



# Central Northern Adelaide Health Service

*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander  
oral health programs*


**Rachael Collins**  
**SA Dental Service**



**Government  
of South Australia**

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SA Health

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- > SA Dental Service is committed to improving the oral health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in South Australia
  - > SA Dental Service is actively working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers through several programs

# SA Dental Service Programs

- > Population Oral Health Program  
'Lift the Lip'
- > Aboriginal Liaison Program





# Population Oral Health Program Lift the Lip (6 months – 5 years)

- > To address the current decline in children's oral health by working with health professionals to identify children under the age of 5 years suffering tooth decay and referring them to dental services for treatment or preventive interventions



# Population Oral Health Program

- > CYWHS Nurses
- > Recruiting GPs and Nurses
- > Midwives
- > Child Care Centres
- > Migrant Health Services
- > Aboriginal Health Workers
- > SA Dental Service Staff

# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in SA

- > Children generally have more than twice the decay experience and a greater number of untreated decayed teeth.





## Problems associated with tooth decay

- > Experience pain, irritability, facial swelling and interrupted sleep
- > Poor diet can follow due to pain on chewing – child & parent opt for “soft foods”
- > Impact on speech development
- > Low self esteem, and social issues
- > Need for General Anaesthetic

# 'Lift the Lip'

## 6 months – 5 years

- > Lift the child's top lip and look at the front top teeth
- > Look for signs of decay
- > General health appointment, health check or immunisation



# Screening and Referral Tool

## Early Childhood Caries

Lift the Lip for children 6 months to 5 years



**Healthy Teeth**  
No referral required



**Early signs of decay**  
White lines along the gum can be the beginning of tooth decay. Please refer for a dental visit.



**More advanced decay**  
Brown areas or decayed spots. Please refer for a dental visit.

## Early signs of decay

White lines along the gum line can be the beginning of tooth decay. Please refer for a dental visit.

## More advanced decay

Brown areas or decayed spots. Please refer for a dental visit.

# SA Dental Service Referral → ECC

Unique code

Patient Details

Your details

Select  
Private or  
Public

Parents  
Consent

Please complete details below:

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Master

Parent/Guardian (name): \_\_\_\_\_

Child (name): \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## Health Assessment

Conducted by: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

(please print)

Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

In the opinion of the health assessor, a dental visit would be beneficial.

## Dental check recommended

Does the parent/guardian want the child to attend the School Dental Service?

YES **Post this referral form in the reply paid envelope provided and give the parent/guardian a copy.**

OR **Fax this referral to SA Dental Service 8222 9020 and give the parent/guardian a copy.** School Dental Service staff will contact parent/guardian to make an appointment.

Does the parent/guardian want the child to attend a Private Dentist?

YES **Give this referral to the parent/guardian to take to the Private Dentist and post or fax a copy of the referral to SA Dental Service in the reply paid envelope.**

For names of Private Dentists in your area, phone the Australian Dental Association (SA Branch) on 8272 8111 or look under Dentists in the Yellow Pages.

## Parent's/Guardian's Consent

I am happy for this information to be given to SA Dental Service for follow up and evaluation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of parent/guardian Date: \_\_\_\_\_

SA Dental Service Use Only:

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_



Government of South Australia  
Central/Northern Adelaide  
Health Service

SA.DENTAL.SERVICE

**Duplicate - Parents Copy**

# Severe signs of tooth decay





# Healthy Kids Check

## Check oral health – teeth and gums

IDENTIFIED ISSUES	ACTION

- Check hearing - including but not limited to:**
  - conducting an ear examination
  - seeking parental/other concerns regarding the child's hearing or listening, following instructions or language
  - questioning any history of ear infections, ear discharge, recurrent or chronic otitis media
  - referring the child to an audiologist for a hearing assessment if appropriate

IDENTIFIED ISSUES	ACTION

- Check oral health - teeth and gums (a potential tool could include Lift the Lip)**
  - questioning whether the child has visited the dentist
  - questioning how often the child brushes their teeth

IDENTIFIED ISSUES	ACTION

- Question toilet habits – including but not limited to:**
  - questioning whether the child needs assistance or can use a toilet independently
  - questioning whether the child is a bed wetter

IDENTIFIED ISSUES	ACTION

- Note known or suspected allergies**

IDENTIFIED ISSUES	ACTION





# SA Dental Service School Dental Service

- > **All dental care is free for preschoolers**
- > There are no waiting lists
- > Children who are dependents of/holders of concession cards receive free dental care
- > Dental care may include a check up, cleaning, applying fluoride, oral health and nutrition information



## The program to date

- > 1603 children have been referred into the program
- > 53% are accessing the School Dental Service for dental care within 5 weeks
- > 10.4% of referred children to June 2009, are Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander compared to 4.65% of general School Dental Service population seen in 2009



## Aboriginal Liaison Program

- > To improve oral health outcomes for eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in South Australia by increasing the number who access mainstream dental services
- > Aboriginal adults referred through the Aboriginal Liaison Program are entitled to priority general and emergency dental care, including denture related services



# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander's oral health in SA

- > Prior to the program only a small percentage of Aboriginal people attended SA Dental Service clinics
- > Despite having oral health problems, some Aboriginal people may not access dental services
  - perceived cost of dental treatment
  - lack of awareness of how and where to access services
  - difficulties with transport



## Aboriginal Liaison Program

- > Eligible Aboriginal adults are able to access priority dental care at their local Community Dental Clinic via a referral from Aboriginal Community Health Care Centres. Emergency, general and denture services are included.
- > An Oral Health Assessment tool has been developed to identify people who need dental care. A client's ability to pay the co-payment for dental services may also be assessed.
- > No need for an oral examination

Tear off this original and send in the reply paid envelope provided to:  
 SA Dental Service, 180 Flinders Street, Adelaide SA 5000.

**Original**

This patient has answered the oral health assessment questions and indicated problems with the following areas: **AB**

<b>Q1: Own teeth?</b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Q2: Pain chewing?</b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Q3: Treatment needed?</b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Q4: Avoided laughing?</b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Q5: Interrupt meals?</b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Q6: Difficulty relaxing?</b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

In the opinion of the health assessor, a dental visit would be beneficial Yes  No

Any comments .....

.....

.....

Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms

Patient (Name) .....

Address .....

..... D.O. .... Phone .....

B

Current Smoker

Yes  No

**Patient's Consent**

*I have received an explanation about the SA Dental Service project and received a brochure. I am happy for you to contact me about dental care.*

Signature of patient ..... Date ..... / ..... / .....

Health Assessment

done by .....

Date of Assessment: ..... / ..... / .....

Patient's G.P.

Dr .....

**SA Dental Service Use Only**

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# Aboriginal Liaison Program

- > The Aboriginal Liaison Program is currently running in many sites

Salisbury

Parks

Port Adelaide

Noarlunga

Gilles Plains

Murray Bridge

Victor Harbour



- > The program will be expanded to other sites across the state over the next 12 to 24 months



## Aboriginal Liaison Program

- > From July 08 – June 09, 713 eligible Aboriginal adults were assessed and referred for priority dental care.
- > 670 eligible Aboriginal adults commenced a course of dental care at one of the participating Community Dental Clinics.

## Contact Details

**Rachael Collins**

SA Dental Service

8222 9015

[rachael.collins@health.sa.gov.au](mailto:rachael.collins@health.sa.gov.au)

Or visit the display





# **Government of South Australia**

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SA Health