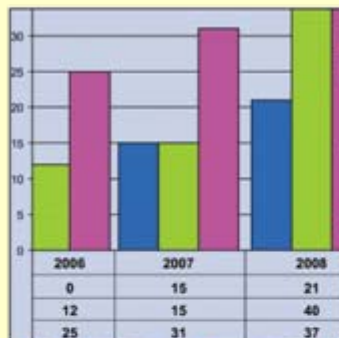


LIFESMILES 4 KOORI KIDS

An Oral Health Program for Aboriginal Children

October 2008




2008 NSW Health EXPO



Prepared by Anne Pritchard

GSAHS

Brought to you by:

PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS 

Aim

- Reduce the incidence of Dental Caries for aboriginal children in the Greater Albury area.
- Establish partnerships and promote ongoing oral health improvement for the local Koori community.

Nature and Extent of the Problem

Compared to non indigenous counterparts, Aboriginal children have much poorer oral health :

- Twice the decay rate,
- More frequent visits to dental services for a serious problem,
- Fewer fillings,
- 0-5 yr olds are admitted to hospital for dental problems more frequently than any other reason.
- More extractions. (AIHW DSRU 2003)

Nature and Extent of the Problem

- Evidence provided by Albury Dental Clinic reveals:
- Koori kids are more likely to miss or arrive late for appointments
- Less likely to return to complete a course of care.
- Dental fear impacts on access & service provision.
- Communication difficulties (contact detail changes etc)
- Legal guardian often not main carer
- Oral hygiene and diet improvement often required at home.

Strategic Importance

- NSW State Health Plan Strategic Direction 4: LS4KK is building regional partnerships between Aboriginal Health service, education dept and Oral Health Services to facilitate access to and the delivery of oral health outcomes for indigenous children. Community consultation and coordinated services ensure improved, culturally appropriate communication, transport, upskilling of staff and improved identification and referral pathways for children to oral health services.
- NSW Oral Framework for Action 2010: 3.4 including priority 3.4.3. Upskilling of health staff in the Aboriginal medical service establishment of strong relationships and improved referral pathways, transport have reduced barriers for children to access the service.

Planning & Implementing Solutions

Establish partnership established between Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health and GSAHS Oral Health Services-2006.

- Funding
- Working group-project team
- Consultation with community

Identify Barriers to access and service provision:

- Transport
- Culturally appropriate communication
- Education
- Fear
- Lack of ownership of service.
- Style of service delivery did not foster positive outcomes.

Planning & Implementing Solutions

Strategies:

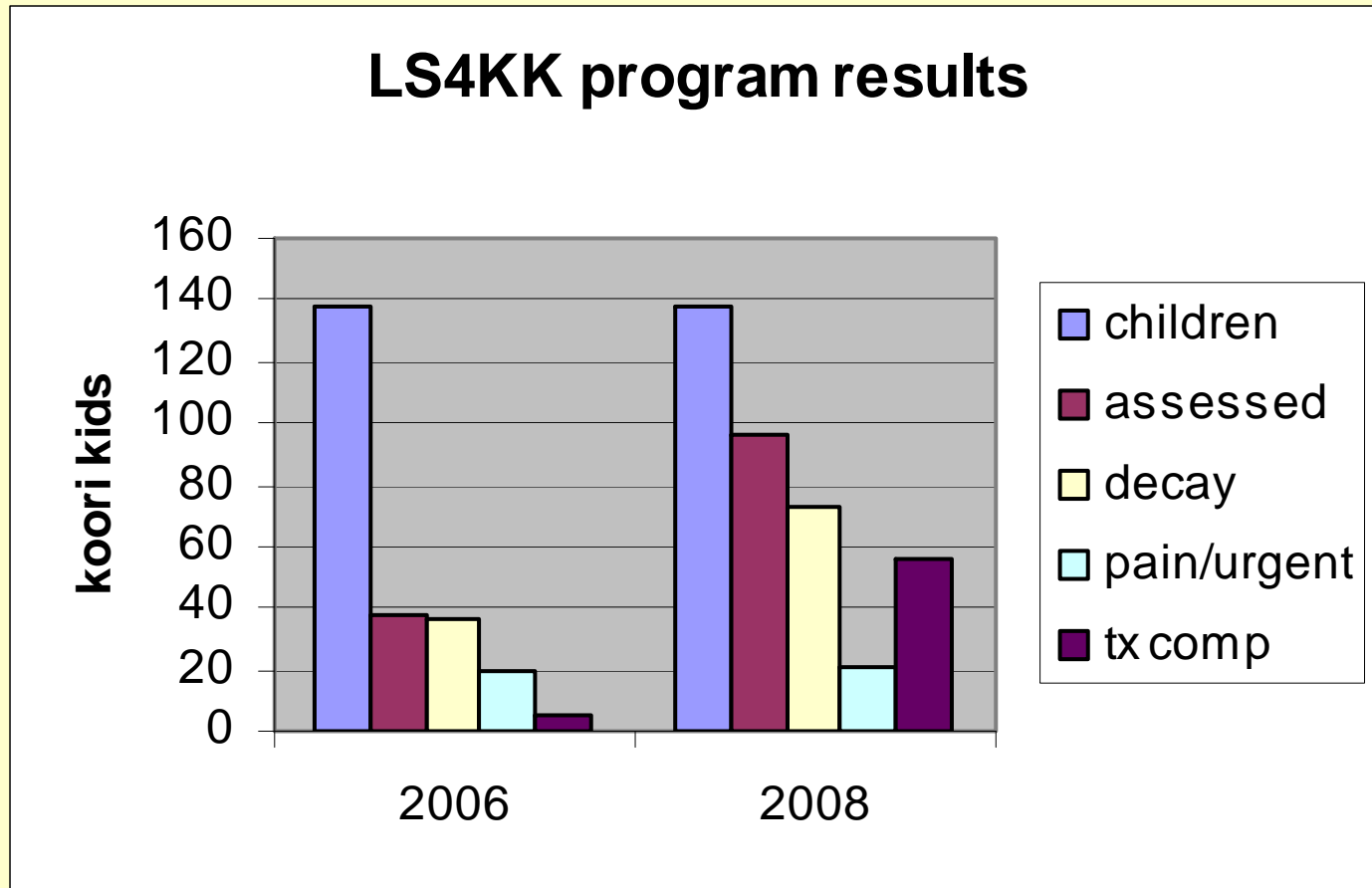
- Deliver oral health services where possible from within the Koori Community.
- Train staff, up skill existing AWAHS professionals to have oral health awareness and referral pathways.
- Appoint key Oral health promotion officer within AWAHS to coordinate Oral health promotion and facilitate clinic access.
- Improve cultural and community awareness in the provision of oral health services from Albury Dental Clinic.

Outcomes & Evaluation

- Positive outcomes reported by clinic and community.
- More positive parent guardian interactions with the clinic.
- Sense of ownership of program for the community.
- Courses of care individually monitored, followed through.
- Increased oral health awareness, knowledge, at Aboriginal health service.
- Regular referrals from other health professionals in Koori community.
- Services provided from Albury Dental Clinic more culturally aware, timely, effective and appropriately delivered.

Clinical Outcomes and Evaluation:

Chart reflects situation at 03/2008



Sustaining Change

- Lifesmiles 4 Koorikids Program recognised as valuable and sustainable by Oral health services Aboriginal Health service and koori community.
- Supported by MoU for service provision between AWAHS and Greater Southern Oral Health.
- Performance indicators met supporting ongoing funding opportunities for AWAHS.
- Strong communication and working relationships have been established between all stakeholders.

Lessons Learned

When offering a service take the time to find out what the recipients require, and how best to provide it:

- Listen and respond creatively
- Be open and flexible in service delivery.
- Embrace change
- Review regularly modify where required.

Future Scope

- Model and strategies transferable to other health disciplines
- Opportunities exist to share screenings and health promotion with other health disciplines.

With thanks to:

PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS 