At our LHAC meeting on Wednesday evening, we discussed the issues concerning the lack of adult dental services in remote areas and the following points were made.

* no access to public dental services within our local area.
* travelling public dentist used to visit Lae Cargelligo regularly until 1980s
* regular travelling dental therapist services to district school students ceased in 1990s
* only one private dentist within the whole Lachlan Shire based at Condobolin, 100kms(1 hour by car) from Lake Cargelligo
* no public transport available . Volunteer community transport is possible on a needs basis at times.
* adults needing dental services have a call a dental hotline (1800 number) to be given an appointment /be put on waiting list at Griffith (1,5 hours away)
   or Wagga (3 hours away by car)
* waiting times for these appointments are usually 2 years or more!!
* patients can also get an oral health fee for service voucher to access a private dentist on Health Service's list of providers,(one in Forbes 2 hours away)
* patients who have difficulty with travelling can get a Health Transport phone number at the intake service
* waiting times for follow up appointments for dentures can be even longer
* patients with a referral from a medical practitioner where their health is compromised due to dental/oral problems maybe be fast tracked within this syste
* preventative dental services are non-existent ,which leads to the acute dental problems experienced by many people in this community
* many adults, even school students, in this area have visibly poor teeth or no teeth at all, resulting in acute and preventable presentations to ED.

In an aging, isolated community with a high indigenous population, there seems to be a greater emphasis on other health related issues, with dental services seeming to have fallen by the wayside for both adults and children.

Thankyou for the opportunity to participate, and apologies again for the delay,
Regards,

Sue Doyle