

Use this checklist of questions and considerations from the National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center when talking with a potential oral health care provider for your child.

- Is your office wheelchair accessible?**
- If we need help getting our child to the office from the parking lot, is there someone on the staff who can help?** Staff may be able to help by carrying personal items or equipment.
- Do any staff members know how to perform safe wheelchair transfers and use a transfer board?**
- Do your dental chairs have movable armrests for easy access?** It can be a challenge to lift children over armrests or to move them into a dental chair without removable armrests if they are wearing leg or back braces.
- Can a wheelchair fit parallel to the dental chair in most of the exam and treatment rooms?** Doing exams and preventive care with children in their wheelchairs is sometimes preferred to transferring the child, particularly if the wheelchair can be adjusted. Transfers are also more difficult if the exam room is too crowded to line up the wheelchair close to the dental chair.
- What are your policies on late arrivals or cancellations?** Families with children who have health or developmental needs that are unpredictable may need special arrangements for appointments.
- How are your exam and treatment rooms arranged?** Is it an open room with many chairs? Is a private room an option?
- What kind of x-ray equipment do you use? Can it reach low enough for young children or children in wheelchairs? Do you have options for alternative x-ray techniques?**
- Can parents and caregivers stay in the exam or treatment room with their child?**
- Do you have a policy on protective stabilization?** Any techniques for stabilization or that restrict movement must have informed consent from parents.
- What is your informed consent process for: Examination? Treatment? Behavior management techniques?**
- Do you have any health history or other forms that you can send me to complete before our first visit?**
- May we schedule an orientation or first visit session?** A meet and greet visit will allow you and your child to see the office, meet the dental team members and ask questions.
- Are you able to schedule appointments to allow for flexible staffing and assistance if needed?** For example, the dental hygienist may need a dental assistant to help place sealants or take x-rays, or additional staff members may be needed to assist with a wheelchair transfer.
- What type of payment methods/arrangements do you accept? Are you aware of any community resources for financial coverage for children with special health care needs who cannot afford oral health care?**
- Have any of the dental team members received special training in working with children with special health care needs?**

Adapted with permission from [National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center](http://www.mchoralhealth.org/) at Georgetown University, 2000. *Special Care: An Oral Health Professional's Guide to Serving Young Children with Special Health Care Needs*. Washington, DC: National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center at Georgetown University. <http://www.mchoralhealth.org/SpecialCare>.