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# A new approach to the education of dental practitioners

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# Overview of presentation

- Definition of dental degree course
- Requirements of degree course
- Challenges, opportunities, strengths

# Bachelor of Oral Health

## Oral Health Therapist

- First recommended by WHO 1984, recognised as the most effective practitioner in oral prevention.
- Graduate profile is;
  - an autonomous registered dental practitioner
  - with scopes of practice in all core dental tasks.
  - unique competency in individual and community oral health promotion.
- Graduates can work in private and public health settings; own their own practice.

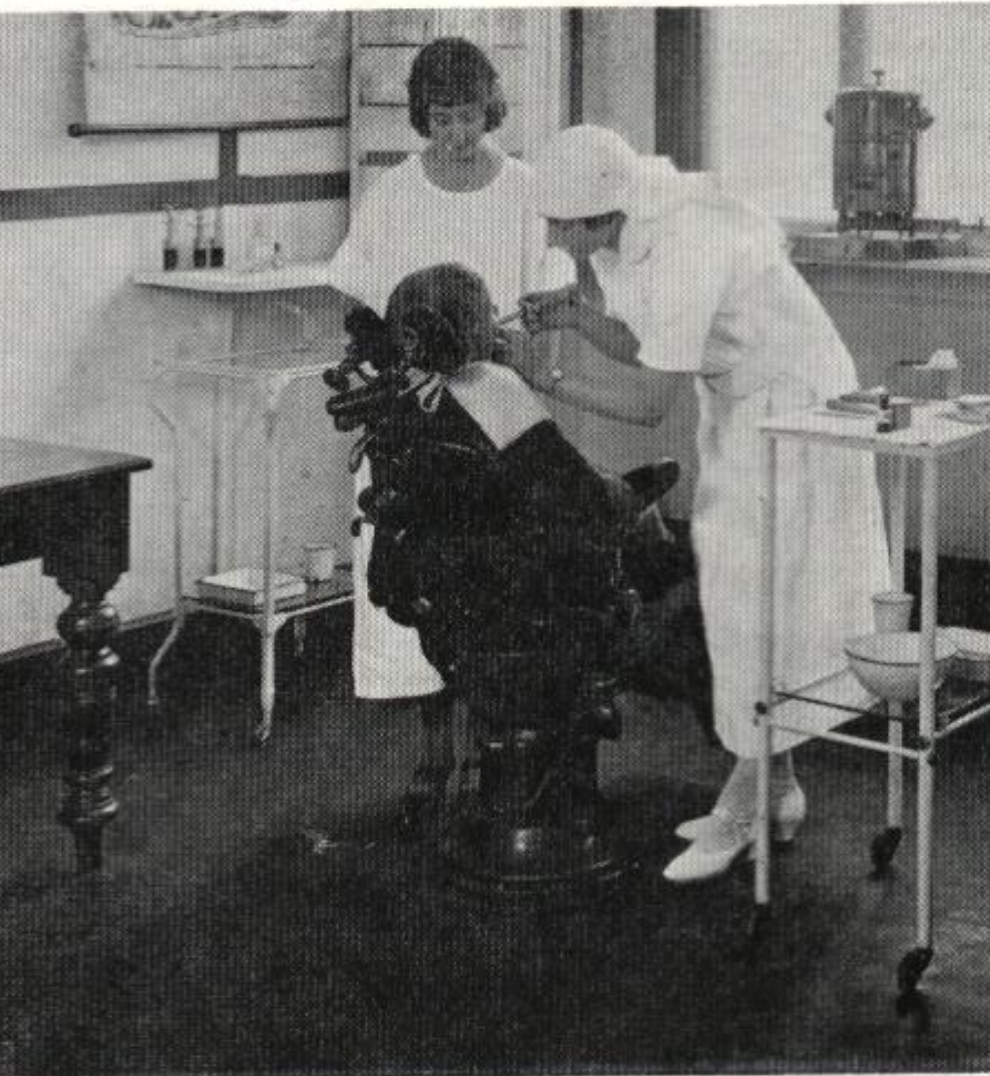


A Flashback to Early Days

The NZ School Dental Nurse started treating patients in 1921.

Patients were mainly children as it was believed that removing dental disease in children would eradicate the disease from the adult population.

An all female profession, restricted to employment in the public health sector.



The Extraction Room 1925.

An endemic of oral disease within the European settlers dictated many extractions.

Despite similar records of dental disease in Australia, the role wasn't introduced until 1970's.

# Bachelor of Oral Health requirements

- Must meet compliance with AHPRA and be fully accredited with the Australian Dental Council.
- Students must 'practice' under fully registered practitioners, all scopes of their clinical requirements on patients, and be assessed as clinically competent before degree can be awarded.
- Cost of establishing dental schools for student learning and meeting ADC compliance has restricted dental schools in the past to metropolitan areas.

# BOH model at CSU

- CSU established a partnership agreement with Holmesglen Institute of TAFE, Melbourne 2013.
- 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> year CSU students can complete their lectures and sim clinic requirements in either School of Dentistry Wagga campus or HG campus.
- 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> year students follow the same curriculum and complete the same course requirements.
- 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> year HG students travel to CSU clinics (Albury & Wagga campuses) to treat patient requirements.

## BOH model at CSU contd

3<sup>rd</sup> year students “attend” lectures presented at Wagga campus via VC & Skype links.

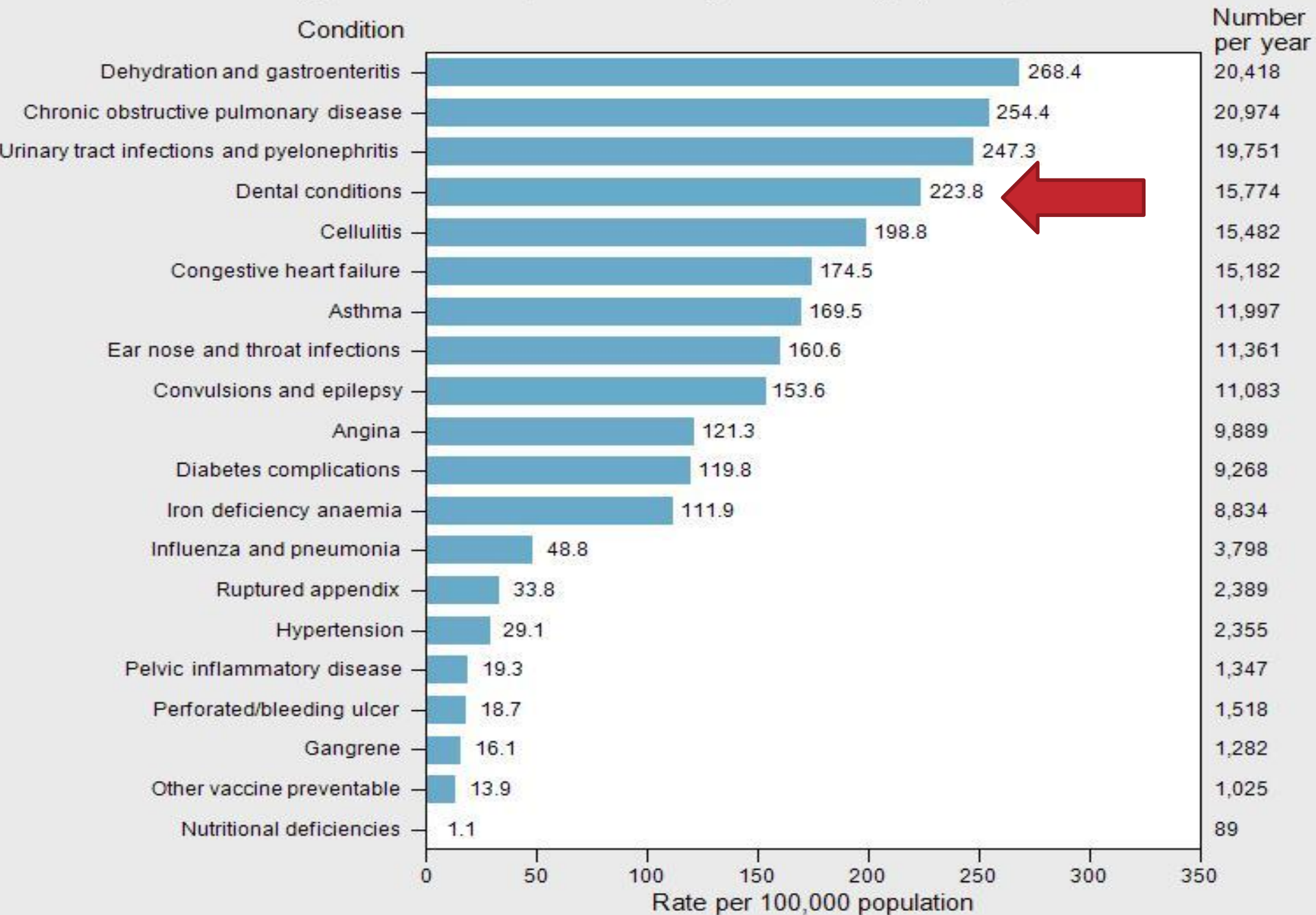
They complete accreditation requirements in clinical hours and set of competency skills in clinical placement clinics.



## Roles and scopes of practice

- Oral health therapists were initiated to have important roles in prevention of oral disease and promoting oral health.
- Questionable as to whether the hours of prevention and oral health promotion are more or less to the hours of treating oral disease, due to small numbers of oral health therapists in the workforce.

# Potentially preventable hospitalisations by condition type, NSW, 2010-11



# Disease of the oral cavity

Smooth surface caries  
+ periodontal disease



Gross / rampant caries



# Recommendations

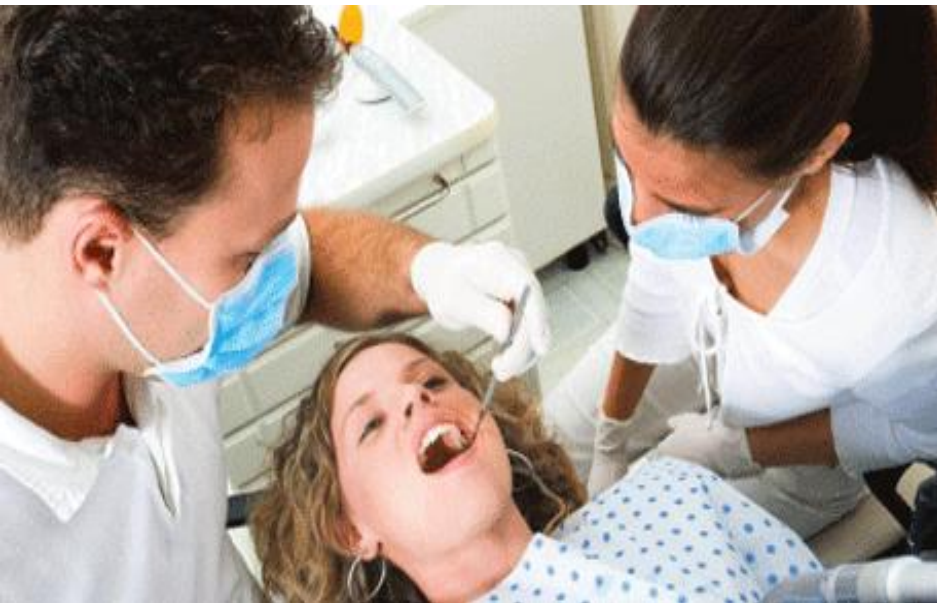
- Primary level of preventive dentistry must be available to all age groups.
  - Expansion of oral health therapists current level of care.
- Changes to the level of clinical activity.
  - Preventive services must be a delegated proportion of all services delivered by OHT's.
- Targeting of preventive dentistry to specific population groups.
  - People with disability (physical, mental, psychological), chronic diseases, communities most likely to be effected by poor health

# Strengths & opportunities of the CSU model

- CSU is the only dental degree course where significant student learning is delegated off-site.
- HG facilities allow for an increase in student enrolments
  - 2009 1<sup>st</sup> year enrolments = 20.
  - 2016 1<sup>st</sup> year enrolments = 70.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> year student achievement 2016 duplicates previous years.
- Graduates are highly flexible, highly adaptable, very high rates of employment.

# Questions Thank you

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<http://moderndentistry.com.au/2014>



<http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/media/photo/dental-care-school>

# References

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