



Variations in access to oral health care in Australia and how might these be tackled?



School of Dentistry



Dr Len Crocombe
Chief Investigator

APHCRI Centre for Research Excellence in Primary Oral Health Care



Research Evidence

- Extractions due to periodontal (gum) disease (16.5% people aged 45-64 years, 20% people over 65 years) (Harford et al. 2013)
- Three out of ten adults have untreated tooth decay (Roberts-Thomson et al. 2008)
- More than 63,000 Australians are hospitalised each year for preventable dental conditions, the third highest reason for acute preventable hospital admissions (AIHW 2014)
- Oral cancer is the eighth most common cancer in Australia (AIHW 2012)
- Expenditure on dentistry in Australia was 8.3b in 2011-12 (AIHW 2012)



Research Evidence

- Higher prevalence and greater severity gingivitis (Hugosan 1971, Raber-Duracher et al. 1993)
- Correlated with sex steroid hormone levels (Hugosan 1971)
- Periodontal pathogens can cross the placental barrier (Kornman & Loesche 1980, Moore & Moore 1994)
- Periodontal infections may be associated with pre-term /low weight births (McGregor et al. 1995, Novy et al. 1995)
- Periodontal treatment can reduce the pre-term /low weight birth rate (Lopez et al. 2005)





Research Evidence

- Diabetes and periodontal disease are biologically linked (Mealey & Rose 2008, Taylor & Borgnakke 2008, Mealey & Oates 2006)
- Periodontitis adversely affects glycemic control (Taylor & Borgnakke 2008, Mealey & Ocampo 2007)
- Periodontal treatment may lead to an improvement of glycemic control (Gerdes et al. 2010)



Research Evidence

Periodontitis may associated with:

- Atherogenesis and thrombosis
- Cardiovascular risk factors (Williams et al. 2008)
- Causal relationship is neither substantial or convincing (Amarsena, 2013)



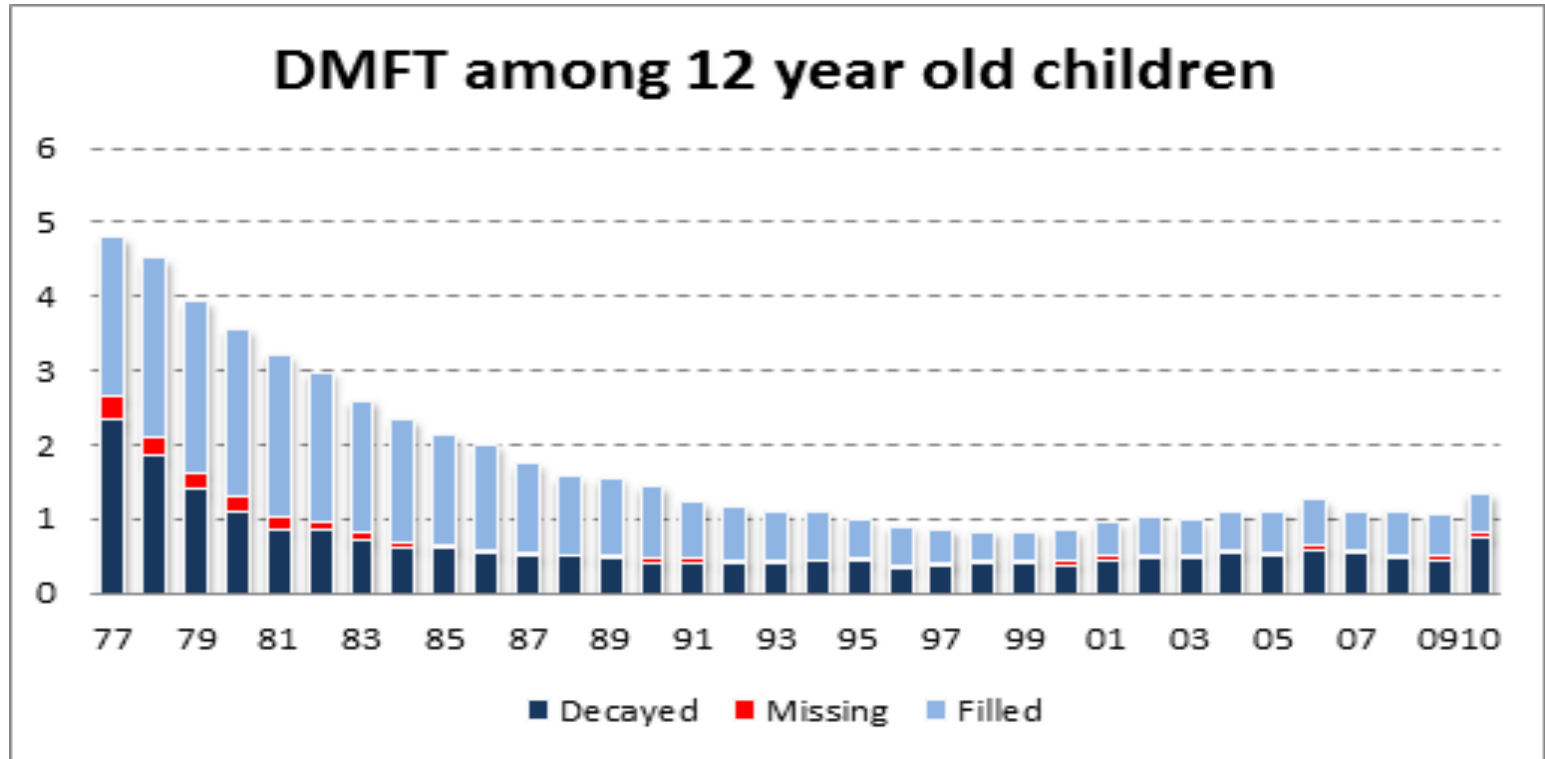
Research Evidence



“The repeat restoration cycle” (Elderton, 1987)



Research Evidence



Mean number of decayed, missing and filled adult teeth among 12 year old children by year, 1977---2010 (AIHW 2011)



Research Evidence

Lifestyle causes of poor oral health

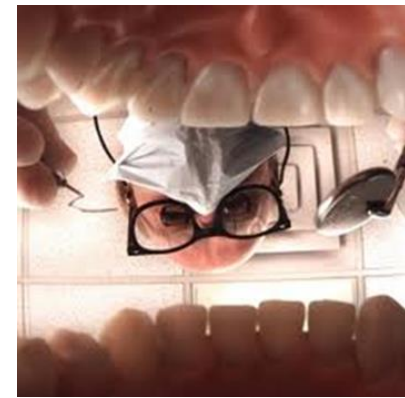
- **Poor hygiene** (Davies et al. 2003; Hujoel et al. 2006)
- **Poor diet** (Rugg-Gunn, 1993)
- **Lack of access to dental care**

(National Oral Health Plan 2004-2013)

- **Smoking** (Do et al. 2008, AIHW 2007)
- **Low fluoride exposure** (Slade et al. 2013)



Research Evidence

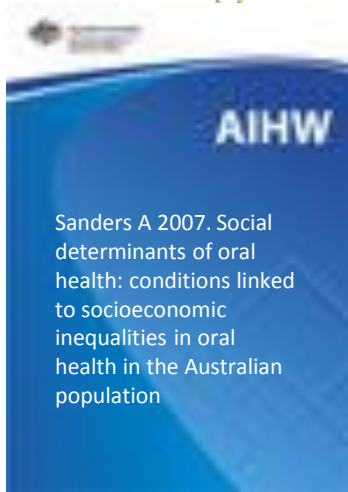


Poor oral health:

- frail and older people (Chalmers 2002)
- rural residents (Crocombe et al. 2010, 2012, 2013)
- Indigenous Australians (Slack-Smith 2011)
- Australians with physical and intellectual disabilities (Pradhan et al. 2009)
- People of low socio-economic status (Chrisopoulos et al. 2013)



Research Evidence



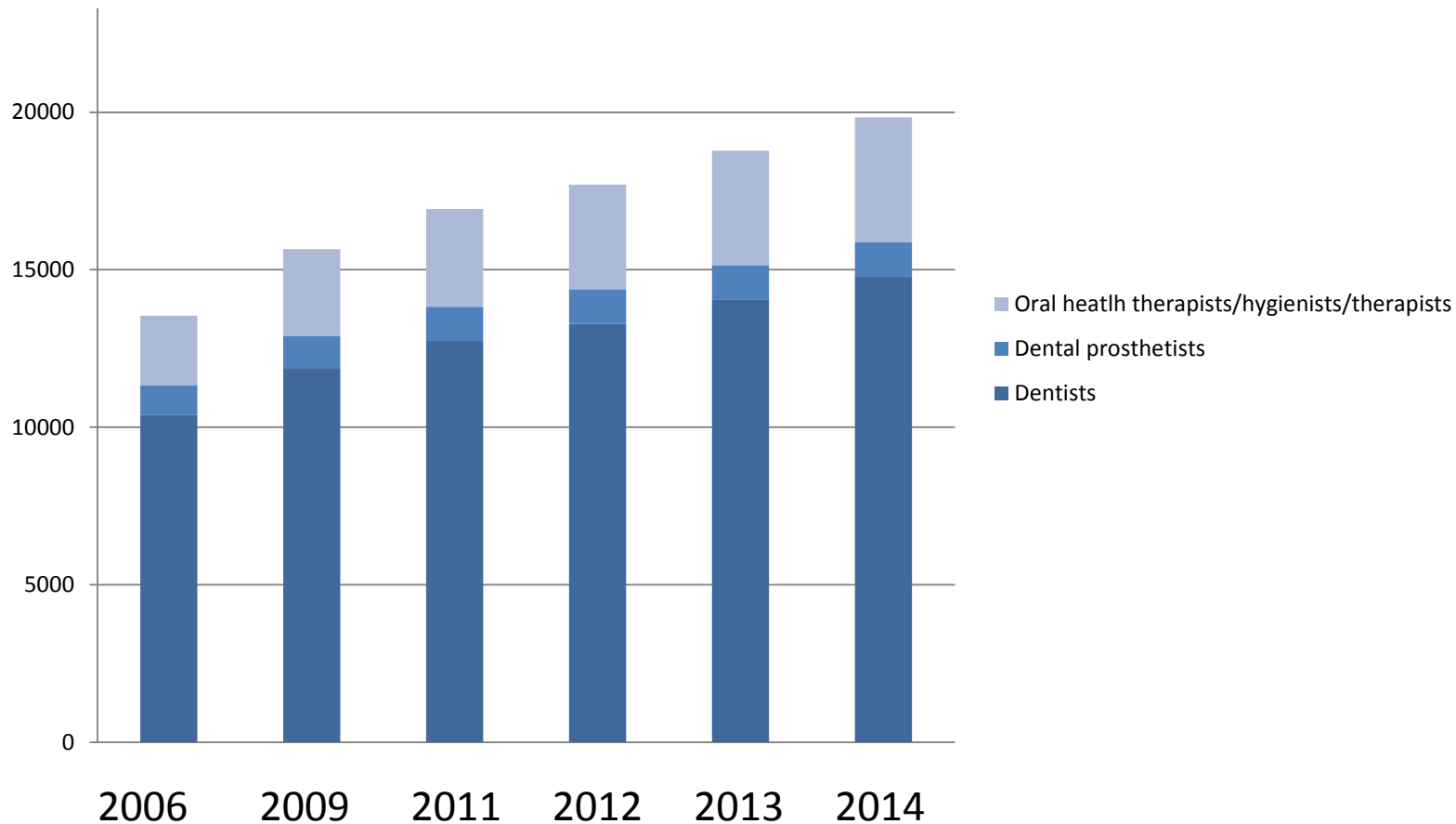
Sanders A , 2007. Social determinants of oral health: conditions linked to socioeconomic inequalities in oral health in the Australian population. Cat. no. POH 7. Canberra: AIHW



Watt RG, 2007 From victim blaming to upstream action: tackling the social determinants of oral health inequalities. Community Dentistry & Oral Epidemiology 35: 1-11.



Research Evidence



HWA, 2013



Research Evidence

- Oral disease has a large effect on people's quality of life, is common, and treating it is big business
- More and more links are being found between oral and general health
- The oral health of Australian adults and children has improved greatly
- The causes of poor oral health are the same as the causes of poor general health, with the exception of water fluoridation
- Some Australians have poor oral health due to factors outside their control
- The dental workforce is changing in size, make up and life outlook



Policy Approaches

- Voluntary Dental Graduate Year Program & the Oral Health Therapist Year Program
- Dental Relocation and Infrastructure Support Scheme
- Stronger Futures Northern Territory – National Partnership Agreement – Health Implementation – Oral Health Services Program
- National Partnerships Agreement – Treating more Public Dental Patients
- Children Dental Benefits Schedule



Centre for Research Excellence in Primary Oral Health Care



School of Dentistry





Centre for Research Excellence in Primary Oral Health Care

Successful aging and oral health

Rural oral health

Indigenous oral health

The oral health of people with physical &
intellectual disabilities



Outline of research program

Theme 1: Successful aging and oral health





Outline of research program

Theme 1: Successful aging and oral health



Dr Archana Pradhan, 2014



Outline of research program

Theme 1: Successful aging and oral health



Osteonecrosis of the Jaws



Dr Archana Pradhan, 2014



Outline of research program

Theme 1: Successful aging and oral health

- Community based trial: Medical GP assessment of need for dental care.
- Incorporating dental professionals into aged care facilities.





Outline of research program

Theme 2: Rural oral health

- Dental practitioners: Rural work movements
- Relationship of dental practitioners to rural primary care networks
- International oral health policy implications for Australia





Outline of research program

- Oral health policy implications for Australia

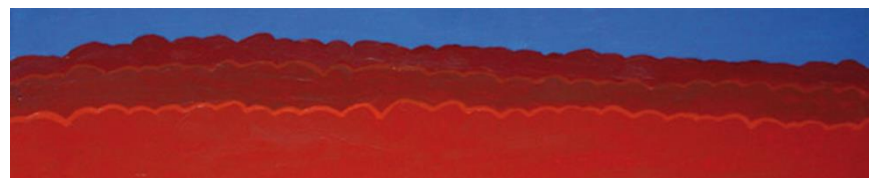


A/Prof Erica Bell



Outline of research program

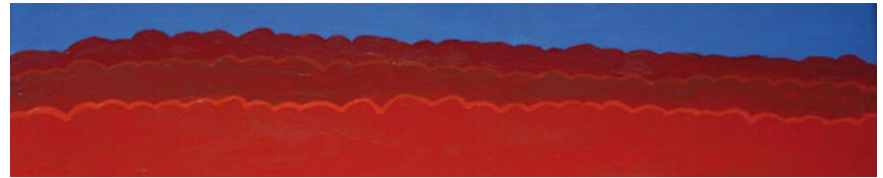
Theme 3: Indigenous oral health





Outline of research program

Theme 3: Indigenous oral health



- Why Aboriginal adults who are referred for priority dental care do not take up or complete a course of dental care
- Perceptions and beliefs regarding oral health of Aboriginal adults in Perth and key rural centres, Western Australia



Outline of research program

Theme 4: The oral health of people with physical & intellectual disabilities.

- Community-based Trial:
Train carers of people with physical and intellectual disabilities





Research Capacity Building

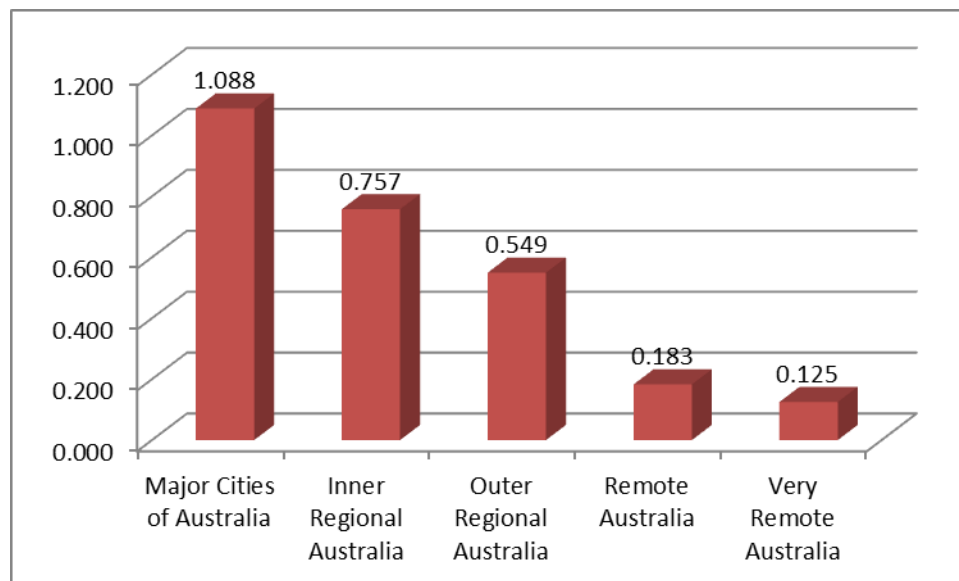
- Postdocs
- PhD students
- Adjunct positions
- Practitioner scholarships



Research Capacity Building

Chronic Disease Dental Scheme

Total number of services per head of population by regional area





The research reported in this presentation is a project of the Australian Primary Health Care Research Institute, which is supported under the Australian Government's Primary Health Care Research, Evaluation and Development Strategy.