



AUSTRALIAN DENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION
PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION
2020-2021



**AUSTRALIAN
DENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION**
ADVANCING AUSTRALIA'S ORAL HEALTH



THE FOUNDATION'S MISSION

Consistent with the Australian National Oral Health Plan 2015-2024 (NOHP), and largely modelled on the targets identified in that document, the Australian Dental Health Foundation's (the Foundation) mission is to address the inequality between those Australians who can access the dental care they need, and those who can't. The Foundation aims to assist in the provision of improved access to and delivery of quality dental care and dental health for all Australians regardless of their financial, geographical or social situation.

The Foundation believes access to quality dental care and the provision of the basics of oral hygiene are important building blocks in the health of all Australians. The Foundation's goal is to ensure the continued improvement of oral health through the support of dentists, the dental profession, dental support staff, the dental industry and the community.

The Australian Taxation Office has provided the Foundation with deductible gift recipient status.



WHO WE ARE:

In 2008, the Australian Dental Association Foundation (ADAF) was established. It mobilised dentists across Australia to come together to improve the oral health of disadvantaged Australians. This was done by dentists, either volunteering their time in the delivery of dental services or providing financial contributions to support needy Australians access the dental care they needed but could not access due to financial or geographic disability.

In August 2017, the ADAF merged with the National Dental Foundation (NDF) to form the Australian Dental Health Foundation (ADHF). The NDF had been established 13 years prior to provide a well organised and structured platform to enable those in the dental profession and industry to step up and make a direct contribution to help disadvantaged members of our society.

The merger has:

- rationalised the operations of the two Foundations to provide a singular focus of activities;
- created one major Foundation within the dental profession and dental industry;
- created economies in administrative costs, and
- improved the efficiency of delivery of care programs.

WHAT WE DO:

1. Aligned with National Strategic Direction identified in Foundation Area 2 and the Priority Population Areas 1, 3 and 4 of the NOHP², the Foundation meets its mission through conducting several programs.

From inception, the Foundation has coordinated the delivery of pro-bono basic dental treatment to socially disadvantaged members of the community. The Foundation accepts referrals to its volunteer dental programs for clients who are being supported by a registered charity or not for profit organisation. **Dentists volunteer their time, skills and practice facilities to provide treatment at no cost to eligible patients.** Patients may be supported by one of the following programs:

- Domestic & Family Violence support/accommodation services;
- Drug and/or Alcohol rehabilitation;
- Long-term injury or illness support services;
- Near homeless or homeless support/accommodation services; or
- Support services for those from low socioeconomic areas/circumstances

The dental health of Australians is very much dependent on their financial status. The Foundation has therefore directed its attention and activities to financially disadvantaged Australians.

Proportion of adults with untreated dental decay by annual household income³



Dental Rescue Days (DRD) and Adopt a Patient (AAP) Programs

The *Dental Rescue Day* program sees treatment provided by dentists, in their own practice, through the allocation of a full or half day to treat several referred patients.

Under the *Adopt a Patient* program, volunteer dentists are paired with a patient in need of dental care, with the practice 'adopting' the patient over a number of appointments to complete a course of pro-bono treatment.

In 2018/2019 financial year, through these two programs around \$895,000 of services were provided free to patients living in metropolitan and regional areas across Australia, who are socially disadvantaged, on low incomes, or have additional and/or specialised health care needs.

"I have had pain with my teeth for around 20 years and am now pain free and can eat again, I am so happy."

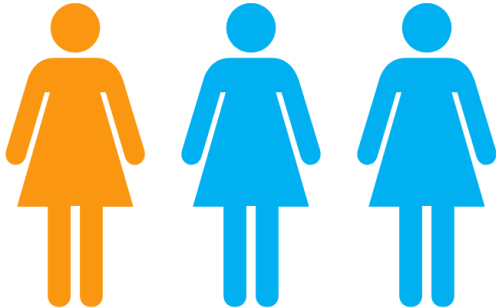
Adopt A Patient client, Stirling SA
April 2018

² "Healthy Mouths Healthy Lives-Australia's National Oral Health Plan 2015-2024:Page 18 and 19

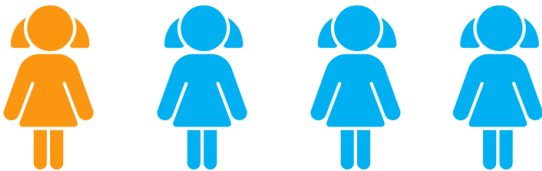
³ ANOHP Figure 9-P50

Rebuilding Smiles® program – targeting domestic violence

The *Rebuilding Smiles*® program aims to assist those who are socially disadvantaged, with an initial focus on individuals who have experienced domestic violence. Within its current Strategic Plan, the Foundation is committed to extending this program to meet the oral health needs of other specific segments of the population.



One in three women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence perpetrated by someone known to them and one in four children are exposed to domestic violence ⁴.



The Foundation seeks to help this sector of the population by providing free dental treatment to clients referred by support agencies assisting women and families experiencing domestic violence.

This new program delivered around \$165,000 of pro bono care to victims of domestic violence in 2018/2019, an increase of 160% in service delivery on the previous year. This reflects the unmet need that exists in the community. The impact of the program is evident from the following testimonial:

I never imagined such compassion and generosity until I had experienced it from you all. Not only have I regained my smile, but I have also regained a little faith in humanity. Both are priceless to me. Thank you seems grossly inadequate but it's all I can offer. “

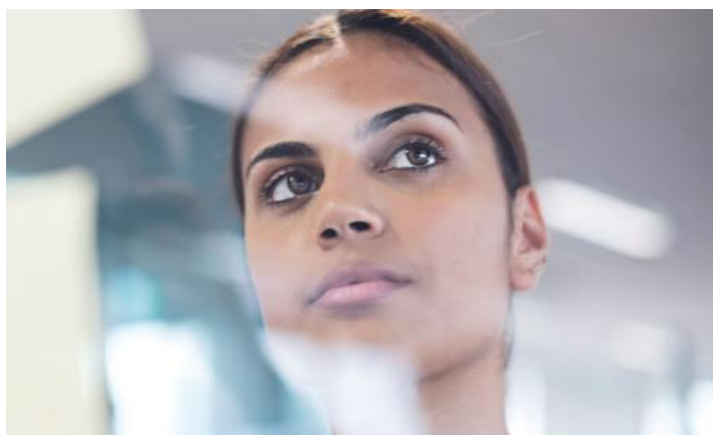
Kylie (Rebuilding Smiles® patient), NSW
6 September 2018

2. Aligned with the National Strategic Direction identified Foundation Area 3 and the Priority population Area 2 of the NOHP⁵, the Foundation meets its mission through:

Indigenous Scholarship Program

The Indigenous Scholarship Program aims to reduce the inequality that exists between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Noting that the delivery of dental care to Indigenous Australians is enhanced if that care is provided by an Indigenous practitioner, the Foundation established an annual scholarship program to specifically support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students who undertake studies in dental hygiene and/or oral health therapy. The Program aims to encourage Indigenous hygiene and therapy graduates to take their skills back to their community, combining their local knowledge and training to offer appropriate dental support and education.

Funding of \$30,000 was awarded in 2018/2019 year.



Community Service Grants

Partnering with the Mars Wrigley Corporation, this program provides funding to support community based oral health programs. The Community Service Grants are awarded to volunteer dentists and dental students to allow them to implement oral health community service, education, and preventative care projects in some of the highest risk and most disadvantaged communities across Australia.

The Community Service Grants program started in 2011 and grants worth around \$120,000 were provided in 2019 to 13 worthy projects.



3. Aligned with the National Strategic Direction identified Foundation Area 1 of the NOHP⁶, the Foundation meets its mission through:

Oral Health Education

The Foundation, in association with community groups, provides oral health education and resources to the community, with a focus on young Australians. The Foundation recognises that early education about oral health practices helps instil a habit of long term good oral health leading to a reduced need for significant dental treatment later in life.



⁵ "Healthy Mouths Healthy Lives-Australia's National Oral Health Plan 2015-2024: Page 18 and 19

⁶ "Healthy Mouths Healthy Lives-Australia's National Oral Health Plan 2015-2024: Page 18



HOW WE DO IT

The dental care delivered to patients is provided on a pro bono basis by dentists who volunteer their time, clinics, staff and resources.

Due to the nature of the cases that are undertaken, the care provided is often complex. For example, patients who have experienced domestic violence may require specialist care involving provision of dental prosthetics such as dentures, crown and bridges and dental implants. The Foundation does not expect dentists to cover these out of pocket (third party) costs and funds these services from donations or in-kind support. The cost of these services can range from \$1,000 to \$20,000 per patient depending on the nature of the treatment.

Financial and in-kind support to cover these sorts of expenditure and to help meet administrative costs are provided by several key sponsors and supporters, including:

[Australian Dental Association](#)

[Southern Cross Dental Laboratory](#)

[Pacific Smiles Group](#)

[Colgate-Palmolive Company](#)

[Mars Wrigley Australia](#)

[Straumann Group](#)

Coordination of the various delivery programs involves several administrative steps being taken. Coordination involves:

- Receipt of applications from support agencies;
- Evaluation of the application to determine eligibility;
- Identifying the appropriate program for the application;
- Providing a connection between the applicant and a suitable dentist-locating a dentist and delivery of requisite information to the Dentist and support agency to ensure applicant's attendance;
- Coordination of dental appointments;
- Liaison between agency and dentist;
- Receipt of treatment information, and
- Payment of any out of pocket accounts.

These steps are carried out by Foundation staff (State and Program Coordinators). The Foundation has 7 part time members of staff - one State Coordinator located in each of the following states: NSW, Queensland, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia; one Program Coordinator; and a National Coordinator based in NSW who manages the programs nationally. Additionally, with the assistance of a Queensland Government grant, the Foundation has been able to fund a 12 month contract role to expand the Rebuilding Smiles program in that state.



WHAT IS NEEDED

All statistical data suggests that, notwithstanding the level of dental services delivered by the Foundation, there remains considerable unmet need for dental care. The increase in demand for assistance the Foundation is experiencing indicates that this is likely to continue.

To allow the Foundation to continue to deliver on its very successful programs and to meet the increasing demand for services, the Foundation needs Government assistance. The Foundation has identified the following funding requirements:

1. Administrative funding support

Both demand and delivery of volunteer dental services by the Foundation have increased substantially in recent years. This has significantly increased the administrative burden of coordinating the programs.

Significant growth as measured by the value of dental services delivered has been significant. Based on current levels of referrals and activity, there is the reasonable expectation that growth of 20-25% will continue.

With administrative costs of around \$220,000 per annum, the return on investment by the Foundation is approximately 5 times expenditure. Overall, our activities currently achieve:

Volunteer Dental programs ⁷	\$1,105,500
Study Grants	\$ 25,000
Community Grants	\$ 118,000
Total value of services funded	\$1,248,500

With anticipated growth of 20-25% p.a., associated administrative costs are similarly expected to increase. Based on the current budget of \$220,000, an additional \$55,000 is required for 2019/2020 with ongoing increases of 25% p.a. thereafter.

The Foundation seeks Federal Government assistance to help meet this increased need to the extent of:

Year 1 - 2019	\$ 55, 000
Year 2 - 2020	\$ 68, 750
Year 3 - 2021	\$ 86, 000
Sub Total	\$ 209, 750

⁷ DRD, AAP and ReBS programs.



2. Delivery cost support

As mentioned, the complexity of the treatments required for some patients are such that laboratory, prosthodontic and other specialist services are required. The Foundation does not expect our volunteer dentists to meet these additional third-party expenses.

Dental Rescue Day and Adopt a patient

Under the *Dental Rescue Day and Adopt a patient program*, the Foundation has received support from Southern Cross Dental Laboratories of \$25,000 per annum to cover costs of prosthetic services-crown and bridges, dentures etc. In 2018, this money was expended by August leaving no support for the remaining one third of the year. While this support has been sufficient to meet needs in previous years, the exhaustion of these funds for 2018 is another indication of the increased demand for services.

With the anticipated increase in demand for services expected at a rate of 25% per annum, the Foundation seeks Federal Government assistance to help meet this increased need to the extent of:

Year 1 - 2020	\$ 9,375 ⁸
Year 2 - 2021	\$ 11,720
Year 3 - 2022	\$ 14,650
Sub Total	\$ 35,745

Rebuilding Smiles® Program

In the last 12 months expenses related to prosthodontic and other specialist services of approximately \$20,000 have been incurred. With the anticipated level of growth of 25% per annum, funding is sought to cover the increase in expenses resulting from that growth.

Year 1 - 2020	\$ 5,000
Year 2 - 2021	\$ 6,250
Year 3 - 2022	\$ 7,800

3. Summary of support required 2020 –2022

Administrative Funding Support	\$ 209,750
Delivery Cost support for the 3 programs	\$ 54,795
Total over 3 years	\$ 264,545

⁸ \$25000 in 8 months suggests current annual need for \$37,500.



THE IMPACT:

With the current growth expectations, assisted by additional Government funding outlined in this submission, it would be reasonable to expect that the projected level of dental services to be delivered by the Foundation would be in the vicinity of:

Year 1	\$ 1,526, 000 ⁹
Year 2	\$ 1, 872,000
Year 3	\$ 2,307,000
Total	\$ 5,705,000

⁹ In 2018 year, \$1.1m of services delivered.

CONCLUSION

Guided by the strategy of Federal Government's Australian National Oral Health Plan 2015-2024 (NHOP), the Australian Dental Health Foundation is currently enabling those most in need to access essential dental treatments from the private sector, leading to improved oral health status and reducing the burden of poor oral health on public health and dental services.

Over the past three years, the Foundation has focussed on increasing program efficiency, as demonstrated by our static administrative budget against continued annual growth of the value of services delivered. It has been identified that additional funding is required to sustain the administration of an extensive volunteer network along with the provision of adequate support for the Foundation's programs, which are facing growing pressure due to increasing demand from community service sector referrals.

The funding request contained in this submission represents a cost-effective approach for the Federal Government to achieve positive dental health outcomes for the Priority Population areas (1,3 and 5) targeted in the NOHP. The Foundation is in a unique position to utilise professional volunteer networks to achieve the targeted growth of our programs.

Through an investment of \$264,545 over 3 years from the Federal Government, the Foundation expects to deliver \$5,705,000 in dental services to those who would not otherwise be able to access the dental health care they need.

Thank you for the consideration of this submission. Should you require further detail about information contained in this submission please contact the Foundation's Honorary Secretary, Robert Boyd-Boland on rbb@adhf.org.au or 02 8815 3333.



David Owen
Chairman
Australian Dental Health Foundation

January 2020.