomes:

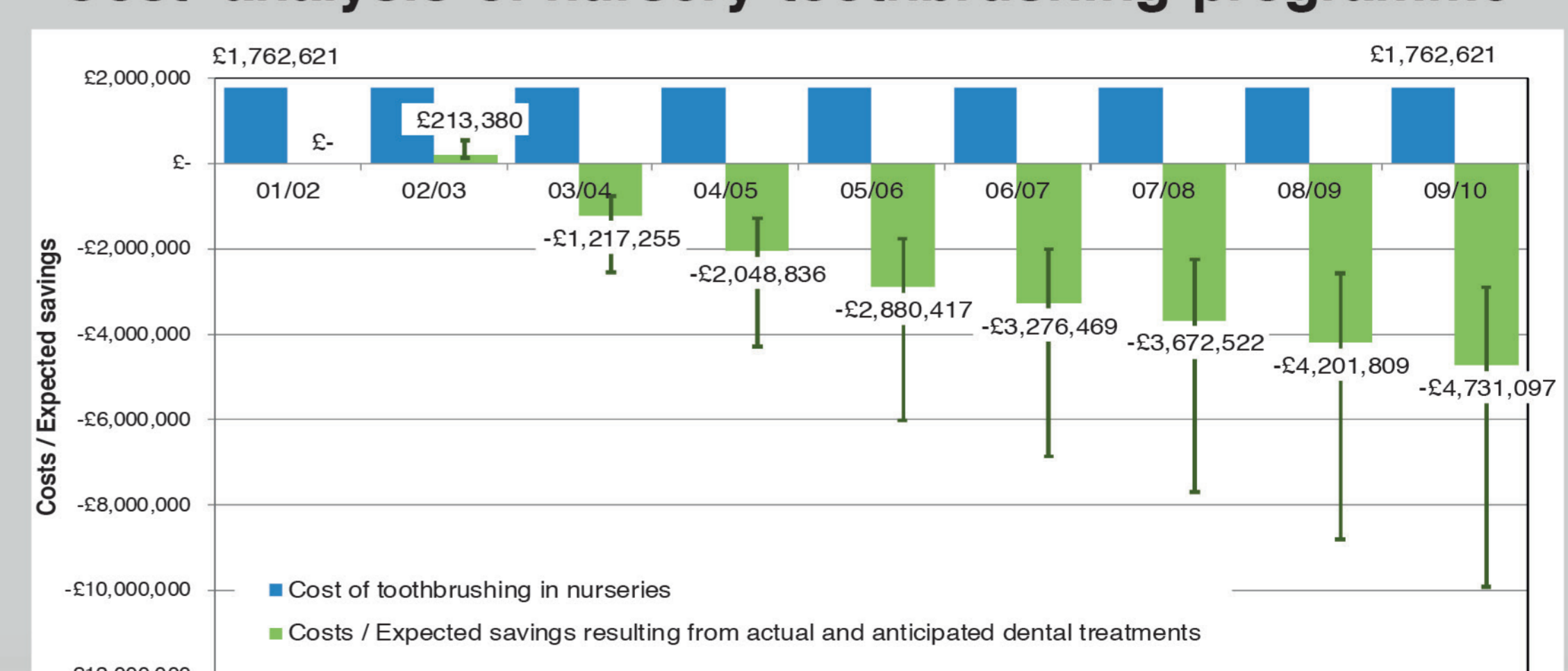
- Development of highly skilled and trained workforce: Extended Duty Dental Nurses; Dental Health Support Workers
- Integration of oral health into broader Early Years Pathway for children
- Prevention introduced into dental primary care contract
- Formative evaluation facilitates ongoing development and evolution of the programme

Results:

- Significant improvement in the oral health of children in Scotland
- Cost analysis of toothbrushing programme demonstrates estimated NHS savings associated with health gain significantly greater than costs of the programme
- Data linkage study shows that Dental Health Support Workers able to facilitate access to dental primary care for socio-economically disadvantaged families
- Cohort study has demonstrated association between oral health and both nursery toothbrushing and dental attendance patterns



Cost analysis of nursery toothbrushing programme



- Development of sustained, multidisciplinary health improvement programme
- Robust methodological approach to development and evaluation of the programme
- Significant oral health improvement since commencement of the programme
- Work ongoing to identify and test interventions to reduce health inequalities