



# Tooth Mob Volunteer Dental Program

**Tooth Mob** is a volunteer dental program arranged by the Charlie Perkins Trust for Children & Students (the **Trust**). The Program was established to provide services to remote communities where dental professionals are in short supply. Since May 2012, **Tooth Mob** has been operating in partnership with the Wadeye community. Wadeye is the largest remote Aboriginal community in the Northern Territory, with an Aboriginal population of approximately 2,500.

## What is Tooth Mob?

Through the Tooth Mob Program, volunteer dental teams comprising four dental professionals carry out treatment in Wadeye. In 2013, volunteer teams will provide a fortnight of dental treatment per month.

Tooth Mob aims to:

1. Provide consistent oral health-care to the Wadeye community, enabling a progression from emergency pain relief to a preventative health-care model focused on education
2. Facilitate community empowerment
3. Function as a sustainable program.



The June 2012 Tooth Mob team in front of the Wadeye Clinic (L-R: Rhea Marner, Sheridan Dawes, Kylie Best and Miles Suter from Suter Clinic, ACT)



Veronica Roller (NSW), Daniel Marcus (Vic), Shelley Buettner (Vic) and Anna Schmidt (Vic) inside the Wadeye Clinic

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## A partnership approach

The Program involves a collaborative partnership of the Trust, a local Indigenous organisation, Thamarrurr Development Corporation (**TDC**), Northern Territory Health (**NT Health**) and Remote Area Health Corps (**RAHC**). Volunteer dental teams work in the Wadeye Health Clinic and are able to draw on the clinic staff's knowledge and expertise. The partnership approach ensures that the Program effectively meets the needs of the Wadeye community.



**In your position as a volunteer dental professional, Tooth Mob covers your flights and accommodation. Meals in Wadeye are also provided.**

## Why is Tooth Mob important?

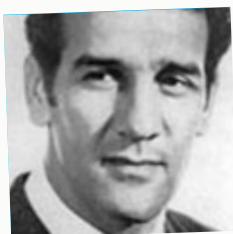
Oral health in many remote communities is at crisis level, which has serious implications for the overall health and wellbeing of Aboriginal community members. A significant obstacle to improving the oral health of many Aboriginal people living in remote northern Australian communities is the lack of dental services. Although there are operational clinics and equipment in the communities, there is a critical lack of dentists. At present, there is a large backlog of patients suffering from acute and chronic dental problems.

Poor oral health is closely linked to chronic disease and is particularly noted as a key factor in the development of Rheumatic Heart Disease. Chronic disease patients need to have more regular dental check-ups and treatment, which have previously been difficult to access in Wadeye. As 700 residents of Wadeye suffer from some form of chronic disease, regular accessible dental services constitute a primary community need.

See [www.perkinstrust.com.au](http://www.perkinstrust.com.au) for more information about the Trust



## The Charlie Perkins Trust



Charlie Perkins

The Charlie Perkins Trust for Children & Students was established in 2002 in memory of the late Dr Charlie Perkins AO. The Trust works to support Aboriginal health and education. Historically, the Trust has also supported the funding of a dialysis unit in Kintore (Northern Territory) and swimming pools in Kintore and Maningrida (Northern Territory). The Trust also provides annual prizes for Aboriginal students and an annual oration at Sydney University.

Since 2009, the Trust, together with The Aurora Project, has developed The Aspiration Initiative (TAI), which includes:

- Scholarships for Indigenous students to undertake postgraduate study at Oxford and Cambridge in the UK
- undergraduate and postgraduate scholarship guides for Indigenous university students
- an Indigenous scholarships website
- a 5 ½ year academic enrichment program for 90 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander high school students across NSW, Victoria and Western Australia.

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## Why volunteer with Tooth Mob?

Tooth Mob not only enables Volunteers to make a difference by rendering a much needed service, but also provides Volunteers with a unique opportunity to experience working-life in a remote community. Tooth Mob also works in conjunction with local organisations and individuals: local employees take Volunteers out on Country for fishing, swimming or walking, and also provide Volunteers with information about the community.

## Training and support

Before heading to Wadeye, each Tooth Mob Volunteer receives a handbook detailing cultural considerations and community resources, and also a pre-departure briefing from the Tooth Mob Project Officer. NT Health provides a day of training in Darwin in the appropriate data systems, in addition to outlining cultural awareness in a health context. Tooth Mob and NT Health provide ongoing support throughout the Volunteer's time in Wadeye.



The June 2012 Tooth Mob team between Boabs in Wadeye

See next page for registration form



## Contact

If you would like further information, please contact:

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# Tooth Mob Volunteer Dental Program

Please email completed form to [fi.belcher@auroraproject.com.au](mailto:fi.belcher@auroraproject.com.au)



## Volunteer registration form

Name

Date of birth

Address

Email

Phone

### QUALIFICATIONS

☐ Dentist ☐ Dental Assistant ☐ Dental Hygienist ☐ Dental Therapist

☐ Specialist (Type):

☐ Other (Type):

### PREFERRED VOLUNTEER DATES

☐ 10-23 March ☐ 7-20 April ☐ 12-25 May  
☐ 16-29 June ☐ 14-27 July ☐ 11-24 August  
☐ 15-28 September ☐ 13-26 October ☐ 17-30 November

Please state if you are applying together with a dental practitioner or a clinic: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Dental clinic:

Dental practitioner:



Please attach an up-to-date Curriculum Vitae including any previous volunteer experience and experience working with remote and/or Aboriginal communities