

Public dental services for Indigenous peoples

Agreed actions

Victorian Advisory Council on Koori Health Oral Health Sub-committee

Overview

In October 2007, the Primary Health Branch asked chief executive officers of community health services, and hospitals that operate community dental clinics, questions via email relating to Indigenous peoples' access to public dental services.

Responses were received from forty-five out of the fifty-one community health services and hospitals (88%). A range of responses were provided: some were lengthy and detailed, others were brief, some were highly enthusiastic about possible future work, some detailed work currently underway, a small minority indicated a reluctance to progress work in this area.

Actions agreed by the VACKH Oral Health Subcommittee

1. The Dental Program will liaise with the Aboriginal Health Promotion and Chronic Care Partnership (AHPACCP) program to determine any opportunities for oral health promotion to be included in relevant initiatives and if any dental service access issues could be addressed through the AHPACC partnerships arrangements.
2. Dental Health Services Victoria (DHSV) will develop a communications strategy to ensure that all relevant personnel in both DHSV and community dental programs, are aware that Indigenous clients are entitled to priority access to services. The strategy should capture community dental clinics that are operated by hospitals (cf community health services) and are therefore not otherwise captured by the Community Health Services Demand Management Framework.
3. DHSV will amend its Funding and Service Agreement to clearly and unequivocally reflect that Indigenous peoples have priority access.
4. DHSV will ensure that Indigenous peoples are a target population in their oral health promotion plan.
5. DHS will include Indigenous peoples as a target population in the program planning component of the evidence-based review of oral health promotion particularly in the context of a population-based social determinants of health approach.
6. DHS will work with the Victorian Aboriginal Controlled Health Organisation to consider the issue of co-payments and the most efficient and effective way to deliver dental services to Koori clients.