Marco Peres, Director of ARCPOH is pleased to announce the Australian Research Centre for Population Oral Health (ARCPOH) will be conducting the 2016–2018 National Study of Adult Oral Health. We will be producing a series of newsletters during the development of this study to keep you updated on the study’s progress.

The development of National Oral Health Surveys are core components of Oral Health Surveillance. The main aims of oral health surveillance are to assess population oral health outcomes and their determinants and to monitor them over time in order to inform policy makers, professional bodies and the public. For all of these reasons, it is highly recommended that national surveys be conducted periodically. In fact, the National Oral Health Plan 2015–24 calls for an adult and child survey to be conducted every 10 years.

ARCPOH, in partnership with the Commonwealth Department of Health and State/Territory Health Departments and Dental Services, will coordinate the 2016–2018 National Study of Adult Oral Health (NSAOH 2016–18), which marks 10 years since the last national survey of adult oral health (NSAOH 2004–06) was conducted. Support for the survey has also been received from the Australian Dental Association and Colgate.

Core components

- NSAOH 2016–18 will be a cross-sectional survey of a representative sample of people aged 15+ years across each State and Territory and will be comprised of two main components: 1) a National Dental Telephone Interview Survey (NDTIS) and 2) oral epidemiological examinations among the dentate population interviewed. A two-stage, stratified, clustered random sampling design will be used to ensure a sufficient geographic distribution of participants from both urban and rural settings in all States and Territories.

- For the NDTIS component, approximately 14,000–15,000 people will be interviewed by telephone in order to gather information on socioeconomic conditions, dental service use, service-mix, oral health behaviours, and other determinants of oral health. Dentate interviewees will be invited to participate in an oral epidemiological examination (the examination component) in line with current international standards for large-scale oral epidemiological studies. It is anticipated that up to 7,500 examinations will be conducted.

- ARCPOH staff will coordinate all aspects of the study including overall supervision of the survey components, sampling, training of examiners, data management, preparation and quality control, data analysis and reporting while State and Territory teams will be responsible for conducting the oral epidemiological examinations. Field work is expected to commence in the second half of 2016 and finish by end-2017.

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NHMRC Plans

NHMRC Partnerships for Better Health – Partnership Projects (Partnership Projects) will help create partnerships among decision makers, policy makers, managers, clinicians and researchers. This funding scheme provides funding and support to create new opportunities for researchers and policy makers to work together to define research questions, undertake research, interpret the findings and implement the findings into policy and practice. (More info: [http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/grants-funding/apply-funding/partnerships-better-health/partnerships-projects](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/grants-funding/apply-funding/partnerships-better-health/partnerships-projects))

Partnership Projects will answer a specific research question to influence health and well-being through changes in the delivery, organisation, funding and access to health services.

To strengthen the scientific quality of NSAOH 2016–18, a longitudinal component will be incorporated into the new study which would involve following-up the 5,505 NSAOH 2004–06 participants who underwent an oral epidemiological examination and provided consent to be recontacted. Once contact has been established, NSAOH 2004–06 participants will be invited to take part in an interview and oral examination.

Therefore, NSAOH 2016–18 will have two separate samples: a cross-sectional sample in 2016 and a longitudinal follow-up of the NSAOH 2004–06 participants. The longitudinal component has been developed as part of the NHMRC Partnership Grant application.

This partnership grant application entitled ‘Delivering effective dental healthcare in 2020–2030: A national longitudinal partnership study of burden of oral diseases in Australia’ (Application ID: APP1115649) was submitted to NHMRC on 9 December 2015. The peer review process is expected to take place between 29 February – 4 March 2016, and it is anticipated that the outcome will be known in early April 2016.

**Figure:** (CS) Cross-sectional component, (L) longitudinal component, (CATI) computer assisted telephone interview, (PALS) Primary approach letter
Project Support

ARCPOH has received strong support from the Commonwealth Department of Health and Health Departments in each jurisdiction for this national study. We are very pleased to have received letters of support from all States and Territories.

Partners

Commonwealth Department of Health
> Ms Margaret Noris, Manager at
  Australian Department of Health

Representatives from State/Territory Dental Services and respective Health Departments:
> NSW: Mr John Skinner, Director
  Centre for Oral Health Strategy NSW
> Qld: Dr Mark Brown, Chief Dental Officer
  Office of the Chief Dental Officer
> Vic: Dr John Rogers, Principal Oral Health Advisor, Department of Health & Human Services
> SA: Dr Geoff Franklin, Executive Director
  SA Dental Service
> WA: Mr Sam Carrello, General Manager
  Dental Health Service
> Tas: Dr Chris Handbury, Clinical Director
  Oral Health Services Tasmania
> NT: Ms Nicolette Dargan, Director
  Oral Health Services NT
> ACT: Loretta Bettiens, Director
  ACT Health, Dental Health Program

Professional & Industry Sponsors
> Colgate (Dr Susan Cartwright)
  Colgate has kindly agreed to donate 10,220 ‘Colgate gift packs’. Participants who undergo an oral examination in this survey will receive a gift pack as a thank you for participating.
> Australian Dental Association
  (Mr Robert Boyd-Boland, CEO)
  The Australian Dental Association has confirmed their support of NSAOH and have advised that they are willing to support the project by way of a financial contribution.

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  ARCPOH
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Advisory Committee

An advisory committee to assist in planning, implementation and translational activities is in the process of being established. Representatives from the Commonwealth Department of Health, State/Territory dental authorities, Colgate, ADA, a consumer representative and named chief investigators and associate investigators on the NHMRC Partnership Application will be sent a letter inviting them to participate on the committee in March 2016. Committee members will be confirmed once ARCPOH receives formal acceptance of membership invitations. The first meeting is scheduled for 18 May 2016.

Logo

We are currently designing a logo for NSAOH 2016–18. Any suggestions you have would be gratefully received, and can be emailed to: nsaoh@adelaide.edu.au.

Next Steps

ARCPOH is currently drafting an ethics application for submission to The University of Adelaide’s Human Research Ethics Committee. ARCPOH, through negotiations between DoH and the Department of Human Services (DHS), has received pre-approval to use the Medicare Enrolment Database (MED) as the sampling frame for the study with an opt-out methodology. The initial mail out to those selected from the MED will be conducted by DHS, on behalf of ARCPOH. Prior to completing forms to begin the approval process for a DHS assisted mail out, DHS requires ARCPOH to provide confirmation of ethics approval. The computer assisted telephone interview (CATI) environment for the conduct of NDTIS is currently being set up. To conduct telephone/web-based interviews, ARCPOH will be using software developed by an Australian based organisation, Australian Consortium for Social & Political Research Inc. (ACSPRI). ACSPRI has developed a web-based CATI interviewing system (queXS) which appears to meet the requirements we need to conduct the interviews.

Timeline of activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Period</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obtain ethics approvals from University of Adelaide’s HREC, develop sampling frame (from DHS Medicare Enrolment Database), prepare CATI suite (transfer NDTIS questionnaire into ACSPRI software for use by telephone interviewers), prepare web-based questionnaire, prepare printable materials to send out to individuals randomly selected from the Medicare Enrolment Database (i.e., primary approach letters), recruit and train interviewers.</td>
<td>Jan 2016 – Aug 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual meeting of advisory committee (May 2016).</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Field work – telephone interviews and dental examinations: Rolling sequences across each State/Territory of: sampling; training and calibration of examiners; subject recruitment; telephone interviews; dental examinations of dentate subjects.</td>
<td>Aug 2016 – Dec 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual meeting of advisory committee (advisory committee members to be confirmed). Processing of data (including editing and cleaning) and weighting of data as it becomes available.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Preparation of report.</td>
<td>Jan 2018 – Dec 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contact

More information about this survey can be obtained by contacting ARCPOH (nsaoh@adelaide.edu.au). ARCPOH will release a regular newsletter with updates about the survey. Please contact ARCPOH if you would like to be on the mailing list to receive this newsletter.