



**IMPLANT DENTISTRY IN AUSTRALIA:
THE PRESENT AND FUTURE**

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, implant dentistry has become a routine part of many general dental practices in Australia. However, there is little information regarding its prevalence as well as the extent and nature of its practice. This investigation aims to address the paucity of information in this area. Additionally, data concerning general dental practitioners (GDPs) will be compared with that for dental specialists to reveal the degree of conformity between the two groups in their practice of implant dentistry. The results of this research may also be of assistance in the development of educational programs in this field.

Electronic surveys on the practice of implant dentistry were designed using SurveyMonkey™ and delivered along with a participation invitation to the following professional bodies: all seven State/Territory branches of the Australian Dental Association (ADA), the Australian and New Zealand Academy of Periodontists (ANZAP), the Australian and New Zealand Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (ANZAOMS), and prosthodontist members of the Australian Prosthodontic Society (APS). After examining the surveys for approval, all above professional organisations agreed to participate by inviting their respective members to complete the surveys online via SurveyMonkey™. The same program was used to analyse the responses while preserving the anonymity of the respondents.

The initial response rates were 7.61% (n = 801) for GDPs, 41.76% (n = 38) for prosthodontists, 34.16% (n = 55) for periodontists, and 34.07% (n = 46) for oral and maxillofacial (OMF) surgeons. Among the respondents, 66.37 % (n = 521) of GDPs, 86.11%

(n = 31) of prosthodontists, 82.98 % (n = 39) of periodontists, and 97.67% (n = 42) of OMF surgeons indicated that they currently practise implant dentistry. Furthermore, of the implant-practising GDPs and prosthodontists, 205 (42.52%) and 13 (41.94%), respectively, reported to be practising both surgical and restorative aspects; while the vast majority of the remainder are involved solely in restorative treatment. In terms of intentions for further education, 79.67% (588) of all GDP respondents indicated a willingness to undertake some form of continuing professional education to improve their knowledge and skills in implant dentistry. Finally, a number of noticeable differences were also found between GDPs and the specialist groups with respect to their opinions and styles of practice.

Being cognizant of the limitations of this study, such as the somewhat arbitrary nature of the participants' input and variable response rates, it appears that implant dentistry is presently practised in its restorative and surgical facets by a significant proportion of GDPs across Australia. Differences were found in opinions and practice styles between GDPs and dental specialists, reflecting differing levels of knowledge and experience. Despite this, the desire displayed by most of the GDP respondents to undertake continuing professional education in this discipline of dentistry suggests that there is a self-identified need for relevant educational programs. This is especially important in light of current guidelines defining the practising scope of implant dentistry based on practitioners' educational experiences.

Declaration

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint-award of this degree.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABL – Alveolar bone loss

ACWIDUE – Australian Consensus Workshop on Implant Dentistry University Education

ADA Federal – Australian Dental Association Federal Office

ADANSW – Australian Dental Association New South Wales Branch

(also includes practitioners in Australian Capital Territory)

ADANT – Australian Dental Association Northern Territory Branch

ADAQ – Australian Dental Association Queensland Branch

ADASA – Australian Dental Association South Australia Branch

ADATB – Australian Dental Association Tasmania Branch

ADAVB – Australian Dental Association Victoria Branch

ADAWA – Australian Dental Association Western Australia Branch

ADEE – Association for Dental Education in Europe

AIHW – Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

ANZAOMS – Australian and New Zealand Association of Oral and Maxillofacial

Surgeons

ANZAP – Australian and New Zealand Academy of Periodontists

APS – Australian Prosthodontic Society

BOP – Bleeding on probing

CAL – Clinical attachment level

CIST – Cumulative Interceptive Supportive Therapy

CPD – Continuing professional development

FDP – Fixed dental prosthesis

FPD – Fixed partial denture

GDP – General dental practitioner

IP – Implant-practising

NIP – Non-implant-practising

OMF – Oral and maxillofacial

PPD – Pocket probing depth

RPD – Removable partial denture



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Thank you for the response dated 18.1.14 to the matters raised. This study is to be conducted by Dr Ying Nan Guo, Doctor of Clinical Dentistry candidate.

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