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**Dental Practitioner Statistics
Northern Territory
September 1995**

by

**AIHW Dental Statistics
and Research Unit**

in conjunction with

**The Dental Board of the
Northern Territory**

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The Dental Statistics and Research Unit (DSRU) is an external unit of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and was established in 1988 at The University of Adelaide. The DSRU is funded to improve the range and quality of dental statistics and research on the dental workforce, dental health status, dental practices and the use of dental services.

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Introduction

This report has been prepared by the Australian Institute of Health's Dental Statistics and Research Unit, located at the University of Adelaide, in conjunction with the Dental Board of the Northern Territory, and follows from the earlier report *Dental Practitioner Statistics, Northern Territory, September 1994*.

The data presented in this report were collected in September 1995 and the aim of the analysis presented is to provide a base on which estimates of the dentist labourforce and practice patterns in the Northern Territory can be examined.

The data collection covers all dentists registered with the Dental Board of the Northern Territory. A copy of the annual data collection instrument is included as Appendix A and a map of divisional boundaries is included as Appendix B.

The instrument aims to:

- (i) identify dentists' practising status;
- (ii) find out the pattern of hours worked by practising dentists;
- (iii) identify the main area of practice;
- (iv) identify the main type of practice;
- (v) obtain data on specialist practice; and
- (vi) describe the geographic distribution of dentist practices.

Additional immutable data collected on all registered dentists includes year of birth, sex, country of birth and university/country of initial qualification and was provided by the Dental Board of the Northern Territory.

This data collection is part of a national data set agreed by the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council to enable appropriate health planning and administration. The data from the Northern Territory will be presented, along with the same data set from other States and the Northern Territory, in an annual report, to enable a national picture of dental practitioner statistics to be presented.

Note: The symbol '—' appears in tables to mean nil or rounded to zero.

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Commentary

State of the Register

Table 1 and Figure 1 present the practice status of all dentists on the Northern Territory dental register. In September 1995, less than half (46.1%) of the dentists registered with the Dental Board of the Northern Territory were practising mainly in the Northern Territory, with 41.4% practising mainly interstate, 6.2% practising overseas and 6.2% not practising.

Table 1:
Dentists registered in the Northern Territory,
practice status, September 1995

Practice status	Males		Females		Persons	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Practising:						
Mainly in the N.T.	40	41.2	19	61.3	59	46.1
Mainly interstate	45	46.4	7	25.8	53	41.4
Overseas	5	5.2	3	9.7	8	6.2
Total practising	90	92.8	30	96.8	120	93.8
Not practising	7	7.2	1	3.2	8	6.2
Total (on Register)	97	100.0	31	100.0	128	100.0

Figure 1:
Dentists registered in the Northern Territory,
practice status, September 1995

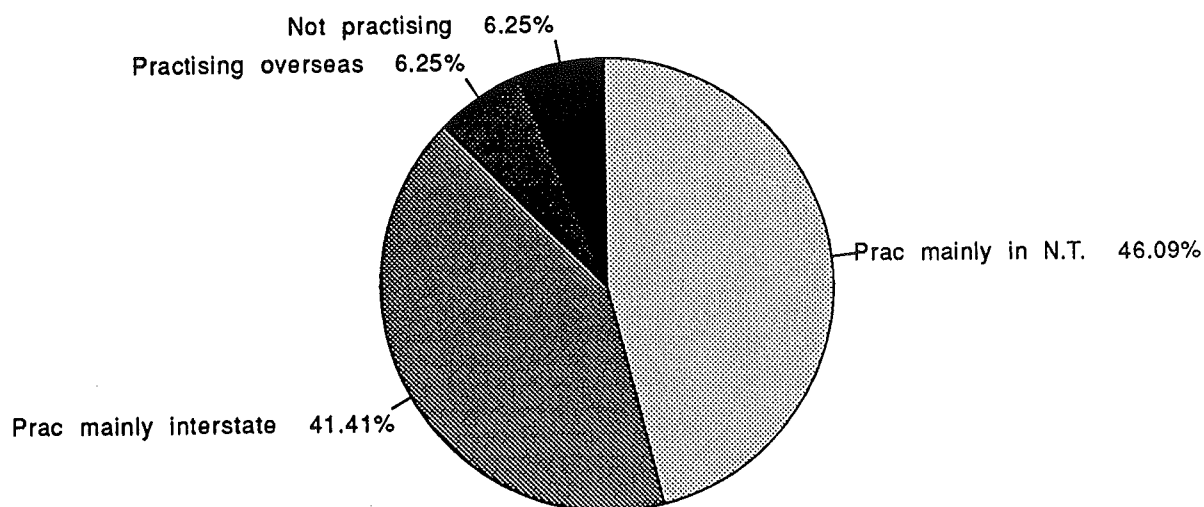


Table 2 presents a cross-tabulation of practice status in September 1994 against practice status in September 1995. By matching practice status from year to year it can be seen that the dentist labourforce has a highly stable component which has remained unchanged, namely the 44 dentists practising mainly in the Northern Territory in both years. In total there were 31 dentists new to the register in 1995 compared to 1994.

Between 1994 and 1995 there was an increase of four (from 55 to 59) in the number of dentists practising mainly in the Northern Territory. It can be seen from Table 2 that this is in fact comprised of an 'inflow' of 15 dentists (one practising mainly interstate, one practising overseas and 13 new to the register) and an 'outflow' of 11 dentists (six practising mainly interstate and five not on the register). ['Outflow' is determined from the first row where practising dentists in the Northern Territory in September 1994 were not practising in the Northern Territory in September 1995, while 'inflow' is determined from the first column where practising dentists in the Northern Territory in September 1995 were not practising in the Northern Territory in September 1994].

Table 2:
Dentists registered in the Northern Territory,
practice status, September 1994 by September 1995

<i>Practice status September 1994</i>	<i>Practice status - September 1995</i>					<i>Total</i>
	<i>Practising mainly in N. T.</i>	<i>Practising interstate</i>	<i>Practising overseas</i>	<i>Not practising</i>	<i>Not registered September 1995</i>	
Practising mainly in the N.T.	44	6	—	—	5	55
Practising interstate	1	29	—	1	19	50
Practising overseas	1	1	2	1	5	10
Not practising	—	4	—	6	—	10
Not registered September 1994	13	13	5	1	—	31
Not known	—	—	1	—	—	1
<i>Total</i>	<i>59</i>	<i>53</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>142</i>

Note: Dentists practising in the Northern Territory: 'out flow' = 11
'in flow' = 15

Age and sex distribution of registered dentists

The age and sex distribution of all registered dentists for September 1995 are presented in Table 3. It can be seen that for September 1995 there were 97 male and 31 female registered dentists. Over half (53.6%) of the registered male dentists were aged 40 years and above. A contrasting phenomenon was evident for female dentists, where the distribution includes predominantly younger age ranges. Most notably, 77.4% of female dentists were aged less than 40 years.

There appears to be a relatively low percentage of dentists either near or at retirement age with 14.1% aged 55 years and over. In addition it can be seen that there was a peak in the number of dentists in the 35-39 age group (namely 24), followed by a gradual reduction as age increased.

Table 3:
Dentists registered in the Northern Territory,
age by sex, September 1995

Age (years)	Males		Females		Persons	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
20-24	5	5.2	2	6.5	7	5.5
25-29	8	8.2	7	22.6	15	11.7
30-34	14	14.4	9	29.0	23	18.0
35-39	18	18.6	6	19.4	24	18.8
40-44	11	11.3	2	6.5	13	10.2
45-49	13	13.4	3	9.7	16	12.5
50-54	11	11.3	1	3.2	12	9.4
55-59	7	7.2	1	3.2	8	6.3
60-64	4	4.1	—	—	4	3.1
65+	6	6.2	—	—	6	4.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>128</i>	<i>100.0</i>

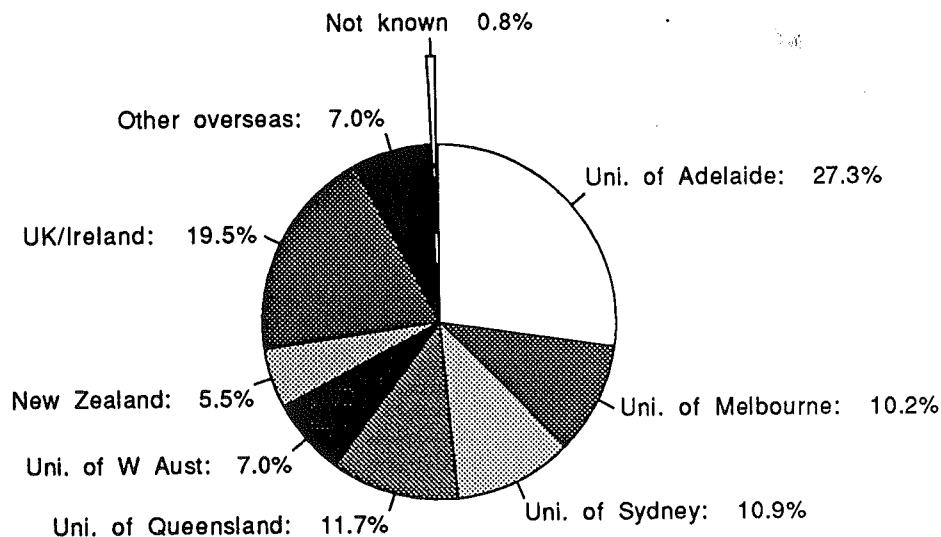
University/country of initial qualification

The origin of initial qualifications of registered dentists in the Northern Territory can be seen from Table 4 to be predominantly Adelaide University (27.3%), followed by similar numbers from Sydney University (10.9%), University of Melbourne (10.2%) and Queensland University (11.7%). Figure 2 provides a graphical presentation of the place of initial qualification for dentists registered at September 1995, and particularly shows the high proportion of registered dentists with an initial qualification from Adelaide University. A total of 67.2% of registered dentists in September 1995 had obtained their initial qualification in Australia, with 41 (32.0%) of registered dentists having an initial qualification overseas.

Table 4:
Dentists registered in the Northern Territory, September 1995,
university/country of initial qualification

Origin of qualification	Males		Females		Persons	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
University of Sydney	10	10.3	4	12.9	14	10.9
University of Melbourne	10	10.3	3	9.7	13	10.2
University of Queensland	12	12.4	3	9.7	15	11.7
University of Adelaide	30	30.9	5	16.1	35	27.3
University of Western Australia	6	6.2	3	9.7	9	7.0
<i>Total Australian university qualification</i>	<i>68</i>	<i>70.1</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>58.1</i>	<i>86</i>	<i>67.2</i>
New Zealand	7	7.2	—	—	7	5.5
United Kingdom and Ireland	13	13.4	12	24.0	25	19.5
Other	8	8.2	1	8.0	9	7.0
<i>Total overseas university qualification</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>28.9</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>41.9</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>32.0</i>
Not known	1	1.0	—	—	1	0.8
Total	97	100.0	31	100.0	128	100.0

Figure 2:
Dentists registered in the Northern Territory, September 1995,
university/country of initial qualification



In recent years only dentists from Great Britain, Ireland and New Zealand have been granted registration on the basis of their initial qualification. Dentists from all other countries gain registration only after being granted a certificate from the Australian Dental Examining Council (A.D.E.C.).

Age and sex distribution of dentists practising mainly in the Northern Territory

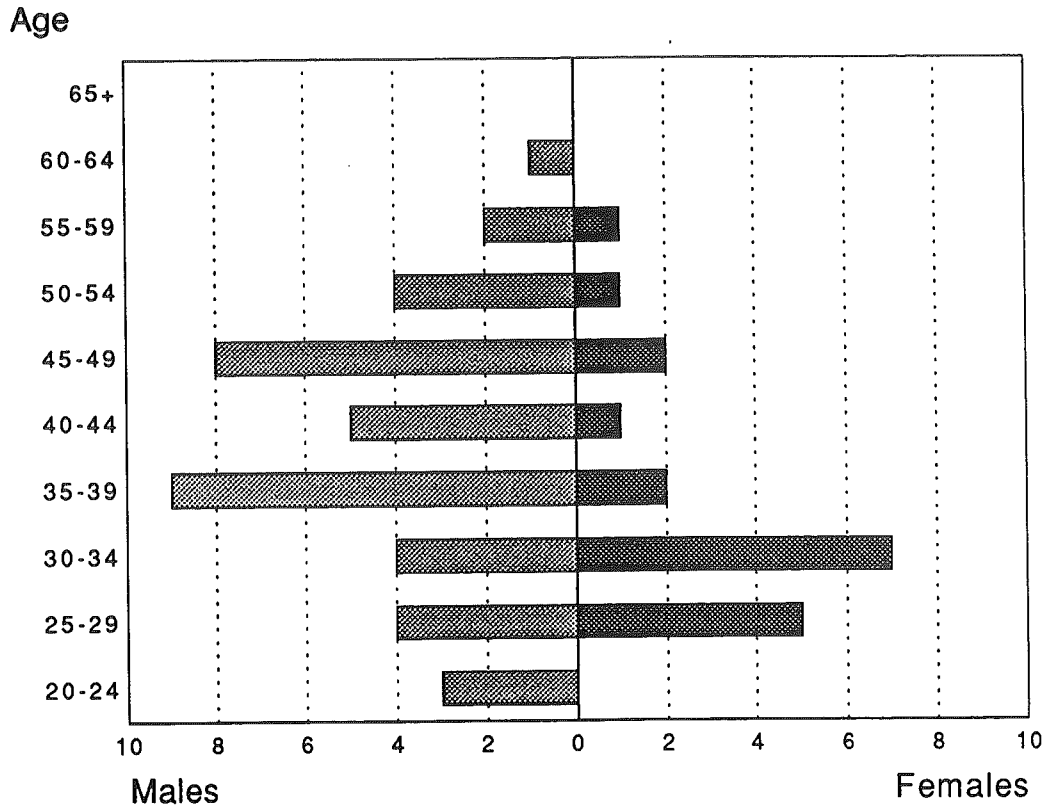
As presented earlier in Table 1, there were 59 dentists (46.1% of the dental register) practising mainly in the Northern Territory in September 1995. It is not surprising to observe that the age and sex distribution of dentists practising in the Northern Territory (presented in Table 5) was similar to the age and sex distribution of all registered dentists. However, there would appear to be major differences in the 50-54, 55-59, 60-64 and 65+ year age groups. These differences would relate to retired dentists maintaining Northern Territory registration.

From Table 5 the percentage of female dentists for all ages in September 1995 was 32.2%, with this percentage highest predominantly in the younger age groups, diminishing to no female practising dentist aged 60 years and above. It can be seen from Table 5 and Figure 3 that for all dentists, the most notable feature in this age distribution is the relatively equal numbers of practising dentists in the five year age groups from 25-29 to 35-39 and 45-49.

Table 5:
Dentists practising mainly in the Northern Territory,
age by sex, September 1995

Age (years)	Males		Females		Persons		Per cent female
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
20-24	3	7.5	—	—	3	5.1	—
25-29	4	10.0	5	26.3	9	15.3	55.6
30-34	4	10.0	7	36.8	11	18.6	63.6
35-39	9	22.5	2	10.5	11	18.6	18.2
40-44	5	12.5	1	5.3	6	10.2	16.7
45-49	8	20.0	2	10.5	10	16.9	20.0
50-54	4	10.0	1	5.3	5	8.5	20.0
55-59	2	5.0	1	5.3	3	5.1	33.3
60-64	1	2.5	—	—	1	1.7	—
65+	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	40	100.0	19	100.0	59	100.0	32.2

Figure 3:
Dentists practising in the Northern Territory, September 1995, age by sex



Level of activity of dentists practising mainly in the Northern Territory

Not all dentists were participating equally in dental practice. Table 6 presents the level of activity of dentists practising in the Northern Territory measured by hours worked per week. In September 1995, 89.8% of dentists worked 30 hours per week or more. It can be seen from the mean hours worked per week that there was a relatively small difference between the hours worked by male and female dentists (40.6 *versus* 36.0).

Table 6:
Dentists practising mainly in the Northern Territory,
average hours worked per week by sex, September 1995

Average hours worked per week	Males		Females		Persons	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 10 hours	1	2.5	—	—	1	1.7
10-19 hours	—	—	1	5.3	1	1.7
20-29 hours	1	2.5	3	15.8	4	6.8
30-39 hours	14	35.0	9	47.4	23	39.0
40-49 hours	19	47.5	6	31.6	25	42.4
50 hours or more	5	12.5	—	—	5	8.5
<i>Total</i>	40	100.0	19	100.0	59	100.0
Mean hours	40.6		36.0		39.1	

Figure 4 graphically illustrates the different average hours worked per week by sex in 1995. The difference in area between the pie charts demonstrates the ratio of male to female practising dentists.

Table 7 presents hours worked per week by age group. There were only six dentists working less than 30 hours per week and there does not appear to be major differences in hours worked for the different age groups.

Figure 4:
Dentists practising mainly in the Northern Territory, September 1995,
average hours worked per week by sex

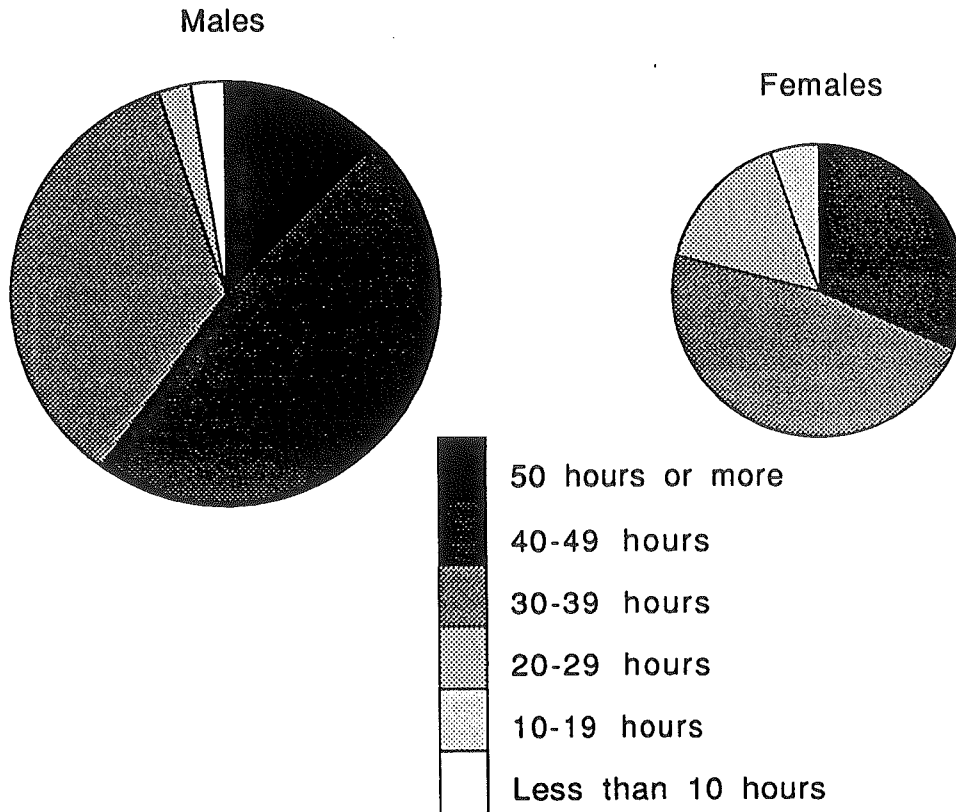


Table 7:
Dentists practising mainly in the Northern Territory,
average hours worked per week by age, September 1995

Average hours per week	20-29 years		30-39 years		40-49 years		50-59 years		60 years and over		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<10 hours	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	12.5	—	—	1	1.7
10-19 hours	—	—	1	4.5	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1.7
20-29 hours	—	—	2	9.1	1	6.3	—	—	1	100.0	4	6.8
30-39 hours	6	50.0	8	36.4	6	37.5	3	37.5	—	—	23	39.0
40-49 hours	6	50.0	10	45.5	5	31.3	4	50.0	—	—	25	42.4
50+ hours	—	—	1	4.5	4	25.0	—	—	—	—	5	8.5
Total	12	100.0	22	100.0	16	100.0	8	100.0	1	100.0	59	100.0

Main area of work of dentists practising mainly in the Northern Territory

Dentists practising mainly in the Northern Territory worked in a range of practice settings. The distribution according to their main area of work is presented in Table 8 and shows that most dentists (89.8%) practised as general practitioners. A small percentage practised as specialists (6.8%) and worked in administration (3.4%).

Table 8:
Dentists practising mainly in the Northern Territory,
main area of practice by sex, September 1995

Area of main practice	Males		Females		Persons	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
General practice	35	87.5	18	94.7	53	89.8
Specialist practice*	4	10.0	—	—	4	6.8
Administration	1	2.5	1	5.3	2	3.4
<i>Total*</i>	40	100.0	19	100.0	59	100.0

* An additional twelve dentists reported that their main practice was interstate but that they also practised in the NT. This number included six in specialist/restricted practice.

Main type of practice of dentists practising mainly in the Northern Territory

Dentists practise in the Northern Territory in either a private or public sector type of practice. Within the private sector, the type of practice can be defined according to whether the dentist practises alone (solo) or in some arrangement with other dentists (partnership, associateship, assistance or locum).

Table 9 presents the main types of practice of dentists practising mainly in the Northern Territory. Dentists were predominantly practising in the private sector (57.6%). Solo practice was the major type of practice (23.7%) with associateship (13.6%), assistants (13.6%) and partnership (6.8%).

Quite marked differences existed between male and female dentists practising in the Northern Territory according to their main types of practice. This difference is reflected in solo and partnership practice. In September 1995 there were only two female dentists reporting as practising in solo, partnership or associateship practice, while 32.5% of male dentists were in solo practice, 7.5% in partnership practice and 20.0% in associateship practice. For assistant practice, the percentage differences

were reversed, with 31.6% of female dentists compared to 5.0% of male dentists being in assistant practice.

As most assistant dentists (in the private sector) and public sector types of practice are salaried rather than self-employed practice, it is evident that a higher percentage of female dentists were in salaried employment (89.5%) than male dentists (40.0%).

Table 9:
Dentists practising mainly in the Northern Territory,
main type of practice by sex, September 1995,

<i>Main type of practice</i>	<i>Males</i>		<i>Females</i>		<i>Persons</i>	
	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Private sector:</i>						
Solo	13	32.5	1	5.3	14	23.7
Partnership	3	7.5	1	5.3	4	6.8
Associateship	8	20.0	—	—	8	13.6
Assistant	2	5.0	6	31.6	8	13.6
<i>Total private sector</i>	26	65.0	8	42.1	34	57.6
<i>Public sector:</i>						
Mainly school dental service	1	2.5	1	5.3	2	3.4
Mainly general dental services	6	15.0	8	42.1	14	23.8
Other public*	7	17.5	2	10.5	9	15.3
<i>Total public sector</i>	14	35.0	11	57.9	25	42.4
<i>Total</i>	40	100.0	19	100.0	59	100.0

* including dental hospital/clinic and defence forces

Geographic distribution of dentists practising in the Northern Territory

The geographic distribution of dentists practising in the Northern Territory by regions is presented in Table 10. The regions are based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Statistical Divisions which represent groupings of statistical local areas. A map outlining these statistical local areas and statistical divisions is included in Appendix B.

Over the whole Territory there was a rate of 33.9 dentists per 100,000 population in September 1995. There are clear differences in the rate between regions, with a notable bias toward Darwin, where nearly two thirds (64.4%) of dentists practising at their main dental practices were located resulting in a rate of 48.1 dentists per 100,000 population compared to a rate of 22.2 for the rest of the Northern Territory.

It should be noted that there were an additional twelve dentists whose main practice location was outside the N.T. but who practised in the N.T. at an additional practice location.

Table 10:
Dentists practising mainly in the Northern Territory,
geographic regions of main practice location by sex, September 1995

Geographic regions	Males		Females		Persons		Population* (30 June 1995)	Rate: dentists per 100,000 population (by main practice)
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Darwin	28	70.0	10	52.6	38	64.4	79,080	48.1
N.T. balance	12	30.0	9	47.4	21	35.6	94,798	22.2
Total**	40	100.0	19	100.0	59	100.0	173,878	33.9

* Source - *Estimated Resident Population by Age, Sex and SLA, Northern Territory, June 1995* (Australian Bureau of Statistics, Catalogue Number 3207.7)

** Excludes twelve dentists whose main practice location was outside the N.T.

Some dentists practise at more than one location. By incorporating the estimated hours worked at all practice locations and dividing the total hours in each geographic region by 37.5 hours (the equivalent of a full-time week on the basis of 5 days per week, 7.5 hours per day), full-time equivalent (FTE) dentist figures are derived and presented in Table 11.

When comparing the results in Table 11 with those in Table 10 it can be seen that the level of 65.4 FTE dentists is above the total of 59 practising dentists whose main practice location is in the Northern Territory. The level of FTE dentists is higher for both Darwin and the balance of the Northern Territory. In addition, in accordance with the differences in mean hours worked (40.6 for male and 36.0 for female dentists), it can be seen that the male dentists show this higher level of FTE dentist figures while for female dentists there is little difference between the FTE dentist figures and the number of practising dentists.

Table 11:
Dentists practising in the Northern Territory,
geographic regions of full-time equivalent dentists by sex, September 1995

Geographic regions	FTE dentists			Population* (30 June 1995)	Rate: FTE dentists per 100,000 population
	Male	Female	Persons		
Darwin	31.5	9.5	41.1	79,080	52.0
N.T. balance	14.2	10.1	24.3	94,798	25.6
Total	45.8	19.6	65.4	173,878	37.6

*Source: *Estimated Resident Population by Age, Sex and SLA, Northern Territory, June 1993 and June 1995* (Australian Bureau of Statistics, Catalogue Number 3207.7).

These regional rates of dentists per 100,000 population include all practising dentists for each region. An examination of the rate for general practice dentists per 100,000 population in Table 12 shows there were 28.4 general practice dentists per 100,000 population in 1995.

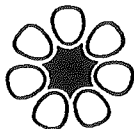
From 1991 to 1995 it can be seen that there has been a fluctuation in the general practice rate, a more stable level in the total practising rate, while the FTE rate has also shown fluctuations over this period.

Table 12:
Dentists practising mainly in the Northern Territory,
rate: dentists per 100,000 population*, September 1991 to September 1995

Area of main practice	Rate: dentists per 100,000 population				
	Sept 1991	Sept 1992	Sept 1993	Sept 1994	Sept 1995
General practising dentists	31.4	31.1	30.7	28.4	30.5
Total practising dentists	33.2	34.1	34.3	32.5	33.9
FTE dentists	36.1	37.6	33.7	34.4	37.6

* Source - *Estimated Resident Population by Age, Sex and SLA, Northern Territory, June 1991 to June 1995* (Australian Bureau of Statistics, Catalogue Number 3207.7)

APPENDIX A
Annual questionnaire



Dental Board of the Northern Territory
1995 Dentist Labourforce Survey

Registration number

The information you provide is collected by the Dental Board of the Northern Territory and forwarded to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's Dental Statistics and Research Unit. These data are part of a data set agreed by the National Working Group on Health Labour Force for the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council to enable appropriate health planning and administration.

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

1 Is your name on the latest dental register in another State or Territory? Yes 1 No 2

If Yes, please specify the States of registration by ticking all appropriate boxes:

NSW Vic Qld WA
SA Tas ACT

2 Are you an Australian citizen? Yes 1 No

If No, do you have permanent resident status in Australia? Yes 2 No 3

3 Which of the following best describes your current work status? (*Tick one box, then go to the question indicated.*)

Working in dentistry

Only in the NT 1 → **Go to 5**

Mainly in the NT but also in other State(s)/Territory 2 → **Go to 5**

Mainly in other State(s)/Territory but also in the NT 3 → **Go to 5**

Only in State(s)/Territory other than the NT 4 → **Go to 7**

In the NT but currently on leave for three months or longer (e.g. maternity, study, long service leave) 5 → **Go to 5**

Overseas 6 → **Go to 7**

Not working in dentistry

Currently not working 7 → **Go to 4**

Currently working, but not in dentistry 8 → **Go to 4**

Working in dentistry includes the practice of dentistry or work that is principally concerned with the discipline of dentistry, whether in the NT, inter-state or overseas. This includes dental research, administration, and the teaching of dentistry.

4 Are you looking for work in dentistry? Yes No 4

Either full- or part-time 1 Full-time 2 Part-time 3 → **Go to 7**

Full-time = 35 hours or more per week. Part-time = less than 35 hours per week.

5 If you are in specialist or restricted practice, please indicate your specialty.

Orthodontics 1 Prosthodontics 5
Oro-maxillo-facial surgery 2 Paedodontics 6
Periodontics 3 Other (please specify) 7
Endodontics 4

.....

6 Please indicate the practice activity you currently perform as a dental practitioner. If you work in more than one job or location, please provide all in descending order of paid hours worked per week. Please estimate usual hours worked per week as best you can.
(Exclude time spent on travel between work locations, unpaid professional and/or voluntary activities.)

Main location																										
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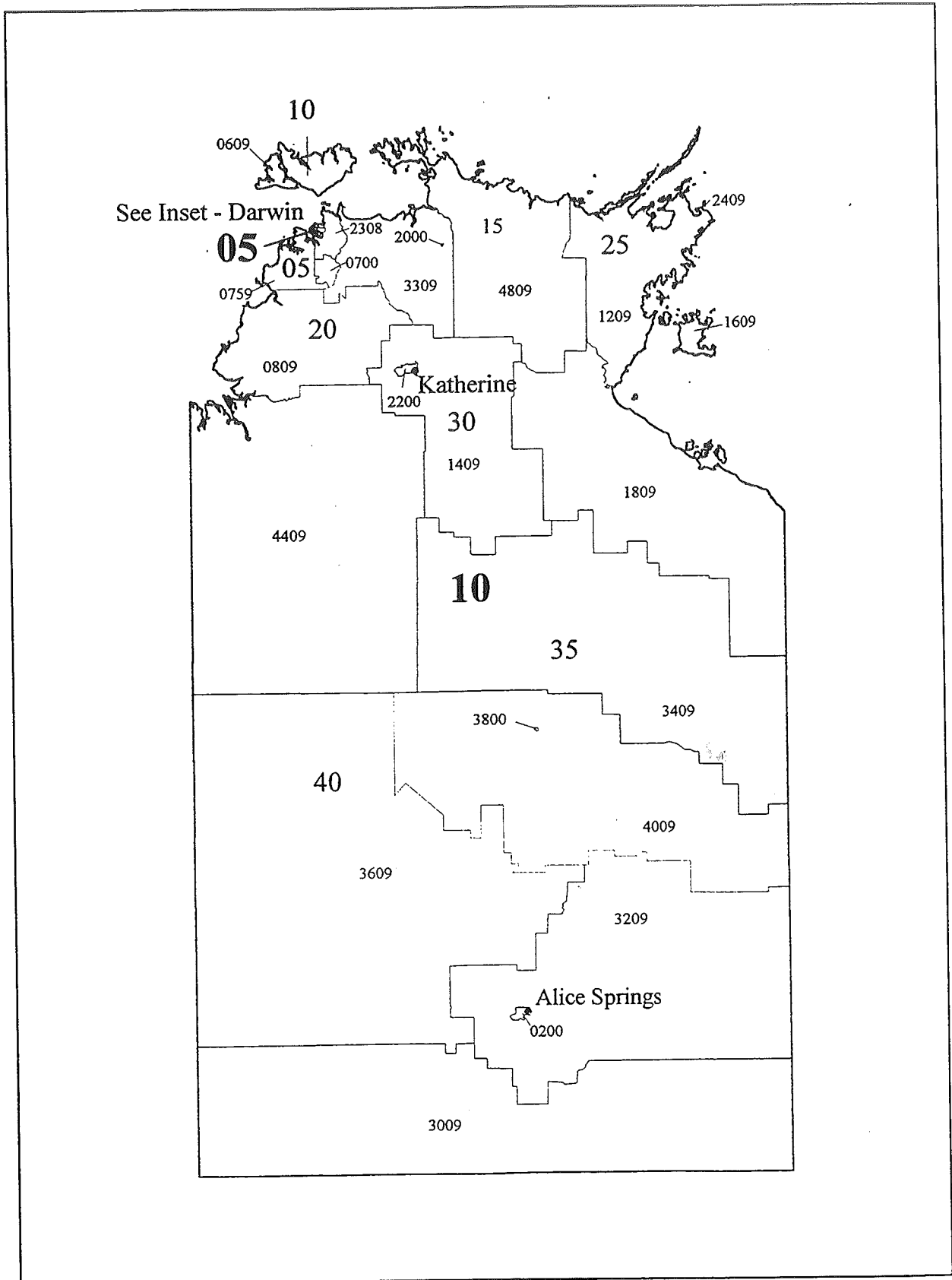
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7 Confidentiality of your responses is preserved by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act (Section 29), which imposes strict restraints on the form and circumstances of data release, particularly protecting the release of information which could identify an individual.

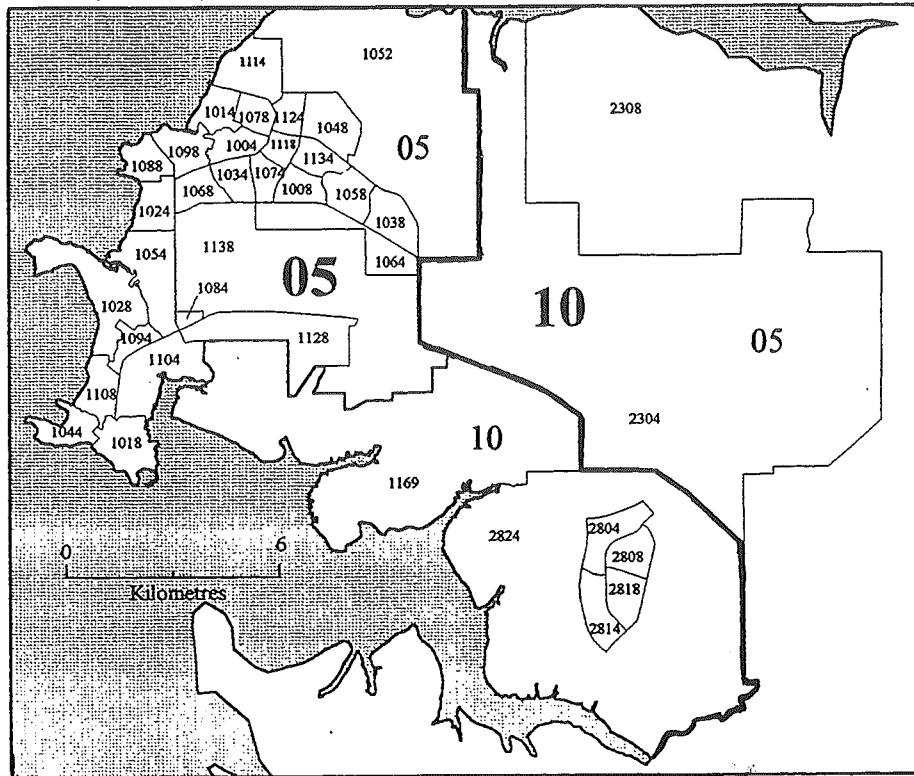
Return completed form to:
 Dental Board of the NT
 GPO Box 4221
 DARWIN NT 0801

APPENDIX B
Map of Northern Territory divisional boundaries*

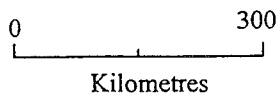


*Source - Australian Bureau of Statistics, ASGC edition 2.1, 1 January 1992.

Inset (Darwin)



Statistical Divisions	<u>10</u>
Statistical Subdivisions	<u>30</u>
Statistical Local Areas	<u>1409</u>



SD	SD Name
05	Darwin
10	Northern Territory - Bal

SSD	SSD Name
0505	Darwin City
0510	Palmerston-East Arm
1005	Darwin Rural Areas
1010	Bathurst-Melville
1015	Alligator
1020	Daly
1025	East Arnhem
1030	Lower Top End NT
1035	Barkly
1040	Central NT

SLA	SLA Name
0200	Alice Springs (T)
0609	Bathurst-Melville
0700	Coomalie (CGC)
0759	Cox-Finiss
0809	Daly
1004	Alawa
1008	Anula
1014	Brinkin
1018	City - Inner
1024	Coconut Grove
1028	Fannie Bay
1034	Jingili
1038	Karama
1044	Larrakeyah
1048	Leanyer
1052	Lee Point-Leanyer Swamp
1054	Ludmilla
1058	Malak
1064	Marrara
1068	Millner
1074	Moil
1078	Nakara
1084	Narrows
1088	Nightcliff
1094	Parap
1098	Rapid Creek
1104	Stuart Park
1108	The Gardens
1114	Tiwi
1118	Wagaman
1124	Wanguri
1128	Winnellie
1134	Wulagi
1138	City - Remainder
1169	East Arm
1209	East Arnhem - Bal
1409	Elsay - Bal
1609	Groote Eylandt
1809	Gulf

SLA	SLA Name
2000	Jabiru (T)
2200	Katherine (T)
2304	Litchfield (S)- Pt A
2308	Litchfield (S)- Pt B
2409	Nhulunbuy
2804	Driver
2808	Gray
2814	Moulden
2818	Woodroffe
2824	Palmerston (T)Bal
3009	Petermann
3209	Sandover - Bal
3309	South Alligator
3409	Tableland
3609	Tanami
3800	Tennant Creek (T)
4009	Tennant Creek - Bal
4409	Victoria
4809	West Arnhem