

Homeless Individuals Deserve Healthy Smiles!

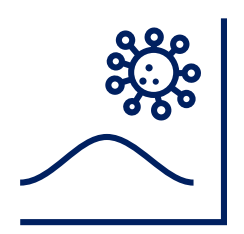
Bringing dental care directly to those in need

Ms Helen Zahra
Mr Peter Butler

Oral Health Services SWSLHD
Oral Health Consumer & Community Representative

A consumer led initiative, building stronger partnerships and collaborations between consumers, community and health care professionals of south western Sydney Local Health District.

Background



Issue: High rates of oral health neglect among the homeless in south western Sydney (SWS).



Impact of COVID-19: Increased homelessness due to financial, mental health and domestic challenges.

Objectives

Address Root Causes: Identify and address the underlying factors contributing to oral health issues in the community.

Improve Oral Health: Enhance oral health outcomes through targeted interventions and preventive measures.

Support Community Healing: Facilitate community healing by providing comprehensive oral health support and resources.

Raise Awareness: Increase awareness of available oral health services within the public health system.

Community Education: Educate on the significance of oral health for overall well-being.

Mobile Dental Truck Outreach: Operate a mobile dental unit during school holidays to deliver affordable and accessible dental care at strategic locations in the Macarthur area.

Methods

1. **Planning:** Scoping and pre-planning conducted.
2. **Conduct focus Groups:** Stakeholders engaged included Uniting Church Campbelltown, Macarthur Homeless Steering Committee, Councils - Camden, Campbelltown and Wollondilly, Homes NSW, Department of Communities and Justice.
3. **Surveys:** Conducted with homeless food van attendees.
4. **Created booking register:** Created with service providers and community organisations. Assists with sending clients information and referrals.

Analysis

To date, there has been:



Executive Support: from Oral Health Services SWSLHD.



Increased stakeholder involvement.

Conclusion

Commitment from SWSLHD staff to provide high-quality oral health service to the community is ongoing.

The dental van outreach visits are commencing 30th September 2024 - 1st week of Term 3 NSW school holiday period.

Visiting sites include:

- St Vincent de Paul Society - Campbelltown
- Uniting Church - Campbelltown
- Blue Wren House-Camden Women's Shelter

This project aims to provide dental care for all, by spreading awareness and providing inclusive health services. By making oral health universal, we forge a stronger, healthier community together.



Acknowledgment

Thank you to:

- the Oral Health Services Executive and Leadership Team for supporting this consumer led initiative; specifically A/Prof. R.Srinivas, S.McDonald, R.Farrell & K.Fitzgerald.
- all SWSLHD staff who passionately participated in this outreach project. This includes Campbelltown, Narellan, Liverpool Dental Clinics & Mobile Dental Service Program, and outreach team members L.Luu, R.Jamee, V.Erdes, Z.Aye & K. Bagangan.