



**Inner South Community Health Service**

# **ORAL HEALTH FROM THE MARGINS**

**Mary Stephens, Senior Dentist**

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# ISCHS

- Major provider of health and community services
- 240 staff in multi-disciplinary teams
- Sites at Prahran, St. Kilda, South Melbourne



# ISCHS VISION

A healthy and inclusive community:

- Delivery quality services to our community
- Investing in our infrastructure and our future
- Valuing our skilled and committed people



# ISCHS

- Health inequities a priority
- Outreach / clinic based programs
- Medical, nursing, allied health, case management, mental health, D & A



# Oral Health Program

- 2 Sites with 4 dental chairs each:  
Prahran and South Melbourne
- Share clients, waiting lists,  
records, staff



# Staffing

- Dentists
- Prosthetist
- Dental Therapist
- Dental Assistants (nurses)
- Receptionists / Admin support
- Hygienist / project worker



# Oral Health Special Needs

- Actively targets socially and economically disadvantaged populations
- High need, high risk clients who have no existing or alternate dental care options
- A range of strategies that enhance accessibility



# OBJECTIVES

- Improve access to oral health services
- Engagement and trust
- Break down barriers in traditional and non-traditional service settings
- Create linkages to a range of other services



# POPULATION GROUPS

People with

- HIV/AIDS
- Chronic drug and alcohol issues
- Mental health issues
- Experiences of homelessness
- Indigenous Australians
- SRS residents

# PRINCIPLES

- Innovative, multidisciplinary approach
- Partnerships - homeless, welfare, Indigenous, drug and alcohol services
- Outreach screening - parks, rooming houses, srs, welfare and homeless services
- Health promotion

# BENEFITS

- Engagement of marginalised population in safe environment
- Enhanced understanding of the importance of oral health
- Establishment of protocols and processes to support outreach service delivery

# BENEFITS

- Supported marginalised populations to better manage their own oral health
- Improved access to a broader range of health and community services



# BENEFITS

- Enhanced access to clinical care
- Improved the likelihood of successful dental treatment
- Provided opportunities for oral health education



# Program Overview

Dental Plus	For clients with HIV/Aids	5 sessions/week
Dental as anything	For clients with mental illness	1 outreach session & 3 clinical sessions/week
Young homeless clinic	For homeless youth and those at risk	1 outreach session/fortnight; 1 clinical session/week

<p>Indigenous clinic</p>	<p>For local Indigenous clients (Ngwala)</p>	<p>2 sessions / week</p>
<p>SRS Pilot Project</p>	<p>For residents of pension only SRS</p>	<p>Screening by hygienist; clinical response</p>
<p>Salvation Army clinic</p>	<p>People experiencing homelessness</p>	<p>1 session / week</p>



# DATA SPECIAL NEEDS

Jan – Dec 09

<b>Individual Clients Seen</b>	<b>No of visits</b>	<b>No of Treatments</b>
1,428  (All clinics:6,522)	4,801  (All clinics: 19,194)	14,281



# RATIONALE

High prevalence of poor oral health

- Poverty
- Nutrition
- Medication – dry mouth
- High tobacco use
- Drug and alcohol use



# RATIONALE

## Barriers to access

- Perceived prejudice
- Fear from both clients and health professionals
- Cost
- Awareness / priority

# Outreach



# SRS







# Outreach

- Medical history
- Dental examination
- Oral Health Education
- Appointment provision
- Coordination with case workers
- Capacity building within host agency



# Staff perspectives

- Challenging work environment
- Interesting clinical exposure
- Up-skilling
- Broadening perspectives
- Increased interaction with non-dental staff



Thank you