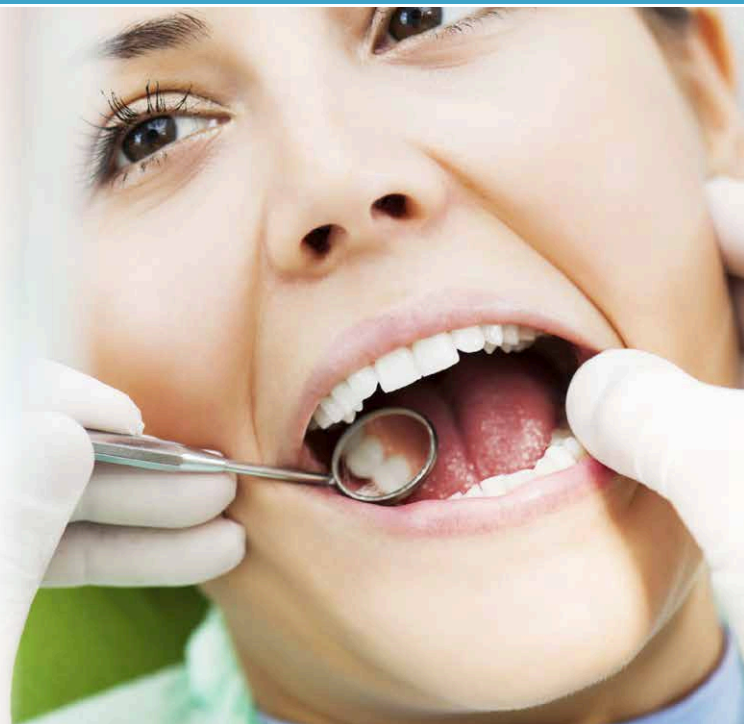


# Oral Health 2020

## Objective

To improve access to oral health services, reduce disparities in oral health status, and improve oral health through primary prevention.

*Good oral health is an important component of general health.*



## Summary

*Oral Health 2020: A Strategic Framework for Dental Health in NSW* sets the platform for oral health action in NSW over the next decade. It provides an overview of the oral health status of the population, outlines the goals for oral health services, describes target groups that require focused efforts, and outlines the high level actions that will be pursued to improve the oral health of the population.

The Framework supports the NSW Ministry of Health and Local Health Districts to plan and deliver priority programs tailored to the

health needs of the population at both a state and local level, and acknowledges the importance of working with a range of partners including universities, the Australian Dental Association and Aboriginal community controlled health services.



**96%**  
fluoridation  
coverage achieved  
in 2012.

## Where we were

In NSW, public dental services are provided to children\* and eligible adults, with the majority of dental services being funded on a private basis. The NSW public health system provides these oral health services according to criteria that prioritise emergency situations, those in most need, and those at highest risk of disease. These services are delivered by each of the Local Health Districts through dental clinics based in community health centres, hospitals, and Aboriginal community controlled health services. They are also provided by private dentists through an oral health fee for service.

\*This excludes access to general anaesthetics, for which there are eligibility criteria for children.

## What has changed

In February 2013, the NSW government signed a National Partnership Agreement with the Australian Government, to provide increased access to public dental services for eligible people. At the same time, the NSW government released *Oral Health 2020: A Strategic Framework for Dental Health in NSW*.

The goals of the *Framework* are to:

1. Improve access to oral health services in NSW.
2. Reduce disparities in the oral health status of people in NSW.
3. Improve the oral health of the NSW population through primary prevention.

The NSW Oral Health Advisory Group, which includes representatives from key partners, will inform the implementation of *Oral Health 2020*.

## Progress on activities

### *Improving access to oral health services in NSW*

The number of services able to be provided through the NSW public health system has substantially increased since the commencement of the dental National Partnership Agreement. In January to June 2012, the number of public dental services provided to adults was 184,250, while in July to December 2013 this increased to 267,459 adult service visits.

NSW Health has also harnessed the Commonwealth Voluntary Dental Graduate Year Program and Oral Health Therapy Graduate Year Program to:

- ▶ increase the number of graduates working in rural and regional areas of NSW
- ▶ support increased access to dental services in these areas
- ▶ provide new graduates with supported practice experience in areas outside metropolitan Sydney.

### **Oral Health 2020** Priority Poulations

Early  
Childhood



Children and  
Adults with  
Special Needs



Aboriginal  
and Torres  
Strait Islander  
People



Older People



Rural and  
Remote  
Communities

A pilot dental access program is underway in Brewarrina, Bourke and Walgett to improve access to both private and public dental services, by engaging a private provider to work out of existing dental clinics in these areas.

**Reducing disparities in oral health status of people in NSW**

A number of initiatives have been undertaken to boost access to dental services for Aboriginal people, and patients living in rural and regional NSW, including:

- ▶ the participation of a number of Aboriginal community controlled health services in the NSW Oral Health Fee for Service Scheme in areas of NSW where there are provider shortages
- ▶ establishing a partnership between the Centre for Oral Health Strategy, the Hunter New England Local Health District, local Aboriginal Medical Services and the Poche Centre for Indigenous Health to provide dental services and oral health promotion to Aboriginal people in the New England region.

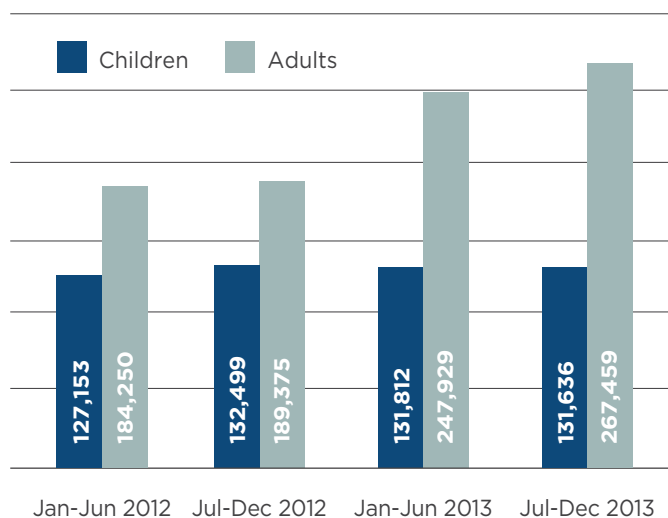


**Improving the oral health of the NSW population through primary prevention**

Primary prevention initiatives continue to play an important role in improving oral health in NSW, and NSW Health will continue to integrate oral health promotion with other health promotion activities in areas such as overweight and obesity prevention, smoking, and alcohol.

NSW will also continue the proactive approach to extending water fluoridation to un-fluoridated rural and regional communities.

**Public dental adult and child service visits, NSW, January 2012 to December 2013**



**37%** increase in the number of adult dental visits provided in the NSW Public Dental Service in 2013 compared to 2012.

## Next steps

- ▶ Completion of the Dental Access Pilot in North Western NSW
- ▶ Release of the NSW Aboriginal Oral Health Plan
- ▶ Implementation of the Aboriginal Dental Assistant Scholarship program
- ▶ Implementation of the Pilot Aboriginal Fluoride Varnish Program
- ▶ Release of Oral Health for People with Special Needs Carers Guide
- ▶ Continue to improve access to public dental services through use of the National Partnership Agreement funding
- ▶ Plan for another dental National Partnership Agreement, to commence in July 2015
- ▶ Increase community access to fluoridated water from 96 per cent to 98 per cent of the NSW population, by working with local councils to introduce fluoride to public water supplies.



## More information

*Oral Health 2020: A Strategic Framework in NSW* is available at [www.health.nsw.gov.au/oralhealth](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/oralhealth)



Health

[www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au)

SHPN (SRC) 140221