

Volunteer dental programs

Quarterly impact report

1 October to 31 December 2024



Dental Health
Foundation

Chairman's Introduction



Happy New Year. It is the season for reflection and making plans. It is pleasing to report that the October to December Quarter 2024 produced excellent impact results for the Foundation. Our quarterly impact total was more than \$379K. This is the value of the dental services provided pro bono by our volunteers to patients, referred by a raft of charities, and who are people impacted by domestic violence, homeless or those who otherwise cannot access public or private dental care. This quarterly result, when added to the three very strong preceding quarters' results, means the Foundation and its volunteers have delivered more than \$1.5M worth of pro bono dental care in 2024, the highest calendar year total ever and \$285K more than the previous best year. It is also worthy of reflection that the Rebuilding Smiles programme continues to grow and this year 41% of the impact was delivered under that banner. It is a sad reflection on our society that the need for this programme exists but commendable that our volunteers are rising to the challenge.

So, where to next? The Foundation's waiting lists continue to grow. Our budget has not increased much in the last 3 years, yet our team of State Co-ordinators led by National Manager Rebecca McFarlane continues improving our impact numbers. What a team! However, to make a step change we need more dollars to employ our most successful coordinators for more days. This is the time of year when people are thinking about framing next financial year's budget. If that is you, please consider making a donation to ADA DHF or increasing your current allocation. That is just the headline issue. Rebecca, her team and the Advisory Board have put together a new Operational Plan with strategies to address all the goals of the Strategic Plan 2024-26 which can be found on our website. And of course we need volunteers. From time to time, we feature some of our prolific volunteers in these Quarterly Impact Reports. I draw your attention to one of our long term star volunteers featured later in this report, Dr Russell Gordon from Perth. While recently retired, Russell continues as the Foundation's State Committee Chair for WA. Well done Russell.

The Foundation welcomes new ADA CEO Dr Kate More. We also congratulate Dr Susan Wise, until recently a member of the Advisory Board, on her election to the Board of ADA.

Yours sincerely,
Dr. Rick Olive AM RFD

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rick Olive', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Chairman,
ADA Dental Health Foundation

Creating impact with the ADA Dental Health Foundation

Our mission is to address the inequality between those Australians who can access the dental care they need, and those who can't.

Our vision is an Australia where no disadvantaged member of our community falls through the cracks and needlessly suffers from a lack of access to dignified professional oral health care.

Through the work that we do, we deliver better access to quality oral health care for all Australians regardless of their geographical or social situation.

From men and women who have overcome addiction, who are enduring long-term economic hardship or suffering from mental and physical health challenges; to those establishing their independence after domestic violence has stolen their freedom, and the homeless whose needless dental suffering no longer compounds their more basic struggles. We are there to provide life changing oral health treatment wherever we can help.

Through our Dental Rescue Days[®], Adopt a Patient and Rebuilding Smiles[®] programs, our national team connects eligible individuals with specialist oral health volunteers who provide their time, expertise and practice facilities at no cost to patients.

We also fund programs that facilitate better long-term oral health outcomes through our Healthier Smiles Community Service Grants and Oral Health Education Projects and reduce the inequality of access to education through our Indigenous Study Grants.

To date, we've created change for thousands of community members by enabling the pro bono delivery of **more than \$8,000,000** of professional oral health services.

We would like to thank all of our volunteer dental practices who make our programs possible as well as those companies who generously offer their financial support to our programs.

Volunteer Program Outcomes

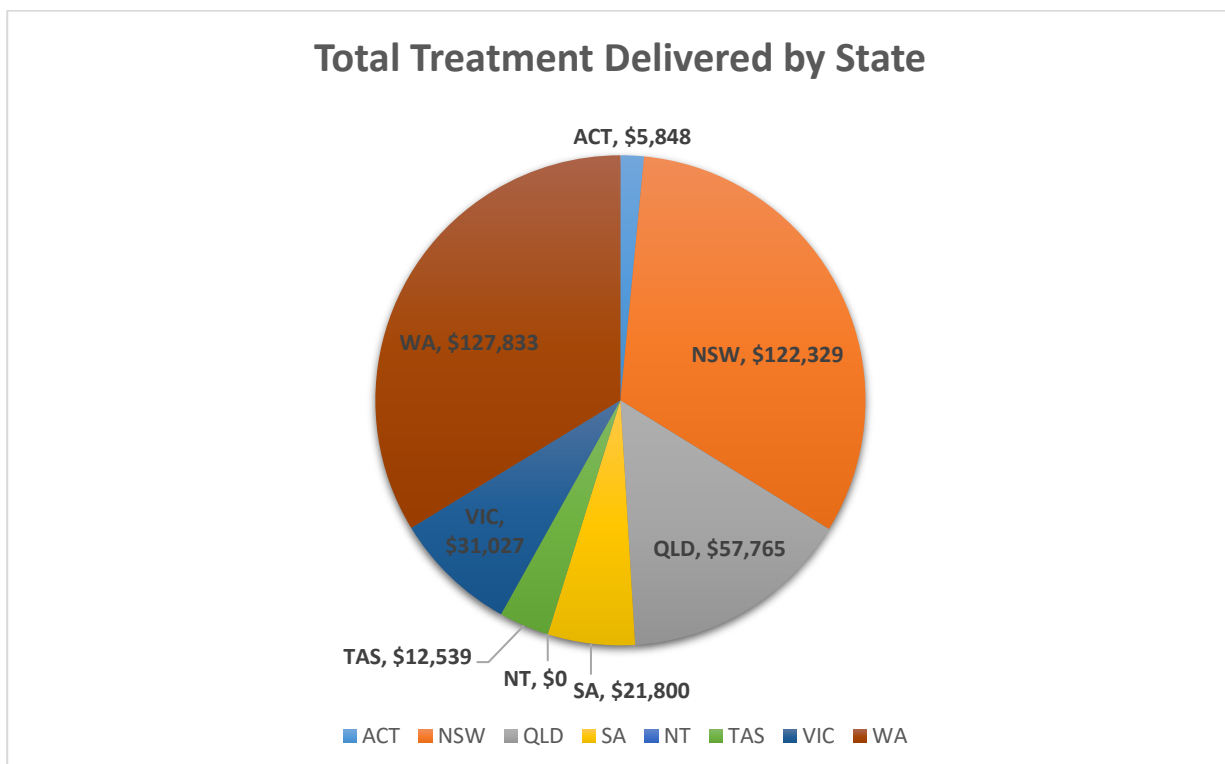
In this second quarter of financial year 2025 (Oct-Dec 24), the Foundation coordinated **7 Dental Rescue Days**® around Australia, providing **137** appointments to disadvantaged patients. The Dental Rescue Day® program coordinates access to local private practices and clinics for eligible patients, whereby a group of patients will receive a comprehensive general oral check-up in a single day as well as treatment for acute concerns.

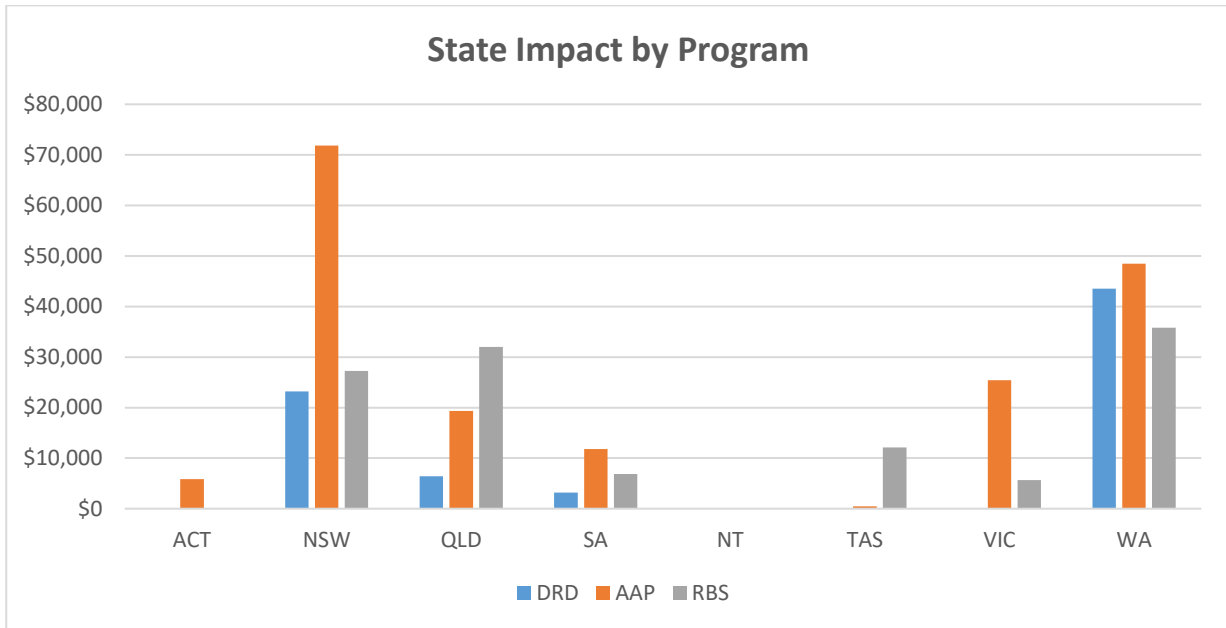
235 appointments were attended by patients under the **Adopt a Patient** program. Under this program, an individual patient attends a local private practice or clinic to receive dental treatment and will usually require several appointments to address their often more complex oral health issues. Currently there are **113** patients being treated under the AAP program in practices throughout Australia.

The **Rebuilding Smiles**® program focuses on providing assistance to individuals and families who have experienced family and domestic violence. During this quarter, **22** cases were completed with **82** patients currently connected to a practice or receiving treatment.

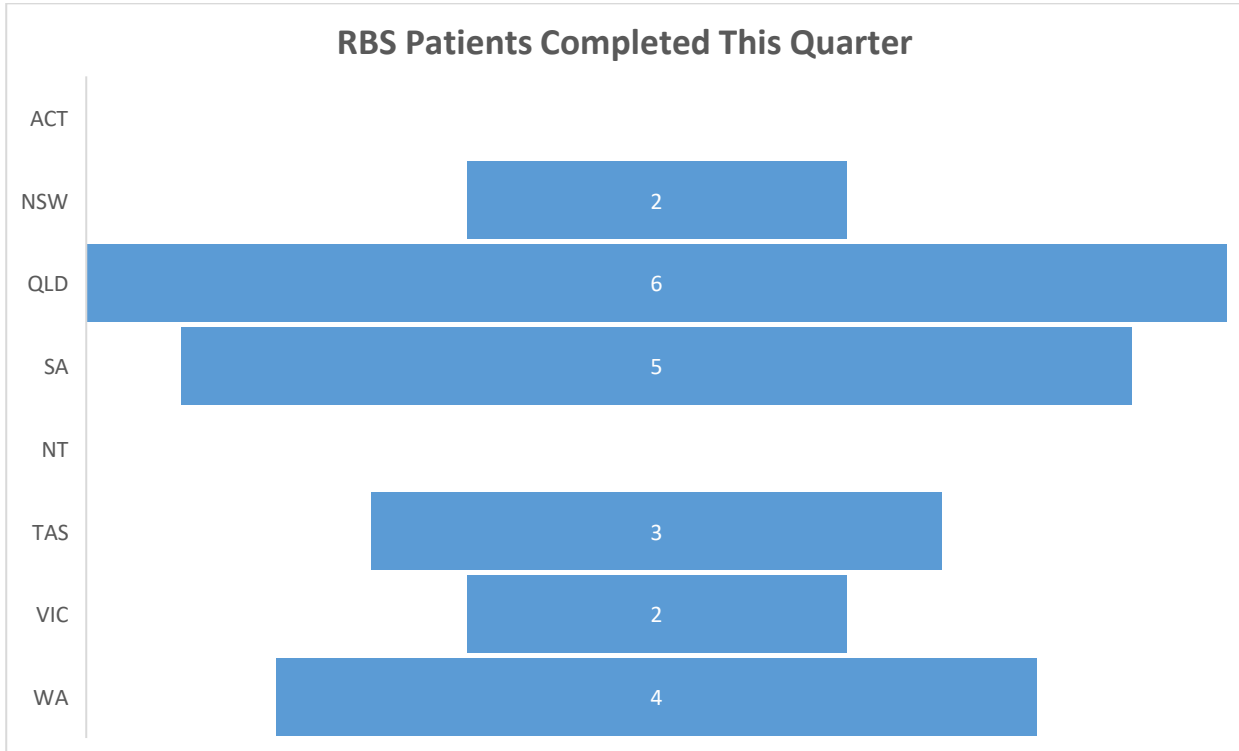
Across all three volunteer programs, pro bono treatment of **\$379,141** has been delivered by our volunteer general practitioners and specialists during the quarter.

Total treatment delivered by state





Rebuilding Smiles completed cases



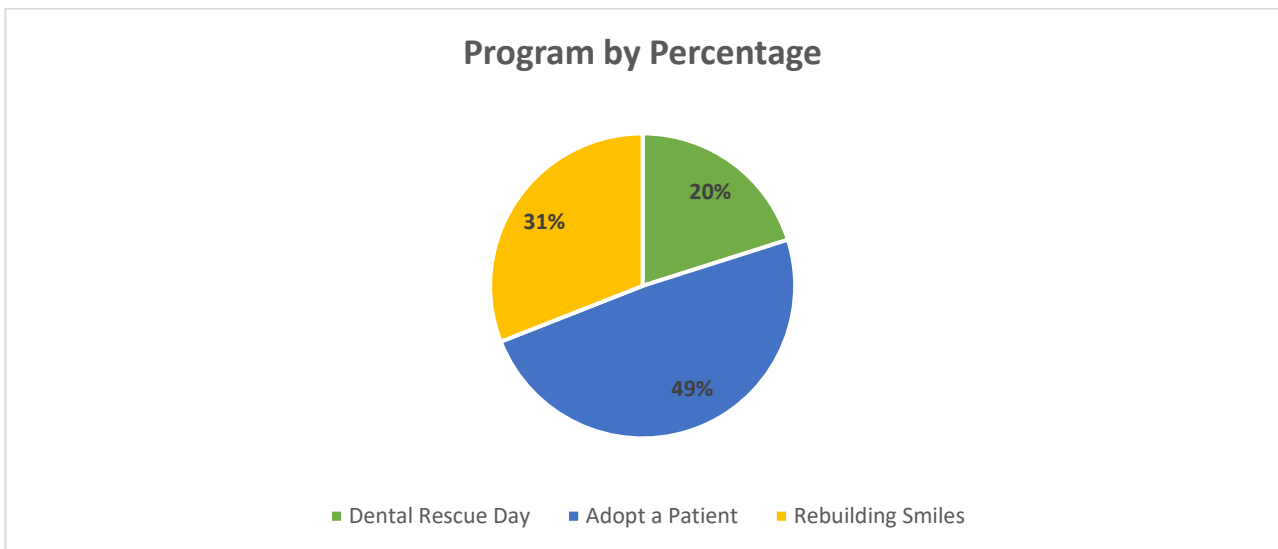
Volunteers

During the quarter, **151 general dentists, prosthetists and specialists** around Australia provided pro bono services to patients. Additionally, many of their staff were involved with coordinating appointments, assisting in surgery and providing oral hygiene and education to patients.

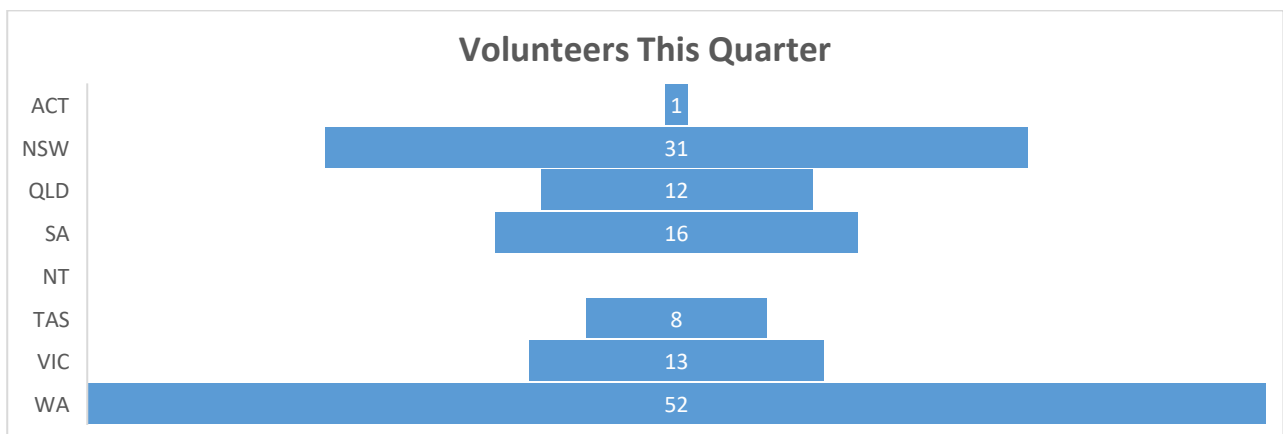
Our Volunteer lists are steadily growing and we have renewed interest and engagement in assisting our programs from those who continue to support our programs. If you know of a colleague who might like to assist us please spread the word about the great value that volunteering can offer.

Our Coordinators continually strive to offer their utmost support to the clients referred to our waiting lists and to the dental practitioners who participate and volunteer in our programs.

Program activity by percentage



Volunteers by state



Quarterly Spotlight



Pictured- Dr Russell Gordon, ADA Dental Health Foundation WA State Committee Chair

Dr Russell Gordon, current Chair of the ADA DHF in WA, has a long history of volunteering.

He first hosted a Dental Rescue Day at his former practice, Rockingham Dental Centre, in 2006, after noticing an advertisement in the ADAWA Newsletter, the Western Articulator. Russell, Dr Gerard Parkinson, and the Rockingham Dental Centre team donated their time and skills on their Saturday morning, to treat the homeless and those at risk of homelessness, in the Rockingham and surrounding areas. It was such a successful first Dental Rescue Day, that the tradition has continued on, and to this day, the practice is very active in volunteering by hosting annual

Dental Rescue Days and each volunteer dentist 'Adopting a Patient' for a full course of treatment.

"Once you hear some people's stories it inspires you to help them if you can," Russell adds. I also feel that it strengthened the regard of our staff for the place they worked at as they enjoyed being part of a caring practice. In those days, we used to print practice updates for our patients and would include photos from DRDs. From the conversations they initiated with our regular patients, I always felt that our standing in the community was enhanced by our volunteering efforts. Subsequently, Hari Menon took over the practice from us. He had worked for us and volunteered in our DRD's and continues the tradition."

Russell admits he has certainly had more hugs from patients at Dental Rescue Days than he has ever received from his regular private practice patients. "I think it is because they often feel overwhelmed. Firstly, because their life situation may be such that they can't see a way they can access treatment even through the Government system because of its waiting lists and the fact it requires a copayment. Secondly, many homeless people have slipped through the cracks in our community and feel that no one cares about them. When they come across a friendly face (even though they are often mortally afraid of the dentist) their gratitude is magnified. "ADA DHF WA Coordinator Andrea Paterson often tells us of letters from case workers passing on the appreciation of patients who lack the resources to do that themselves," he adds.

Russell has also had a long-standing involvement with the St Pat's Oral Health Clinic, which opened in 2016. "The ADHF had acquired some donated equipment, and I heard that St Pat's Community Support Centre wanted to open a dental clinic, so we offered the equipment to them" he recalls. "They gratefully accepted the equipment but said that although they had sourced funds to

build a clinic, they had no expertise to run it and would we partner them.” Over time, St Pat’s has raised money and the ADHF won a \$100,000 grant from Impact 100 Fremantle in 2020, which has allowed a full-time dental nurse to be employed. The ADHF was also lucky enough to secure an account from Henry Schein Cares to supply materials. A-dec has supplied equipment and support, along with many dentists kindly donating instruments and materials.

“St Pat’s clinic has been a great addition to the volunteer options of dentists who don’t have their own clinics and has been extremely successful in providing many hundreds of thousands of dollars’ worth of free treatment for homeless people.”

More recently, Russell volunteered at the annual OHCWA/UWA Dental Student Clinic Dental Rescue Days in August 2023 and 2024.

“Obviously I would encourage all dentists to consider volunteering,” Russell says. “The need in our community is great. By using even the most basic of our skills, we can make huge differences in people’s lives. I think volunteering reflects well on us as individuals, as well as on our profession as a whole. It emphasises to the community that we aren’t normal businesses, but in fact professionals who put the welfare of patients before all else in our daily work and of course it just makes us feel better about ourselves when we are able to help others.”

Story and photo by ADA WA

First Nations Study Grants

Applications will be opening on our [website](#) for the 2025 grants on 1st March 2025.



Healthier Smiles Grants

The ADA DHF and Mars Wrigley Foundation's Healthier Smiles Community Service Grants program is a well-established initiative supporting dentists and dental students from across Australia who seek to improve oral health outcomes by providing screening, treatment, and education to those most in need. Ten grants were awarded across Australia in 2024. Head to our [website](#) for the 2025 application dates.

We would like to extend our thanks

I would like to acknowledge and thank the following clinics for their continued support and offer of their facilities without which we would struggle to treat so many patients.

- ❖ St Pats Oral Health Clinic WA
- ❖ OHCWA/UWA Dental School Clinic WA
- ❖ Filling the Gap Clinic ADANSW
- ❖ Common Ground Clinic SA

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