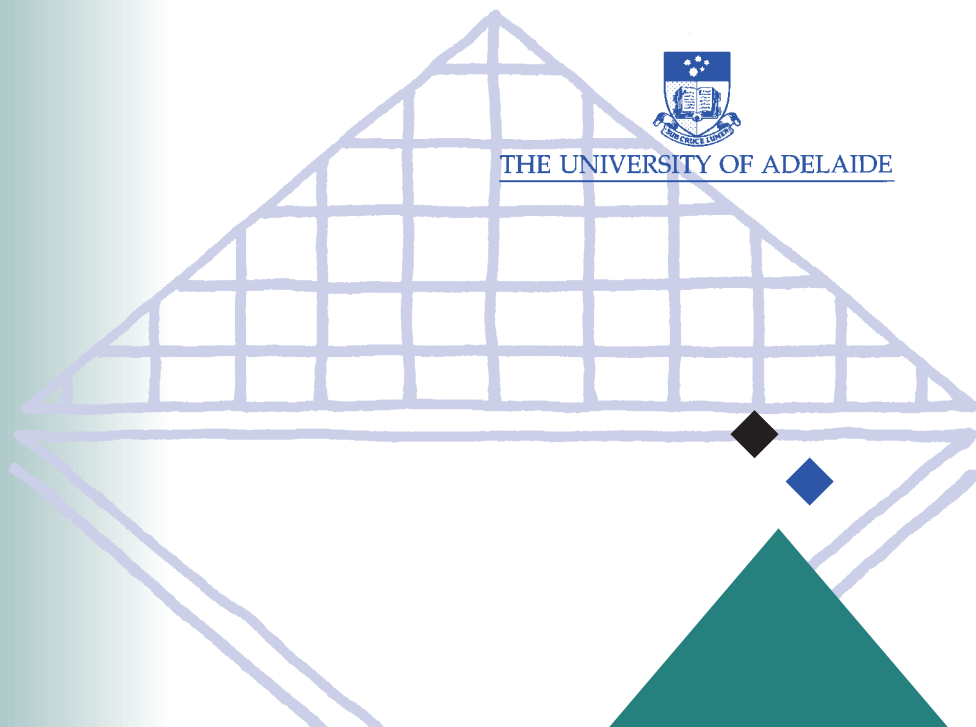


# Dental hygienist labourforce Australia, 1996

FSP Szuster  
AJ Spencer



THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE



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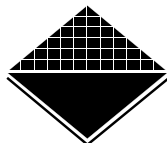
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# Introduction

This report has been prepared by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's Dental Statistics and Research Unit (DSRU), in conjunction with the Dental Hygienists' Association of Australia, and presents national health labourforce statistics for dental hygienists.

Data were collected in 1996 in the six States and Territories of Australia where dental hygienists were permitted to practice. The data items collected comply with the national data set agreed by the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council to facilitate appropriate health planning and administration.

A copy of the questionnaire is included as Appendix 3 to provide the data set and question wording that have been used to collect the data for this report.

The collection aimed to identify dental hygienists':

- a) practising status;
- b) demographic characteristics;
- c) qualification characteristics;
- d) area and type of practice;
- e) pattern of hours worked;
- f) reasons if working in casual or less than full-time work;
- g) number of dentists working to;
- h) number of practice locations; and
- i) geographic distribution.

The response rate data collection was 84.2% but complete data were not available from all respondents. For all estimates, the assumption was made that non-respondents to the survey in each State/Territory had the same labourforce characteristics as respondents, and the survey data were scaled up to State/Territory totals.

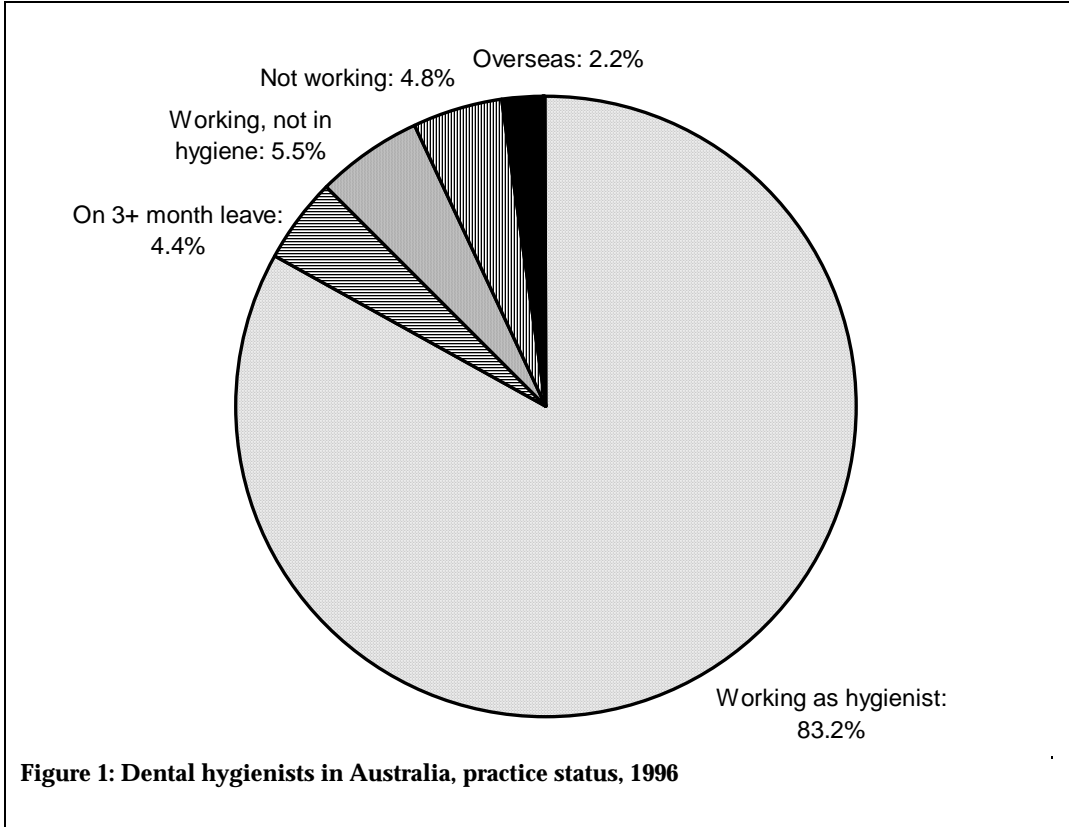
**Note:** Where figures have been rounded (e.g. percentages), discrepancies may occur between some of the component items and totals.

# Commentary

The practice status of the respondents to the data collection by State/Territory is presented in Table 1 and Figure 1. It can be seen that in 1996 there were 227 or 83.2% who were working as hygienists, with an additional 12 or 4.4% who were on 3 or more months leave.

It can be seen from the matching of annual practice status (present in Appendix 1) that there is considerable stability in the practice status of the hygienist labourforce. In particular, the levels of inflow (29) and expected outflow (26) show consistency both when compared to practice status one year ago and expected practice status in 12 months.

In addition, the rate per 100,000 population by State/Territory is also included in Table 1 and Figure 2. There is a considerable difference between the States/Territories in full-time equivalent (FTE) rates per 100,000 with South Australia (and Northern Territory) and the Australian Capital Territory the highest (4.2 and 4.1 respectively) compared to the eastern Australian mainland States.





**Table 1: Dental hygienists, practice status by State/Territory, 1996**

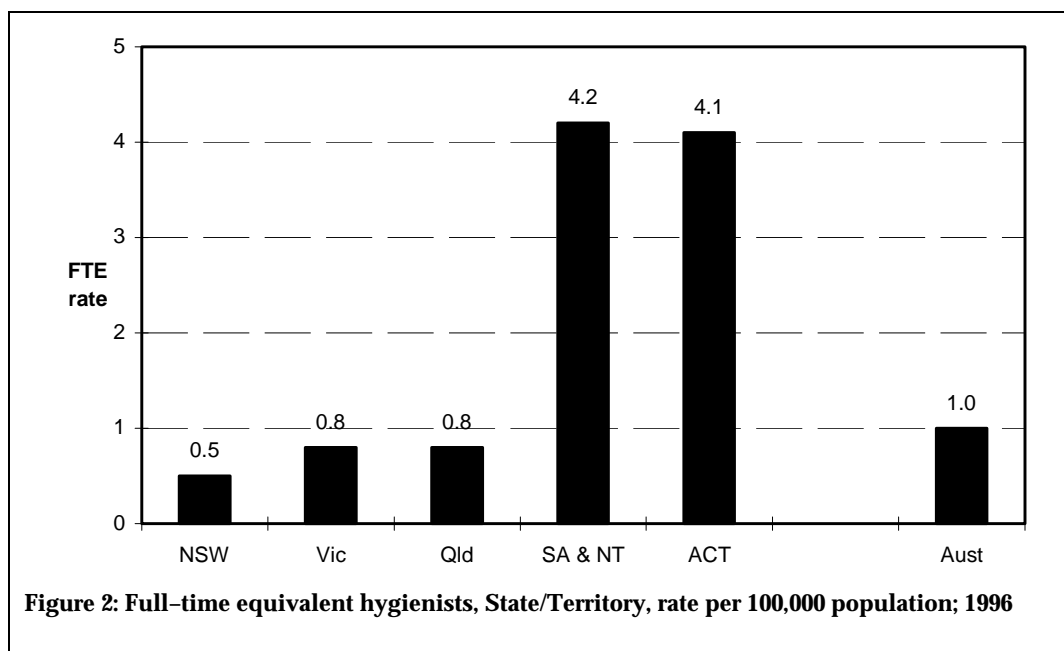
	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA & NT	ACT	Total
Working as hygienist	34	44	31	102	16	227
Working as hygienist, but on 3+ months leave	3	6	1	2	–	12
Working, but not in dental hygiene	4	2	1	8	–	15
Not working	1	2	2	8	–	13
Overseas	2	3	–	1	–	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>273</b>
Practising rate	0.5	1.0	0.9	6.2	5.2	1.2
Full-time equivalent rate	0.5	0.8	0.8	4.2	4.1	1.0

**(percentages)**

	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA & NT	ACT	Total
Working as hygienist	77.3	77.2	88.6	84.3	100.0	83.2
Working as hygienist, but on 3+ months leave	6.8	10.5	2.9	1.7	–	4.4
Working, but not in dental hygiene	9.1	3.5	2.9	6.6	–	5.5
Not working	2.3	3.5	5.7	6.6	–	4.8
Overseas	4.5	5.3	–	0.8	–	2.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

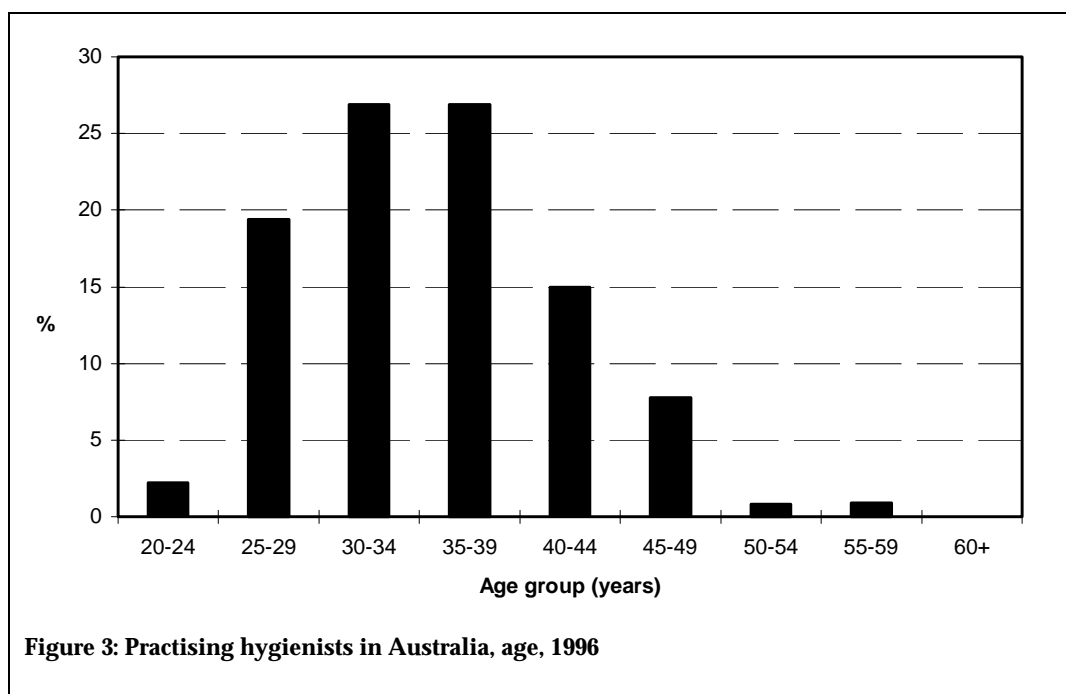
*Notes*

1. Incomplete collection list in NSW with dental board advising that they have records of 66 dental hygienists. However, 28 dental hygienists outside NSW reported that they were registered in NSW.
2. One NT hygienist included in with SA for confidentiality provisions.
3. Rate: Practising and full-time equivalent (FTE) hygienists per 100,000 population. See Appendix 2 for estimated resident population at 30 June 1996.

**Figure 2: Full-time equivalent hygienists, State/Territory, rate per 100,000 population; 1996**

From Table 2 and Figure 3, it can be seen that the largest age groups of practising hygienists are 30–34 and 35–39 with only a few in the youngest (20–24) and oldest (50+) age groups. It can also be seen that practising hygienists were predominantly born in English speaking countries and use English only with clients.

It should be noted that there was one respondent who was male and one respondent reported that they were of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin.



**Table 2: Practising hygienists, demographic background by State/Territory, 1996**

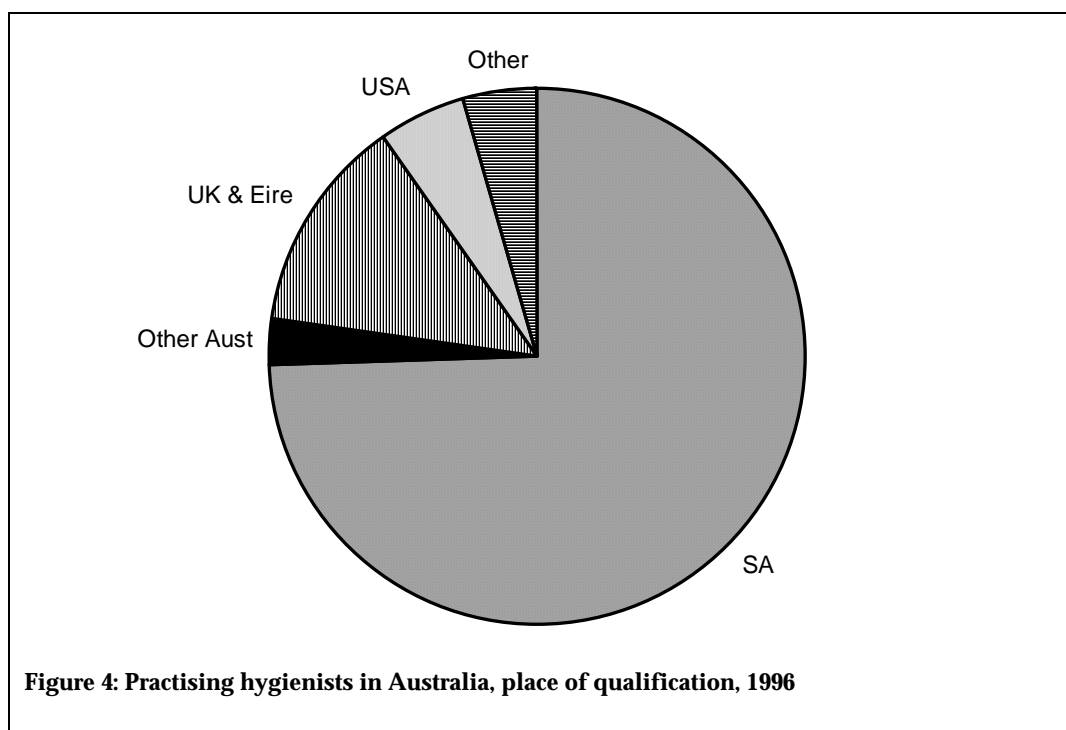
	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA & NT	ACT	Total
<b>Age (years):</b>						
20–24	–	–	4	1	–	5
25–29	4	8	9	20	3	44
30–34	12	14	6	24	5	61
35–39	11	12	9	26	3	61
40–44	3	5	1	21	4	34
45–49	4	4	2	8	–	18
50–54	–	–	–	1	1	2
55–59	–	1	–	1	–	2
60+	–	–	–	–	–	–
<b>Country of birth:</b>						
Australia	15	27	20	91	10	163
UK & Eire	9	6	7	6	3	31
Other English speaking	8	7	3	1	1	20
Other Europe	2	1	–	3	1	7
Asia	–	–	1	1	1	3
Other	–	3	–	–	–	3
<b>Languages used with clients:</b>						
English only	32	41	31	90	15	209
Greek	–	–	–	2	–	2
Italian	–	–	–	4	–	4
Other European	2	3	–	5	1	11
Other	–	–	–	1	–	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>227</b>

(percentage)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA & NT	ACT	Total
<b>Age (years):</b>						
20–24	–	–	12.9	1.0	–	2.2
25–29	11.8	18.2	29.0	19.6	18.8	19.4
30–34	35.3	31.8	19.4	23.5	31.2	26.9
35–39	32.4	27.3	29.0	25.5	18.8	26.9
40–44	8.8	11.4	3.2	20.6	25.0	15.0
45–49	11.8	9.1	6.5	7.8	–	7.9
50–54	–	–	–	1.0	6.2	0.9
55–59	–	2.3	–	1.0	–	0.9
60+	–	–	–	–	–	–
<b>Country of birth:</b>						
Australia	44.1	61.4	64.5	89.2	62.5	71.8
UK & Eire	26.5	13.6	22.6	5.9	18.8	13.7
Other English speaking	23.5	15.9	9.7	1.0	6.2	8.8
Other Europe	5.9	2.3	–	2.9	6.2	3.1
Asia	–	–	3.2	1.0	6.2	1.3
Other	–	6.8	–	–	–	1.3
<b>Languages used with clients:</b>						
English only	94.1	93.2	100.0	88.2	93.8	92.1
Greek	–	–	–	2.0	–	0.9
Italian	–	–	–	3.9	–	1.8
Other European	5.9	6.8	–	4.9	6.2	4.8
Other	–	–	–	1.0	–	0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

In 1996 the Australian locations where hygienists could qualify were in South Australia and in the defence forces. It can be seen from Table 3 and Figure 4, that nearly three-quarters (74.4%) qualified in South Australia. The next highest was 13.2% from the United Kingdom and Ireland, and the United States (5.3%). Not surprisingly, South Australia (and the Northern Territory) reported the highest percentage of South Australian graduates (89.2%).

It can be seen that the majority of hygienists have an associate diploma (65.6%) as their highest level of qualification and both qualified and first practised in the late 1980s and 1990s.



**Table 3: Practising hygienists, qualification background by State/Territory, 1996**

	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA & NT	ACT	Total
<b>Place of qualification</b>						
South Australia	17	31	20	91	10	169
Other Australia	1	–	4	–	1	6
UK & Eire	8	6	6	9	1	30
USA	7	2	1	1	1	12
Other overseas	1	5	–	1	3	10
<b>Level of qualification</b>						
Certificate	8	7	7	23	4	49
Associate diploma	12	33	19	75	10	149
Diploma	5	3	–	3	1	12
Degree	7	–	1	1	1	10
Other	1	–	4	–	–	5
Not stated	1	1	–	–	–	2
<b>Year qualified</b>						
Before 1980	7	9	5	23	4	48
1980 – 1984	9	5	4	17	–	35
1985 – 1989	9	12	6	29	7	63
1990+	9	18	16	33	5	81
<b>Year first practised in Australia</b>						
Before 1980	3	5	2	23	1	34
1980 – 1984	4	2	3	17	3	29
1985 – 1989	13	11	3	29	7	63
1990+	14	26	23	33	5	101
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>227</b>

(percentage)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA & NT	ACT	Total
<b>Place of qualification</b>						
South Australia	50.0	70.5	64.5	89.2	62.5	74.4
Other Australia	2.9	–	12.9	–	6.2	2.6
UK & Eire	23.5	13.6	19.4	8.8	6.2	13.2
USA	20.6	4.5	3.2	1.0	6.2	5.3
Other overseas	2.9	11.4	–	1.0	18.8	4.4
<b>Level of qualification</b>						
Certificate	23.5	15.9	22.6	22.5	25.0	21.6
Associate diploma	35.3	75.0	61.3	73.5	62.5	65.6
Diploma	14.7	6.8	–	2.9	6.2	5.3
Degree	20.6	–	3.2	1.0	6.2	4.4
Other	2.9	–	12.9	–	–	2.2
Not stated	2.9	2.3	–	–	–	0.9
<b>Year qualified</b>						
Before 1980	20.6	20.5	16.1	22.5	25.0	21.1
1980 – 1984	26.5	11.4	12.9	16.7	–	15.4
1985 – 1989	26.5	27.3	19.4	28.4	43.8	27.8
1990+	26.5	40.9	51.6	32.4	31.2	35.7
<b>Year first practised in Australia</b>						
Before 1980	8.8	11.4	6.5	22.5	6.2	15.0
1980 – 1984	11.8	4.5	9.7	16.7	18.8	12.8
1985 – 1989	38.2	25.0	9.7	28.4	43.8	27.8
1990+	41.2	59.1	74.2	32.4	31.2	44.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The distribution of main practice settings are presented in Table 4. Over three-quarters (76.2%) reported working in general private practice followed by specialist practice (19.4%). It was only in South Australia (and the Northern Territory) that any respondents reported that in their main practice was in the public sector.

**Table 4: Practising hygienists, type of main practice by State/Territory, 1996**

	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA & NT	ACT	Total
<b>Private</b>						
General practice	24	33	23	80	13	173
Specialist practice	9	11	7	14	3	44
Other	1	–	1	–	–	2
<b>Public</b>						
Community dental clinic	–	–	–	2	–	2
Dental hospital	–	–	–	4	–	4
Teaching institution	–	–	–	2	–	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>227</b>
<b>(percentage)</b>						
	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA & NT	ACT	Total
<b>Private</b>						
General practice	68.6	75.0	74.2	78.4	81.2	76.2
Specialist practice	25.7	25.0	22.6	13.7	18.8	19.4
Other	2.9	–	3.2	–	–	0.9
<b>Public</b>						
Community dental clinic	–	–	–	2.0	–	0.9
Dental hospital	–	–	–	3.9	–	1.8
Teaching institution	–	–	–	2.0	–	0.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 5 and Figure 5 present the level of activity measured by hours worked per week. The largest grouping was 41.9% who reported working 30–39 hours per week, with the smallest grouping being those working less than 10 hours per week (2.6%).

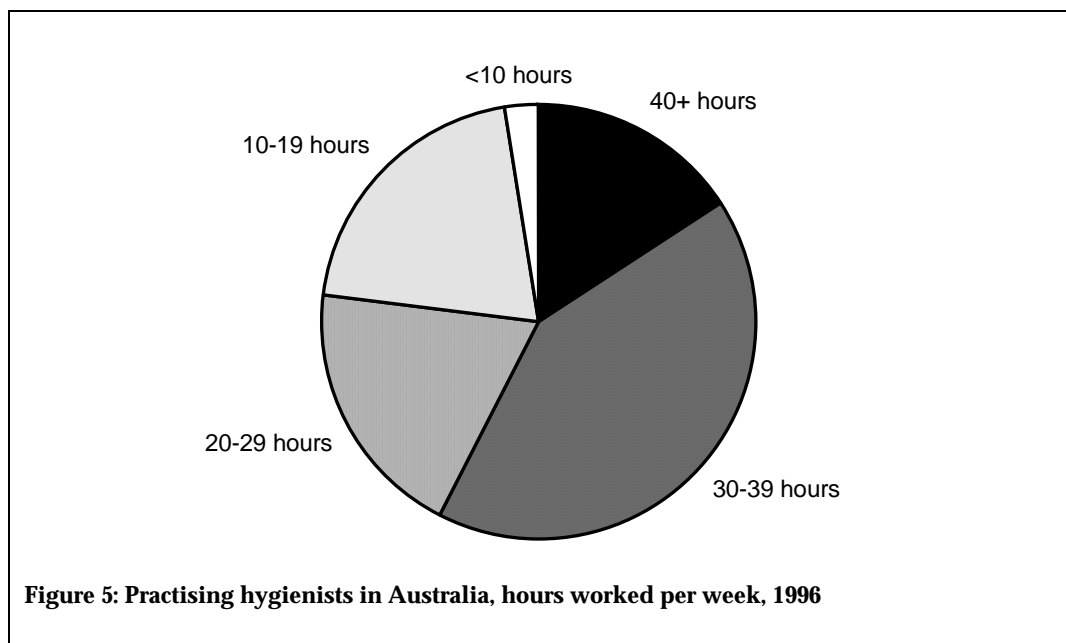
There were clear differences between those in the eastern mainland States, whose mean hours per week were all over 30 hours, and South Australia (and the Northern Territory) with 25.5 mean hours per week.

**Table 5: Practising hygienists, hours worked per week by State/Territory, 1996**

	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA & NT	ACT	Total
Less than 10	1	–	–	5	–	6
10–19	4	3	5	30	4	46
20–29	4	10	3	24	3	44
30–39	18	23	16	32	6	95
40+	7	8	7	11	3	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>227</b>
Mean hours per week	32.3	32.7	32.2	25.5	29.3	28.9

(percentage)

	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA & NT	ACT	Total
Less than 10	2.9	–	–	4.9	–	2.6
10–19	11.8	6.8	16.1	29.4	25.0	20.3
20–29	11.8	22.7	9.7	23.5	18.8	19.4
30–39	52.9	52.3	51.6	31.4	37.5	41.9
40+	20.6	18.2	22.6	10.8	18.8	15.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>



**Figure 5: Practising hygienists in Australia, hours worked per week, 1996**

For those who worked on a casual or less than full-time basis, Table 6 presents the main reason for doing so. More than one response was possible to the question in the data collection. Over half (54.1%) reported child rearing as a main reason, with preference (37.6%) and household duties (20.3%) also as significant reasons.

**Table 6: Practising hygienists in casual or less than full-time work, main reason by State/Territory, 1996**

	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA & NT	ACT	Total
Household duties	3	2	1	18	3	27
Child rearing	7	12	4	43	6	72
Further study	3	2	–	7	1	13
Illness	–	–	–	1	–	1
Preference	5	12	8	21	4	50
Other	1	3	1	11	1	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>(percentage)</b>						
	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA & NT	ACT	Total
Household duties	23.1	8.0	7.7	24.0	42.9	20.3
Child rearing	53.8	48.0	30.8	57.3	85.7	54.1
Further study	23.1	8.0	–	9.3	14.3	9.8
Illness	–	–	–	1.3	–	0.8
Preference	38.5	48.0	61.5	28.0	57.1	37.6
Other	7.7	12.0	7.7	14.7	14.3	12.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Note:* The sum of the reasons exceeds total as it was possible to provide more than one reason were provided.



It can be seen from the questionnaire (Appendix 3), that respondents were asked to report the number of hours per week against the area of practice. Accordingly, Table 7 presents the full-time equivalent (total hours divided by 37.5) against those areas of practice.

The majority (87.9%) of hours were spent in clinical practice with small amounts of dental health promotion (3.5%), administration/management (3.4%) and teaching/education (3.3%). There were some variations between States/Territories with the most notable being teaching/education in South Australia.

**Table 7: Full-time equivalent hygienists, area of practice by State/Territory, 1996**

	<b>NSW</b>	<b>Vic</b>	<b>Qld</b>	<b>SA &amp; NT</b>	<b>ACT</b>	<b>Total</b>
Clinical	25.5	35.4	24.2	59.3	11.7	156.1
Dental health promotion	1.0	0.6	1.1	2.8	0.7	6.2
Chairside assistance	0.5	–	0.5	1.2	–	2.2
Administration/management	0.7	1.2	1.1	2.9	0.1	6.0
Teaching/education	0.1	1.3	0.1	4.2	0.1	5.8
Research	–	–	–	0.1	0.1	0.2
Other	0.4	0.1	–	0.6	–	1.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>28.1</b>	<b>38.5</b>	<b>26.9</b>	<b>71.1</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>177.5</b>
<b>(percentage)</b>						
	<b>NSW</b>	<b>Vic</b>	<b>Qld</b>	<b>SA &amp; NT</b>	<b>ACT</b>	<b>Total</b>
Clinical	90.7	91.9	90.0	83.4	92.1	87.9
Dental health promotion	3.6	1.6	4.1	3.9	5.5	3.5
Chairside assistance	1.8	–	1.9	1.7	–	1.2
Administration/management	2.5	3.1	4.1	4.1	0.8	3.4
Teaching/education	0.4	3.4	0.4	5.9	0.8	3.3
Research	–	–	–	0.1	0.8	0.1
Other	1.4	0.3	–	0.8	–	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Note:* Full-time equivalent equals total hours divided by 37.5.

Respondents were able to report more than one location of practice. The questionnaire permitted five separate locations, although the most used were four (by three respondents). It can be seen from Table 8 that well over half reported working at only one location and over 90% practised in no more than two locations.

**Table 8: Practising hygienists, number of practice locations by State/Territory, 1996**

	<b>NSW</b>	<b>Vic</b>	<b>Qld</b>	<b>SA &amp; NT</b>	<b>ACT</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	22	21	16	63	7	129
2	11	18	11	31	5	76
3	1	5	4	6	3	19
4	–	–	–	2	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>227</b>
<b>(percentage)</b>						
	<b>NSW</b>	<b>Vic</b>	<b>Qld</b>	<b>SA &amp; NT</b>	<b>ACT</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	64.7	47.7	51.6	61.8	43.8	56.8
2	32.4	40.9	35.5	30.4	31.2	33.5
3	2.9	11.4	12.9	5.9	18.8	8.4
4	–	–	–	2.0	6.2	1.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

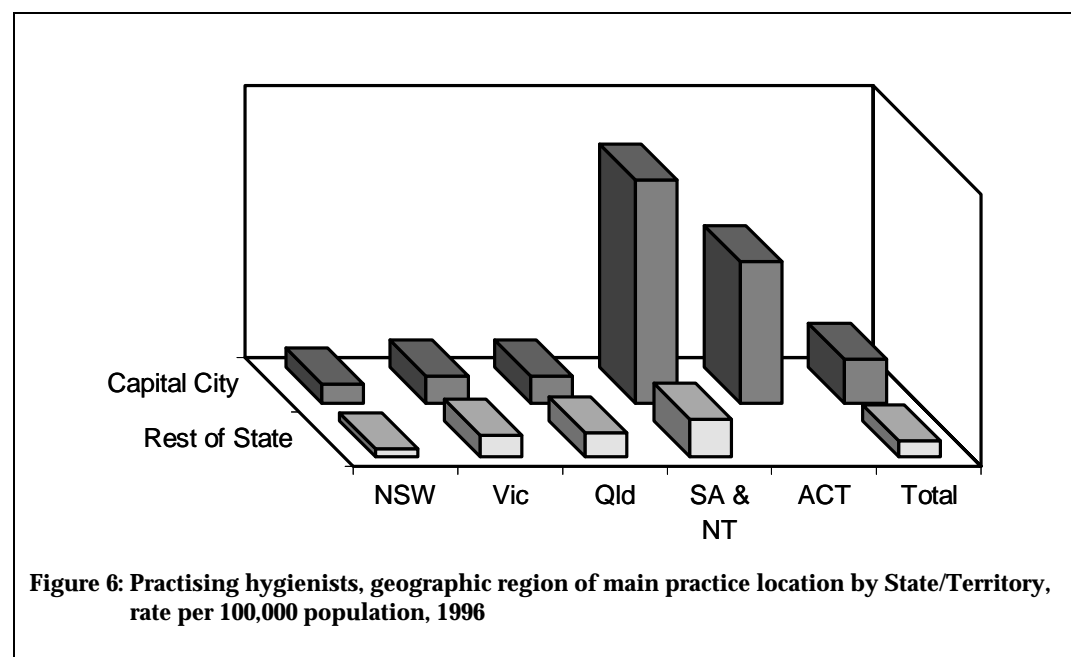
The geographic distribution of hygienists by capital city/rest of state is presented in Table 9 and Figure 6. There are clear differences in the rate per 100,000 between Adelaide/Darwin and the rest of South Australia and the Northern Territory while for Victoria and Queensland there is no such difference.

With the dominance of South Australia (and the Northern Territory) and the Australian Capital Territory this difference is transferred to the total geographic distribution with an almost three-fold difference in the rate per 100,000 between the capital cities (1.6) and the rest of states (0.6)

**Table 9: Practising hygienists, geographic region of main practice location by State/Territory, 1996**

	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA & NT	ACT	Total
<b>Capital city</b>						
Number	27	33	15	95	16	186
Rate	0.7	1.0	1.0	8.1	5.2	1.6
<b>Rest of state</b>						
Number	7	11	16	7	–	41
Rate	0.3	0.9	0.9	1.4	–	0.6
<b>Total</b>						
Number	34	44	31	102	16	227
Rate	0.5	1.0	0.9	6.2	5.2	1.2

*Note:* Rate: Practising hygienists per 100,000 estimated resident population. See Appendix 2 for estimated resident population at 30 June 1996.



Dental hygienists can work to more than one dentist in a dental practice and it can be seen from Table 10 that this is in fact the case with the minority (38.3%) reporting that they work to one dentist.

**Table 10: Number of dentists working to by State/Territory, 1996**

Number of dentists working to:	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA & NT	ACT	Total
1	18	15	9	40	5	87
2	7	8	15	28	10	68
3	4	9	4	19	–	36
4 or more	4	11	3	8	1	27
Not stated	1	1	–	7	–	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>227</b>

(percentage)

Number of dentists working to:	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA & NT	ACT	Total
1	52.9	34.1	29.0	39.2	31.2	38.3
2	20.6	18.2	48.4	27.5	62.5	30.0
3	11.8	20.5	12.9	18.6	–	15.9
4 or more	11.8	25.0	9.7	7.8	6.2	11.9
Not stated	2.9	2.3	–	6.9	–	4.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 11 presents the reported levels of looking for work. It can be seen that the majority (24 of the 37) are seeking part-time work only, with only five looking for full-time work.

**Table 11: Hygienists looking for work, full-or part-time by State/Territory, 1996**

	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA & NT	ACT	Total
Either full-time or part-time	3	2	1	2	–	8
Full-time	–	3	–	2	–	5
Part-time	–	4	3	17	–	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>37</b>

# APPENDIX 1

## Annual changes in practice status

**Table 1.1: Dental hygienists, current practice status by practice status one year ago, 1996**

Current practice status	Practice status one year ago						Total
	Working as hygienist	On 3+ mths leave	Working but not in hygiene	Not working	Overseas	Not stated	
Working as hygienist	194	11	11	5	2	4	227
Working as hygienist but on 3+ mths leave	12	–	–	–	–	–	12
Working but not in hygiene	3	–	10	–	1	1	15
Not working	7	–	1	5	–	–	13
Overseas	1	–	–	–	5	–	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>273</b>

Inflow : 29

By matching the practice status one year ago to current practice status, inflow can be determined as those who were not working as a hygienist one year ago and who are currently working as a hygienist (namely 11, 11, 5 and 2 in the first row in Table 1.1).

**Table 1.2: Dental hygienists, current practice status by expected practice status in 12 months time, 1996**

Current practice status	Expected practice status in 12 months time						Total
	Working as hygienist	On 3+ mths leave	Working but not in hygiene	Not working	Overseas	Not stated	
Working as hygienist	195	17	6	2	1	6	227
Working as hygienist but on 3+ mths leave	11	1	–	–	–	–	12
Working but not in hygiene	2	–	11	–	–	2	15
Not working	5	–	1	6	–	1	13
Overseas	3	–	–	–	3	–	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>273</b>

Expected outflow : 26

By matching the expected practice status in 12 months time to current practice status, expected outflow can be determined as those who do not expect to be working as a hygienist in 12 months time and who are currently working as a hygienist (namely 17, 6, 2 and 1 in the first row in Table 1.2).

# APPENDIX 2

## Estimated resident population, 30 June 1996

State/Territory	Capital city	Rest of State/Territory	Total
New South Wales	3,821,400	2,368,800	6,190,200
Victoria	3,248,800	1,292,200	4,541,000
Queensland	1,525,500	1,829,200	3,354,700
Western Australia	1,282,800	480,000	1,762,700
South Australia	1,086,500	392,600	1,479,200
Tasmania	195,000	278,400	473,400
Northern Territory	80,900	96,800	177,700
Australian Capital Territory	307,500	–	307,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,548,400</b>	<b>6,738,000</b>	<b>18,286,300</b>

*Source:* Australia Bureau of Statistics, Catalogue Nos. 3201.0, 3210.1, 3203.2, 3201.3, 3204.5, 3201.4, 3204.6, 3201.7

*Note:* Rate per 100,000 population is calculated by dividing the number of hygienists by the estimated resident population and multiplying by 100,000.

$$\begin{aligned}\text{eg. Practising rate for Australia} &= 227 \div 18,286,300 \times 100,000 \\ &= 1.2\end{aligned}$$

# APPENDIX 3

## Questionnaire

# DENTAL THERAPIST LABOURFORCE NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Dental Statistics & Research Unit and the Australian Dental Therapists' Association, with the co-operation of State/Territory Dental Health Services and Dental Boards, are conducting a national data collection on the dental therapist labourforce. These data are part of a national data set to enable appropriate health planning and administration.

**Individual information remains strictly confidential.**

*Please tick the boxes and write responses, where appropriate, in the spaces provided.*

**1** Please indicate your: (a) date of birth:    (b) sex: Male  <sub>1</sub>  
Female  <sub>2</sub>

**2** In which country were you born? Australia  <sub>1</sub> Other   
 (a) please specify your country of birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
country  
 (b) are you an Australian citizen? Yes  <sub>2</sub> No   
 If you are not an Australian citizen, do you have permanent resident status in Australia? Yes  <sub>3</sub> No  <sub>4</sub>

**3** Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin? Yes, Aboriginal  <sub>1</sub>  
Yes, Torres Strait Islander  <sub>2</sub>  
No, other  <sub>3</sub>

**4** Do you use a language other than English with clients?  
 No, only English  <sub>1</sub>  
 Yes, other language(s)  <sub>2</sub> (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**5** (a) Where did you obtain your qualification as a dental therapist? NSW  <sub>1</sub> SA  <sub>4</sub> Overseas (please specify)  <sub>7</sub>  
 Vic  <sub>2</sub> WA  <sub>5</sub>  
 Qld  <sub>3</sub> Tas  <sub>6</sub> \_\_\_\_\_  
country of qualification

(b) In what year was this qualification obtained? (please indicate the **final year of study** and not the year of official graduation)  
     
year

(c) How long was your dental therapy training course? .....years.....months

(d) What dental therapy qualification did you receive? Certificate  <sub>1</sub> Graduate certificate  <sub>4</sub>  
 Associate diploma  <sub>2</sub> Other (please specify)  <sub>5</sub>  
 Diploma  <sub>3</sub> \_\_\_\_\_  
highest qualification obtained

(e) What other qualification have you obtained? (please specify) Dental (eg dental hygiene) .....  
 Non-dental (eg education).....



6

(a) In what year did you first practise as a dental therapist in Australia?

1	9		
---	---	--	--

year

(b) Apart from maternity, study and long service leave, have you worked continuously in dental therapy since then?

Yes  1 No  2

(c) Please estimate how much maternity, study and long service leave you have had since you first practised?

..... years ..... months

7

Which of the following best describes your work status one year ago, current status and anticipated status in twelve months' time? (*Tick one box only for each column.*)

	1 year ago	Current	In 12 months' time
Working in dental therapy	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Working in dental therapy, but on leave for three months or longer (e.g. maternity, study, long service leave)	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Working in dentistry, but not in dental therapy	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Working, but not in dentistry	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Not working	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Retirement	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Overseas	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 7	<input type="checkbox"/> 7

8

Are you looking for paid work in dental therapy?

Yes  No  1

If Yes, are you seeking full-time or part-time work?

Either full- or part-time  2 Full-time  3 Part-time  4

9

During your career as a dental therapist have you been absent from the workforce for more than one year?

Yes  No  1

If Yes,

(a) Please indicate the total period

1 to less than 2 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	4 to less than 5 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
2 to less than 3 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	5 years or more	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
3 to less than 4 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 4		

(b) Did you have a formal assessment of your knowledge and skills (prior to returning to work in dental therapy)?

Yes  1 No  2 Still absent from workplace  3

(c) Did you attend formal schooling to update your knowledge and skills (prior to returning to work in dental therapy)?

Yes  1 No  2 Still absent from workplace  3

(d) Were you placed with a mentor who supervised your work for a period of time?

Yes  1 No  2 Still absent from workplace  3

**10** Please indicate the practice/professional activity you currently perform as a dental therapist. For each area of practice, please estimate as best you can the hours worked per week. If you work in more than one job or location, please provide all in descending order of paid hours per week. This questionnaire has provided space for four locations. If you have more than four practice/professional locations, please add these activities on an additional page.

<b>Main location</b>		
Postcode: <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<b>Type of practice</b> Public clinic: school <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Public clinic: community centre <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Public clinic: hospital <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Public: teaching institution <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Other public <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Private clinical practice <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Other private <input type="checkbox"/> 7	<b>Area of practice (duties) and hours worked per week</b> Clinical practice <input type="checkbox"/> 1..... <input type="text"/> hrs Classroom dental risk assessment <input type="checkbox"/> 2..... <input type="text"/> hrs Dental health promotion <input type="checkbox"/> 3..... <input type="text"/> hrs Chairside assistance <input type="checkbox"/> 4..... <input type="text"/> hrs Administration/management <input type="checkbox"/> 5..... <input type="text"/> hrs Teaching/education <input type="checkbox"/> 6..... <input type="text"/> hrs Research <input type="checkbox"/> 7..... <input type="text"/> hrs Other <input type="checkbox"/> 8..... <input type="text"/> hrs

<b>2nd location</b>		
Postcode: <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<b>Type of practice</b> Public clinic: school <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Public clinic: community centre <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Public clinic: hospital <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Public: teaching institution <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Other public <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Private clinical practice <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Other private <input type="checkbox"/> 7	<b>Area of practice (duties) and hours worked per week</b> Clinical practice <input type="checkbox"/> 1..... <input type="text"/> hrs Classroom dental risk assessment <input type="checkbox"/> 2..... <input type="text"/> hrs Dental health promotion <input type="checkbox"/> 3..... <input type="text"/> hrs Chairside assistance <input type="checkbox"/> 4..... <input type="text"/> hrs Administration/management <input type="checkbox"/> 5..... <input type="text"/> hrs Teaching/education <input type="checkbox"/> 6..... <input type="text"/> hrs Research <input type="checkbox"/> 7..... <input type="text"/> hrs Other <input type="checkbox"/> 8..... <input type="text"/> hrs

<b>3rd location</b>		
Postcode: <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<b>Type of practice</b> Public clinic: school <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Public clinic: community centre <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Public clinic: hospital <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Public: teaching institution <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Other public <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Private clinical practice <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Other private <input type="checkbox"/> 7	<b>Area of practice (duties) and hours worked per week</b> Clinical practice <input type="checkbox"/> 1..... <input type="text"/> hrs Classroom dental risk assessment <input type="checkbox"/> 2..... <input type="text"/> hrs Dental health promotion <input type="checkbox"/> 3..... <input type="text"/> hrs Chairside assistance <input type="checkbox"/> 4..... <input type="text"/> hrs Administration/management <input type="checkbox"/> 5..... <input type="text"/> hrs Teaching/education <input type="checkbox"/> 6..... <input type="text"/> hrs Research <input type="checkbox"/> 7..... <input type="text"/> hrs Other <input type="checkbox"/> 8..... <input type="text"/> hrs

<b>4th location</b>		
Postcode: <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	<b>Type of practice</b> Public clinic: school <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Public clinic: community centre <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Public clinic: hospital <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Public: teaching institution <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Other public <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Private clinical practice <input type="checkbox"/> 6 Other private <input type="checkbox"/> 7	<b>Area of practice (duties) and hours worked per week</b> Clinical practice <input type="checkbox"/> 1..... <input type="text"/> hrs Classroom dental risk assessment <input type="checkbox"/> 2..... <input type="text"/> hrs Dental health promotion <input type="checkbox"/> 3..... <input type="text"/> hrs Chairside assistance <input type="checkbox"/> 4..... <input type="text"/> hrs Administration/management <input type="checkbox"/> 5..... <input type="text"/> hrs Teaching/education <input type="checkbox"/> 6..... <input type="text"/> hrs Research <input type="checkbox"/> 7..... <input type="text"/> hrs Other <input type="checkbox"/> 8..... <input type="text"/> hrs

**11** Please indicate your total hours and direct patient care hours per week.  
 (Exclude time spent on travel between work locations, unpaid professional and/or voluntary activities.)

Total hours worked per week:  hours  
 Direct patient care hours per week:  hours

**12** If you work at present **less** than a **total** of 35 hours per week, or work on a casual basis, please indicate all of your reasons for doing so:

Home duties	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Preference	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Further study	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	Illness	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Other employment	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Rehabilitation after injury	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
Full-time work in therapy is not available	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> 8

.....

**13** (a) Do you have an activity outside of dental therapy from which you derive an income? (eg property developer, health manager) Yes  1 No  2

(b) If yes, what is this area of activity outside dental therapy? (please specify) .....

**14** (a) Are you the sole earner of your family income? Yes  1 No  2

(b) How many other people are dependent on the total family income? (exclude yourself) .....

(c) Please provide the ages (in years) of any dependent children, starting with the oldest child. (If children less than one year old, provide **months/12**)

.....

**Thank you for your time and contribution.  
 Please return your completed questionnaire in the envelope provided.**

The Dental Statistics and Research Unit (DSRU) is a collaborative unit of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and was established in 1988 at The University of Adelaide. The DSRU aims to improve the oral health of Australians through the collection, analysis and reporting of dental statistics and research on the dental labourforce, dental health status, dental practices and the use of dental services.

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