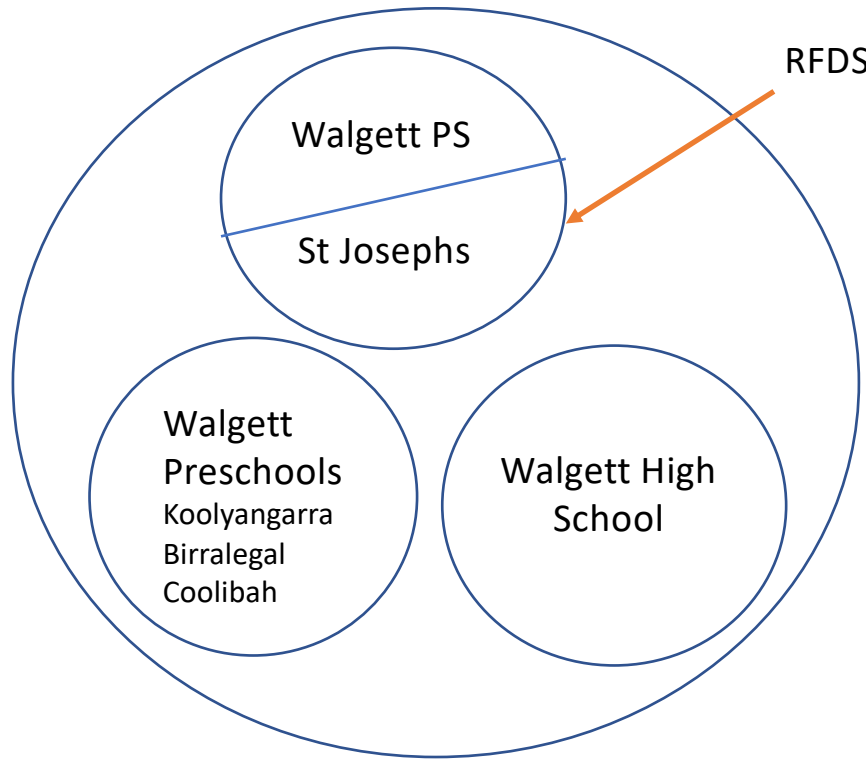
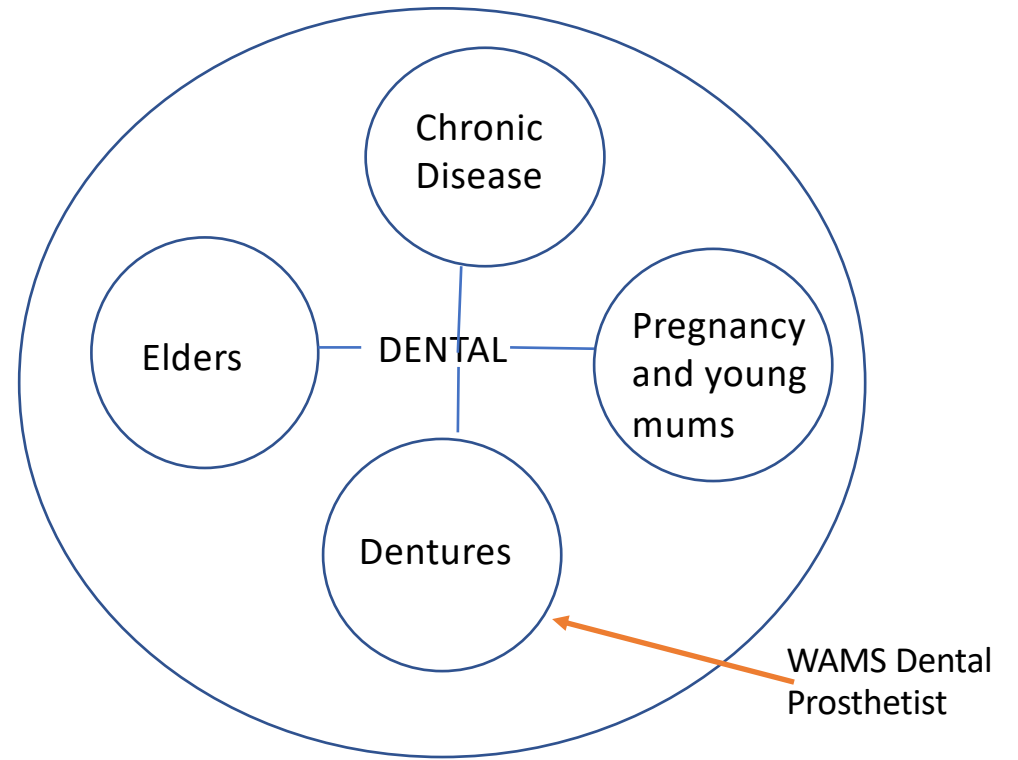


Walgett Aboriginal Medical Service Dental Program



Children up to 18 years
WAMS Oral Health Therapist



Adults
WAMS Dentist

WAMS Child Dental Program

Delivered by Dental/Oral Health Therapist and WAMS Dental Staff

AIM

To improve the oral health of children in Walgett through the provision of preventive based oral health care in the context of a whole-of-health, primary health care approach.

- Focus on prevention and early intervention, atraumatic dental care
- Annual dental screening at school and preschool and at health checks
- Provide regular Fluoride treatments and oral health advice, and necessary fillings and other needed dental services
- Support school based tooth brushing program with Fluoride toothpaste
- Participated in community based oral health and general health promotion activities

Participating schools

- Walgett Primary
- Walgett High School
- Birralelegal preschool
- Koolyangarra preschool
- Coolibah preschool

WAMS dental has been focusing on the kids at Walgett Primary and high school due to the higher rates of dental disease. As of March 2019, the Royal Flying Doctor Service has been providing service to the children at St Joseph's school.

Since WAMS started employing a Dental (now Oral Health) Therapist in 2012, the number of young children on the waiting list for dental treatment under general anaesthesia in Dubbo has considerably decreased. (Working on getting together data related to this). This is in contrast to the rest of the State where the numbers on the lists are increasing.

WAMS Child Dental Program

Advocacy

The WAMS dental team and WAMS management have been advocating for the implementation of water fluoridation in Walgett for the past 20 years. A fluoridation plant was installed in 2015 (funded by NSW Health Department). Its management is the responsibility of the Walgett Shire Council.

Thus far there is no one in Walgett with the necessary training and skills to operate the plant.

In 2014 WAMS obtained funding to install a water chiller at the public school, to encourage the drinking of water. WAMS supplies water bottles. WAMS was the first community to do so in NSW. The Education Department is now rolling out school based water coolers in NSW.

Medicare Funding

WAMS was one of the first AMSs in NSW to sign up for the Medicare-funded Child Dental Benefits Schedule (CDBS), in early 2014.

Eligible children (up to the age of 18 years) are funded up to \$1000 over a 2 year period for basic dental services.

There are still AMSs in NSW that have not taken up the CDBS program.

Partnerships

WAMS has a good working relationship with the Western NSW LHD.

Recently the LHD released one of its Oral Health Therapists to come monthly for the WAMS child dental program.

WAMS Adult Dental Program

Delivered by Dentist, Dental Prosthetist and WAMS Dental Staff

AIM

To improve the oral health of the population in Walgett through the provision of preventive based oral health care in the context of a whole-of-health, primary health care approach.

WAMS works with locum dentists who provide general dental care to adults, and to any children referred from the OHT, or child emergency appointments when the OHT is not in Walgett.

The general pattern of adult attendance is largely relief of pain-based, with some people attending for regular dental care.

WAMS Dental is working with WAMS general health programs to improve internal referrals to Dental from Chronic Disease, Midwifery, and others.

Dentures

The Dental Prosthetist specialises in making dentures, and is employed when the denture wait list has at least 10 people ready for dentures.

People requesting or identified as needing dentures must first be cleared by the dentist to be dentally fit before going on the list for dentures, that is, any bad teeth have been removed, fillings done, gums checked.

History of WAMS Dental Program

1989

WAMS received the Wally Byers dental van from Redfern AMS, to start providing dental services to the Walgett community. WAMS employs Dentist when available, and local dental assistants. Dental Therapist from Bourke comes monthly to provide school dental services through the public dental surgery.

1995

WAMS builds 2 surgery dental clinic.

2003

Full time dentist leaves WAMS.

2003-04

Dentist from Coonamble visits one day per week. Defrauds WAMS and is asked to leave WAMS. Despite extensive forensic searching of records and invoices, the Dental Board refuses to acknowledge guilt by this dentist. NOTE: This Dentist was finally arrested in Bourke for fraud in 2011.

2004

Dentist from Cobar visits part time to help re-establish the WAMS dental program. WAMS relies on visiting dentists, and works on getting dentists to become regulars so that relationships and knowledge are strengthened. Dubbo Public Dental clinic sends Dental Therapist occasionally to Walgett.

2012

Bila Muuji Dental Therapist starts working monthly at WAMS for the child dental program.

2014

WAMS employs Lynne Turner, dental therapist in Dubbo, to visit WAMS twice monthly. WAMS achieves Dental Practice Accreditation, the first AMS in NSW to do so. As of 2019 there are several AMSs in NSW without dental accreditation. WAMS installs water chiller at public school, in anticipation of Fluoride in the water – which still hasn't been implemented. The first community in NSW to do so and now the Education Department is rolling out water chillers into rural/remote schools.

2018

WAMS employs part time Dental Prosthetist to provide dentures.

WAMS Dental Funding

ATSIC funding as part of overall AMS funding til 1995.

1995

Aboriginal health funding transferred from ATSIC to Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Services OATSIHS. Commonwealth government declares dental funding is a States responsibility.

1996

OATSIHS allows AMSs with existing dental programs to continue using Commonwealth funds. Any new dental program to seek State funding.

2005

WAMS develops an agreement with the Dubbo public dental program for maximum annual funding of \$52,000 pro rata according to numbers of weeks worked by dentist, to recognise that WAMS provides services to their eligible clientele. WAMS charges dental fees for private dental services.

2007

WAMS is contributing partner to Bila Muuji oral health program.

2011

NSW Health provides WAMS with an annual dental grant of \$113,000 without any consultation with WAMS. Ongoing annual grant CPI-indexed.

2014

WAMS signs up for the funding program from Medicare, the Child Dental Benefits Schedule CDBS, \$1000 over 2 years for eligible children under the age of 18 years. One of the first AMSs in NSW to do so. Many NSW AMSs took several years to sign up for this funding if at all.

2018

Dubbo public dental, after discussion with WAMS, ceases pro rata funding due to their changed circumstances under the National Partnership Agreement.

