

Supporting residents of Catherine House by providing dental screening, health education, and ongoing referrals to receive appropriate care.

In 2018 oral health student volunteers from the Adelaide Dental School conducted two educational workshops, oral health screens and provided appropriate referrals for the permanent residents of Catherine House. Catherine House is a homelessness service for women victims of domestic violence based in the Adelaide CBD. This intervention was an example of a streamlined approach to accessing dental health services for a vulnerable population group. It allowed the identification of oral conditions requiring immediate care (dental pain from caries or pulpitis, dental trauma, suspected oral cancers and cellulitis). It allowed for more timely access to dental health services for women victims of domestic violence as those requiring immediate care were triaged through the Community Outreach Dental Program (CODP) located at Common Ground. The participants' oral health quality of life score was gathered through the completion of the Oral Health Related Quality of Life instrument namely OHIP-14, at both visits and a comparison made. The risk of caries was minimised through the primary and secondary caries intervention.

A positive outcome of this intervention was that one of the student volunteers involved in a pilot program in 2017, was the registered Oral Health Therapy supervisor for both visits in 2018. It is expected that a continuum of care by student volunteers and recent graduates will evolve as it builds trust amongst the clients as well as the directors of Catherine House.

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