

Kimberley Dental Team

KDT teams continue to engage with remote communities, providing invaluable dental services in a friendly and happy team environment. Volunteers express the pleasure they feel in seeing the difference made by the KDT education program and being able to relieve chronic pain for people who have been suffering.

MAY 2023

Week 1. *Team members: Dr Jilen Patel, Dr Simon Shanahan, DA Ranae Russo, Jyoti Arora, final year dental students Benny Sherrif and Lilly Lui, Jan and John Owen AM.*

Our first team for 2023 arrived full of excitement to be in the Kimberley region and to start this adventure. A team briefing was followed by a visit to the shops to stock up and then a sunset picnic on Cable Beach. After a smooth and quick pack, we set off on our journey on Sunday morning to Fitzroy with our three KDT vehicles and accommodation van. It was with great relief that we navigated the new temporary crossing

across the mighty settled in at Fitzroy travelled to Bayulu and treatment. up camp and went to where we set up on community was remarkable work has normal. Once we school, the convoy to Halls Creek arriving



Martuwarra (Fitzroy) river and Lodge. On Monday the team School to provide screenings Tuesday morning, we packed Muludja community school the basketball court. This flooded in January, but been done to return life to finished treatment at the set off for 3 hours to the east in the early evening.

Wednesday to Friday were spent at the Halls Creek District High School where we screened all the children and then set up a clinic in a disused classroom. The team also made a visit to Menkawum Ngurra frail aged centre to provide dental checks for the residents. Our final night was spent enjoying a sausage sizzle and the wonderful Kimberley sky at Caroline Pool.

Week 2. *Team members: Dr Jilen Patel, Dr Moses Lee, DA Ranae Russo, David Owen, Sue Worsley, final year dental students Ben Lundberg and Chris Lee, Jan and John Owen AM.*

The week 1 team set off for Kununurra on Saturday after breakfast and those of us remaining in Halls Creek spent the weekend restocking and finishing paperwork. Due to flight delays, the incoming team arrived quite late on Sunday evening. On Monday half the team spent a busy day at the Halls Creek hospital clinic and the rest screened children at Red Hill School and then set off for Ringer Soak to stay overnight and work Tuesday. However, when arriving in Ringer Soak we were faced with a medical incident which we attended as there were no medical staff. Unfortunately, the person involved passed away and we made the decision to drive back to Halls Creek rather than stay in the community where there was so much distress. We navigated the 2 ½ hour drive in the dark arriving safely at 8.30pm. The rest of the week kept us busy returning to Red Hill school on Wednesday to treat children screened on Monday. The whole team moved to Yiyili Community on Thursday where many adults and children were treated. It was delightful to be back in this community which was the first community we visited back in 2009. Friday night was spent enjoying snacks and a sausage sizzle at Caroline Pool.



Week 3. *Team members: Dr Tim Clair, Dr Ashlee Bence, DA Mylita Levings, DA Kirra Moody, Ashleigh Owen, final year dental students Amy Zhang and Breeanna Reynolds, Jan and John Owen AM.*

The outgoing team set off early to Kununurra on Saturday to meet the incoming flight and hand over the vehicles to our week 3 team who then drove to Halls Creek that afternoon. Sunday was a leisurely day and involved some shopping and visiting local sights such as China Wall and the lookout. Monday morning was spent at the hospital clinic and then we set off after lunch to Warmun community where we worked Tuesday and Wednesday at the Ngalangangpum school where we screened the children and treated those in need along with many community members. Most of the team drove back to Halls Creek on Wednesday afternoon and worked at the Halls Creek Hospital clinic for the rest of the week. On Thursday a small team visited Frog Hollow, Purnululu school to screen and then treat children identified as needing care and adult community members in need. On Friday a small team worked at the YYMS clinic. An earlyish finish meant that we could enjoy a delicious sundowner at Caroline Pool with a sausage sizzle and delicious damper cooked by Kirra.

Week 4. *Team members: Dr John Hearne, Dr Greg Celine, DA Ruth Warden, DA Karen Bowman, Tracy Sandercock, final year dental student Joshua Ding, Jan and John Owen AM.*

The team departed early on Saturday to meet the incoming team who then stayed the night in Kununurra before driving down to Halls Creek on Sunday. Following an overnight stay in Halls Creek, we headed south on the Tanami Road arriving in Billiluna in time to screen all the children at Kururrungku before school finished. We then set up a clinic at the Billiluna medical clinic seeing several community members. We also worked at the clinic on Tuesday and school staff brought the children identified as being in need for treatment as well as many who were absent when we screened. As well as treating children, we saw many adults before packing up and driving a further 108 km south to Balgo late that afternoon.

On Wednesday and Thursday, one team set up and had a busy session at the Balgo clinic. The other team examined children at Luurnpa school and set up a clinic to treat those in need. On Friday one team returned to the Balgo clinic and the other travelled across to Mulan on the edge of Lake Gregory to screen children at the school and run a busy session at the clinic before driving back to Balgo.

On Saturday we packed up and drove 540 km to Fitzroy Crossing where we stayed overnight and enjoyed an end of trip celebratory dinner at the Lodge. We crossed the new two-lane temporary crossing on Saturday morning and after a chicko roll fest at Willare Roadhouse, we arrived back in Broome early afternoon in time to repack for the July trip before the team flew out in the evening.

In May, the teams provided examinations, oral health education and dental services for 644 people. As well as examination, oral hygiene instruction and dietary advice, services included 101 topical fluoride applications, 705 fissure sealants, 155 extractions, 228 restorations, 66 scale and clean, 8 radiographs, 629 education units and 136 other services including 8 partial dentures. A total value of \$198,983.40 in dental services was provided.

AUGUST 2023

In August, our team included, Dr. Andrew Heap and Dr. Nick Albatis, along with dental assistants Ruth Warden and Kathy Kahaupt, and admin assistant Tracy Sandercock. The team arrived in Broome for an afternoon briefing after which we enjoyed a delightful sundowner on Cable Beach.



On Monday morning we packed up our supplies and readied the vehicles, setting off from Broome mid-morning. In the afternoon we visited Pandanus Park where we kicked off the trip by providing dental care to 17 patients working in the Centrelink Office space until quite late. After a quick set up and dinner, we spent a surprisingly chilly night in the campsite at Willare Bridge Roadhouse.

Tuesday (Derby High School): A very busy dental clinic was conducted at Derby High School, where we were able to examine and treat 79 children in our pop-up clinic in the

school library. The care and preventive measures given during this visit will contribute to the long-term dental health of these young people.

Wednesday (Mowanjum Community): Our outreach extended to Mowanjum community, where we provided considerable dental services to 26 adults and children. The reception from the community members was heartwarming and we are glad to have made a positive impact in their lives.

Thursday (Holy Rosary School in Derby): Our final destination was Holy Rosary school in Derby, where we treated 42 children and 1 young adult, the latter required the expertise of a bush orthodontist and luckily for him we just so happened to have one with his leatherman along with us. This ended a great 2023 for the hard-working KDT teams.

In August, we saw 165 people, all receiving examinations, oral hygiene instruction and dietary advice. We also carried out 29 fluoride applications, 41 fissure seals, 20 extractions, 43 restorations and 10 scale and cleans. A total value of \$39,648.75 of dental services was provided.

Deep Appreciation

Thank you as always to our Fellows and all incredible current and past corporate sponsors - Maven Dental Group, Denticare, International College of Dentists, SDI, Colgate, CBA Employees Community Grants, the Office of the Chief Dental Officer, the Mc Cusker Charitable Foundation, the Academy of Dentistry International, the Rotary Clubs of Perth, Perth City East and Heirisson for their ongoing support. Thank you to the young Rotaracts for packing our toothbrushes into classroom ready packs.

Thank you to the Australian Dental Association (WA Branch) for their ongoing support of KDT in general and especially for awarding grants for final year dental students through the University of WA. These Remote Area Student Scholarships greatly assist with their remote placement costs. The John Prichard Memorial Prizes were awarded to four final year DMD dental students. This along with ADA support allowed us to mentor and support seven students this year. Thank you to our fabulous volunteers and supporters without whom our results could not have been achieved over the past fifteen years.



Jan and John Owen AM

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<http://www.kimberleydentalteam.com/>