



# The Oral Health of Australia

## Prevalence of dental decay

- Dental caries (tooth decay) is the most prevalent health problem in Australia
- Periodontal (gum) diseases are the fifth most prevalent health problem among Australians
- About 90% of all tooth loss can be attributed to dental caries and periodontal disease, both of which are **preventable and treatable**

*(Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council, 2001)*

- Although preventable, dental decay is the second most costly diet-related disease in Australia, with an economic impact comparable to heart disease and diabetes

*(AIHW, Health Expenditure Australia 2010-11)*



## Childhood tooth decay and dental visits

- In 2010, 55% of six year olds had experienced decay in their primary (baby) teeth
- In 2010, 48% of 12 year olds had experienced decay in their permanent teeth

*(Oral Health and Dental Care in Australia: Key facts and figures 2015, AIHW)*

- NSW had the highest proportion of children aged 5 to 14 who had never visited the dentist (15.6%, compared with 11% nationally)
- 46% of children in NSW had not visited a dentist before the age of five

*(The National Child Oral Health Study 2012-14)*



## Adult tooth decay

- Almost 29% of Australians aged 25 to 44 had untreated tooth decay
- Rates of untreated decay were highest among those with the lowest household income, and among those living in remote or very remote areas
- 19% of Australians over 65 years of age had no natural teeth

*(Oral Health and Dental Care in Australia: Key facts and figures 2015, AIHW)*

## Potentially preventable hospitalisations

- Dental conditions were the third-leading cause of potentially preventable hospitalisations in NSW (and nationally) in 2015-16
- There were 16,693 potentially preventable hospitalisations for dental conditions in NSW in 2015-16
- Dental conditions were the leading cause of potentially preventable hospitalisations for children aged 5 to 14 in NSW in 2014-15.
- Dental conditions were the second-leading cause of potentially preventable hospitalisations for kids aged 0 to 4.

*(www.healthstats.nsw.gov.au)*

## Oral health hospitalisations in NSW by reason, 2014-15

- 1) Developmental disorders of teeth: 19,895 (55%)
- 2) Dental caries: 8,979 (25%)
- 3) Other diagnoses: 4,387 (12%)
- 4) Other infection of teeth or gums: 2,140 (6%)
- 5) Injury: 487 (1.4%)

*(www.healthstats.nsw.gov.a)*

## Public dental waiting lists in NSW

- 13,555 children and 98,322 adults were on NSW public dental waiting lists in June 2017
- Waiting times for general dental treatment increased 46% in NSW from December 2014 to December 2016, up from 9.73 months to 14.24 months

*(Senate Community Affairs Committee)*