

# Victorian Action Plan to Prevent Oral Disease

## Annual progress update 2024-25

### PRIORITY AREA 1 | Improve the oral health of school children



**40**

agencies provided  
Smile Squad  
services



Visited **584** schools  
Examined **63,710** students  
Distributed **322,000+** oral health packs  
Applied fluoride varnish to more than **44,880** students.  
Provided fissure sealants to more than **17,617** students.

Launched a third regional specialist hub in Latrobe Valley in November 2024  
**1,232** students were referred and **1,135** students received specialist care

### PRIORITY AREA 2 | Promote healthy environments

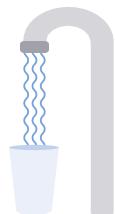


In 2024, partnered with  
**34 community organisations**

to implement the program in **745** local early childhood services across **58** LGAs reaching **54,726** children within the early childhood services.

**374** early childhood services achieved or maintained the Smiles 4 Miles award, representing 50% of registered services.

Oral Health Victoria (OHV) updated the LGA oral health profiles in partnership with the Victorian Department of Health.



OHV supported Northern Grampians Shire Council to promote community water fluoridation. The Council resolved to advocate expansion to suburbs including St. Arnaud and Stawell on 5th May 2025.

#### Healthy Kids Healthy Futures (HKHF)

**13** of the 18 priority actions are being effectively delivered.



supported **200** education and community organisations to improve healthy eating and oral health.



**42** organisations completed the Healthy Eating and Oral Health priority.

**35** out of 73 Community Health Promotion funded agencies supported implementation.

#### Healthy Eating Advisory Services

Supported **748** organisations to implement Victorian Government healthy food and drink policies and guidelines and create healthier food environments.

Estimated reach - **257,207** people = 3.7% of the Victorian population

All **80** public health services (494 sites) have been coached by HEAS to implement Healthy choices policy directive. 100% achieved all food and drink targets.

#### Local Public Health Units

Grampians Public Health Unit partnered with the La Trobe Violet Vines Marshman Centre for Rural Health Research to deliver place-based oral health education in four regional towns, focusing on improving care for older populations and promoting the benefits of water fluoridation.

Ovens Murray Public Health Unit assessed community water fluoridation across the region, incorporating input from the Department of Health Water Unit, North East Water, Oral Health Victoria, and local prevention partners.

## PRIORITY AREA 2 | Promote healthy environments

### Community Dental Agencies



- Bellarine Community Health delivered the Little Food Growers program in partnership with Geelong Regional Libraries and early childhood.



- Holstep Health ran the Taste of Tucker family nutrition program for 3081 families, targeting First Nations and multicultural communities.



- Boort District Health incorporated the healthy eating tick system at their café.

## PRIORITY AREA 3 | Improve oral health literacy

### healthy families healthy smiles

Trained over

**1,666**

health and  
non-health  
professionals  
in oral health



Launched  
engaging and  
convenient new  
toothbrushing  
packs that  
promote key oral  
health messages.



#### New & updated resources:

- Healthy mouth, healthy pregnancy fact sheet
- Oral Health Milestones messages for Maternal and Child Health Nurses
- 6 tips to help kids brush resource
- OHV Oral Health Messages 2024

Expanded the *Let's be food explorers* module, with **101** early childhood professionals registered for this eLearn.

Partnered with Playgroup Victoria and Public Libraries Victoria to support oral health education, reaching approx. **1,281** families.



Translated Smile  
Squad brochure into  
**30 languages**.

**Oral Cancer**

PREVENT • DETECT • REFER

### Oral Cancer Screening and Prevention Program

Launched the consumer  
tested Betel nut and oral  
cancer brochure



## PRIORITY AREA 3 | Improve oral health literacy

### Community Dental Agencies



Your Community Health, Latrobe Community Health, Holstep Health, and Peninsula Health developed cessation resources and delivered smoking and vaping cessation programs, advice and referrals.



- Your Community Health developed a Soft Food Diet Guide for patients awaiting dentures and introduced CoTreat AI reports post-preventive appointments.



Royal Flying Doctor Service

- Royal Flying Doctor Service ran culturally safe education program for Indigenous students in Mansfield and Sea Lake.



- Sunraysia CHS provided oral health education and one-on-one sessions with young mothers' groups.



- Holstep Health ran Early Childhood Expo, Malahang Festival, library pop-ups, and developed 'Ride a Chair' video for preschoolers



- Echuca Regional Health café ran live radio interviews with oral health tips



- Grampians Health promoted oral health through NAIDOC Week, cancer wellness clinic, and aged care forums



- Sunbury Cobaw CH promoted oral health at First Nations Health Day at library.



- Barwon Health, Echuca RH and Grampians Health trained aged care staff and carers on oral hygiene best practice.



- Echuca RH ran workshops for eating disorders and dental emergencies for ED doctors and delivered education on dental-systemic health links for medical interns.



- Echuca Regional Health delivered flyers for parents and children 0–3 years with diet and oral hygiene guidance, including information on dummies and weaning.



- Bairnsdale Regional Health Service delivered storytime events during Dental Health Week

## PRIORITY AREA 4 | Improve oral health promotion, screening, early detection and prevention services



Updated The Mouth: a guide to oral health in schools for primary school nurses.

Designed a training program for secondary school nurses and piloted with eight nurses.

Provided **295** free oral health checks and **1,123** oral health packs to children at Smile Squad events at Melbourne Zoo.

Trained **71** visiting primary school nurses in **12** Department of Education regions.



In 2024 Smiles 4 Miles partnered with **18** local community dental agencies to screen **10,453** children. **44%** received fluoride varnish



OHV is partnering with Early learning Victoria (ELV) to explore the integration of oral health promotion within **50** planned government-run early learning centres.



### Early Years Model of Oral Health

OHV's Case for Change: Recommendations to improve the oral health of pregnant women and children aged 0-5 years in Victoria through oral health promotion and prevention approved by OHV Executive.

Phase 3 (design solution) commenced.

### OHV's Homelessness Project

Formed a diverse steering committee with representatives from community dental agencies, community support organisations, universities, Department of Health, OHV and consumers with lived experience of homelessness

Identified barriers and enablers to accessing oral health care for Victorians experiencing homelessness in Victoria

Mapped existing oral health promotion initiatives for people experiencing homelessness in Victoria, across Australia and internationally.



### Oral Cancer Screening and Prevention Program

**231** oral health professionals

**198** general practitioners completed oral cancer training

Pilot project (GP oral cancer screening):

- **6** Victorian general practices;
- **49** risk-based screenings undertaken;
- **27** patients referred for specialist assessment.

### Published papers:

- Promoting oral cancer screening by GPs in Australia: strengthening primary health care (Australian Journal of General Practitioners, Dec 2024)
- Oral health practitioners' knowledge, perceptions and practices relating to e-cigarettes (Journal of Dentistry, Apr 2025) in collaboration with University of Melbourne.

## PRIORITY AREA 4 | Improve oral health promotion, screening, early detection and prevention services

### Community Dental Agencies



- Bendigo Health delivered 291 Telehealth sessions, 248 special needs patients treated, 253 Nitrous Oxide inhalations, refugee pop-up clinics.



- Barwon Health delivered the Wide Smiles Oral Health Program and Dental Van outreach.



- Latrobe CHS delivered oral health sessions at community playgroups including Monash, Chinese and Mabuhay groups and expanded the Little Smiles Program to 40 preschools.



- Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative delivered the Connected Beginnings Program (0-5 years) with oral health presentations.



- Peninsula Health delivered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander based oral health programs, mum & bub programs, and MCHN services.



- DPV Health delivered campaigns on healthy eating and sugar reduction through Healthy Schools for Healthy Future and High5 for a Super You.



- Holstep Health delivered the INFANT program linking dietitians with oral health promotion



- Boort District Health applied fluoride varnish to all patients due to absence of fluoridation in local water supply.



- Latrobe CHS delivered fluoride applications at early childhood learning centres, kindergartens, playgroups, and schools.