



Australian volunteers step up to improve oral health

The Wrigley Company Foundation and Australian Dental Health Foundation congratulate the recipients of the 2018 Community Service Grants

In recent years, while oral health in Australia has seen substantial improvements,¹ this positive trend is starting to decline, particularly in remote and disadvantaged communities across Australia.² Differences between the oral health of children in cities and rural communities is widening, with people living in major cities 10% more likely to visit a dentist for a check-up than those in regional areas and dental decay is more than twice as likely to affect children living in remote parts of Australia than in major cities.³ Every day, Australians living in remote or disadvantaged communities encounter a number of barriers to good oral health, such as poor diet, access to dental facilities, financial pressure, and lower health literacy, all of which greatly impact the health equity of those living in this country.⁴

Now in its eighth year, the Wrigley Company Foundation and Australian Dental Health Foundation (ADHF) Community Service Grants program is a well-established initiative supporting dentists and dental professionals from across Australia who seek to improve oral care services for those who need it most.

The Community Service Grants are awarded to volunteer dentists and dental students (who are ADA members), encouraging them to implement oral health community service, education, and preventive care in some of the most disadvantaged communities across Australia, and with patients who face the most challenging dental health needs.

This year, the Wrigley Company Foundation has awarded a total of US\$88,000 (approx. AU\$119,000)* in grant funding to 14 worthy projects, and is excited to announce the 2018 winners.

“The ADHF applauds 2018’s successful grantees. These grants will go to organisations providing oral care and education at a grassroots level and the ADHF is proud of our members working to deliver services that are vital to ensuring equity in access to oral healthcare services and education across Australia.”

—David Owen, Chairman Advisory Board, Australian Dental Health Foundation

“Over the past eight years, the Community Service Grants program has helped hard working volunteers carry out important work that provides oral care services and dental education to disadvantaged communities across Australia. We continue to be impressed with the work carried out by the grant recipients and we look forward to seeing this year’s results!”

— Sophie Lodge, on behalf of the EXTRA® Oral Healthcare Program

This year’s grant recipients

WA

University of Western Australia Dental School Perth

University of Western Australia, Oral Health Centre of Western Australia Perth

SA

University of Adelaide Dental School Adelaide

TAS

Royal Flying Doctor Service Circular Head

University of Tasmania, Centre for Rural Health Launceston



QLD

Griffith University, Hope4Health Cherbourg

NSW

University of Sydney, Poche Centre for Indigenous Health Redfern

University of Sydney, Westmead Hospital Westmead

Cerebral Palsy Alliance Allambie Heights

University of Newcastle Newcastle

Little Big Smiles Gordon

VIC

Health in Kind Point Cook

Murdoch Children’s Research Institute Melbourne

Carevan Foundation Albury-Wodonga

Principles in Action Grant (US\$10,000 X 1)

Health in Kind: Free Mobile Dental Project

There is currently a gap in service of dental care in regional Victoria. This grant will help to fill that gap, delivering much needed dental treatment to disadvantaged mothers and children across regional Victoria. In addition to providing screening and treatment at community health centres, the project team will also use the funds to develop a mobile dental clinic, which will allow them to deliver services to more disadvantaged groups across the state in the long-term.



Community Service Grants (US\$6,000 X 13)

Royal Flying Doctor Service: Circular Head Based Dental Program

Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) has launched a school dental therapist team and adult dental team mobile outreach unit to provide dental care for remote areas, with Circular Head set to be their priority area. Based out of Launceston Airport, the RFDS team will travel every Monday to provide same day treatment, realistic treatment plans and robust education programs to school children in Circular Head and to adult patients in need at the Circular Head Aboriginal Corps Facility. This grant will allow the RFDS to increase the number of trips, and the quality of care provided to vulnerable and Indigenous Tasmanians living in regional areas.



Centre for Rural Health, The University of Tasmania: Developing a Robust Laboratory Protocol for Analysing Oral Swabs for Pathogenic or Key Microbiological Flora

The aim of this project is to decrease cases of pneumonia among residents living in aged care facilities. Through daily, evidence-based oral care – teeth cleaning after meals using timed electric or regular toothbrushes, daily denture care, monitored referrals, and examinations of oral microorganisms living in residents' mouths – the team will assess the oral hygiene of residents over the course of three months. Following the investigation, the team will design a reproducible method of analysing oral swabs for pathogenic or key microbiological flora which will be used to develop a simple tool to predict which residential aged care facility residents are likely to suffer from aspiration pneumonia or other forms of ill health.

Murdoch Children's Research Institute: Improving the Oral Health Knowledge of Australian Families

This grant will fund the development of a short educational video that will demonstrate to parents of young children how to brush their child's teeth. The video will be shown in the waiting room areas within the hospital and will be used to support clinical services provided in the Department of Dentistry at the Royal Children's Hospital.



University of Adelaide Dental School: Community Dental Outreach Program

To accommodate the growth of the University of Adelaide's Community Outreach Dental Program, this grant will allow a team of 30 volunteer dentists and dental students to open an additional treatment room in the centre to accommodate the growing homeless population in Adelaide who need oral health treatment services and education.



Cherbourg Volunteer Dental Clinic: Hope4Health

Cherbourg is the most disadvantaged community in Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics census data – 2016). The Indigenous people of Cherbourg experience many health inequalities, including the lack of access to regular dental services. Through grant funding, Griffith University dental students and a supervising dentist will work in conjunction with the Barambah Medical Service, to provide emergency and preventive dental treatment and education to the Indigenous community living in Cherbourg.

University of Western Australia Dental School: Improving Compliance in Head and Neck Cancer Patients

Due to the complex nature of head and neck cancer, there is an increased need for patients to maintain excellent oral hygiene throughout their treatment journey. Through grant funding, the UWA Dental School will work with 180 head and neck cancer patients undergoing radiation to educate them about modified oral health techniques for cancer patients and to monitor their oral health compliance throughout treatment. Special oral health education kits will also be handed out to 180 patients, which will include toothbrushes, high fluoride toothpastes, and salivary replacement products for medically complex patients.



Oral Health Centre of Western Australia: Oral Health Education and Caries Stabilisation for High-Risk Children

Children in Western Australia are eligible to seek treatment through the school dental service from five years of age, but unfortunately by this age, almost 40 per cent of children already have dental caries. Furthermore, children from low socioeconomic backgrounds present with 2.4 times higher caries levels. This project will directly address an area of urgent, unmet need by stabilising the dentition of children from low socioeconomic backgrounds through expedited access to services and tailored oral care education.

Poche Centre for Indigenous Health: Guards on the Go

Sport plays a significant role in the culture of Indigenous communities. Unfortunately, dental injuries are the most common type of injury sustained during participation in sport and many Indigenous families do not have the funding or support services to purchase custom fitting mouthguards. This grant will aim to reduce the disparities in the oral health status amongst Indigenous people living in NSW by providing patients with a custom fitted mouthguard for use during sport, which can prevent sport related oral injuries to the teeth, mouth, cheeks, tongue and jaw.



Westmead Hospital: Improvement in Lifespan Oral Health in Children with Cerebral Palsy

This grant will build capacity within the challenged community of children who suffer from cerebral palsy and their carers through education, provision of a targeted oral health program and supply of the necessary equipment to reduce dental and gum diseases. The aim is to break the cycle of poor oral hygiene and the significant health effects that may follow.

Cerebral Palsy Alliance: Equipment for New Clinic at Northern Beaches Hospital

This grant will allow the Cerebral Palsy Alliance to fund the purchase of important equipment to fit out new spaces in the new Northern Beaches Hospital, made necessary by the closure of Mona Vale Hospital. The equipment in the new hospital is essential to the team of 35 volunteer dentists and hygienists who provide complex care to people living with Cerebral Palsy across NSW.



The University of Newcastle: Ungooroo Dental Services Program

The University of Newcastle has donated its Oral Health Van to the Ungooroo Aboriginal Corporation to provide a permanent facility for dental services to be provided to the community. This year, University of Newcastle dental students will use the funding to continue to provide essential oral health screenings, referrals and education sessions to the Indigenous communities living in the Hunter Region of NSW.



Little Big Smiles: School Dental Program

Little Big Smiles is a social enterprise with a vision to foster Australia's next generation of healthy smiles. The innovative school dental program delivers preventive dental care directly to schools in regional NSW via its mobile dental clinic. The grant funding will be used to expand the school visitation program to ensure that children from disadvantaged backgrounds in regional NSW are able to access screening and treatment for dental issues.



Carevan Foundation: The Sun Smiles Fluoride Varnish Program

A previous grant winner, the Carevan Foundation will use this year's grant funding to expand its Sun Smiles oral health education program to disadvantaged students living in the Western suburbs of Sydney. Through provision of fluoride varnish, dental screening services and education services, the Sun Smiles program stands to improve the oral health of over 600 children.



WRIGLEY Company Foundation

About the Wrigley Company Foundation

Established in 1987, The Wrigley Company Foundation (WCF) aspires to support People & Planet through oral health education, environmental stewardship, and local community partnerships. For more than 25 years, Wrigley has supported independent, clinical research into the benefits of chewing gum including saliva stimulation and plaque acid neutralisation. The EXTRA® Oral Healthcare Program supports oral health professionals in the promotion of oral health benefits of chewing sugarfree gum as part of a regular oral care routine.