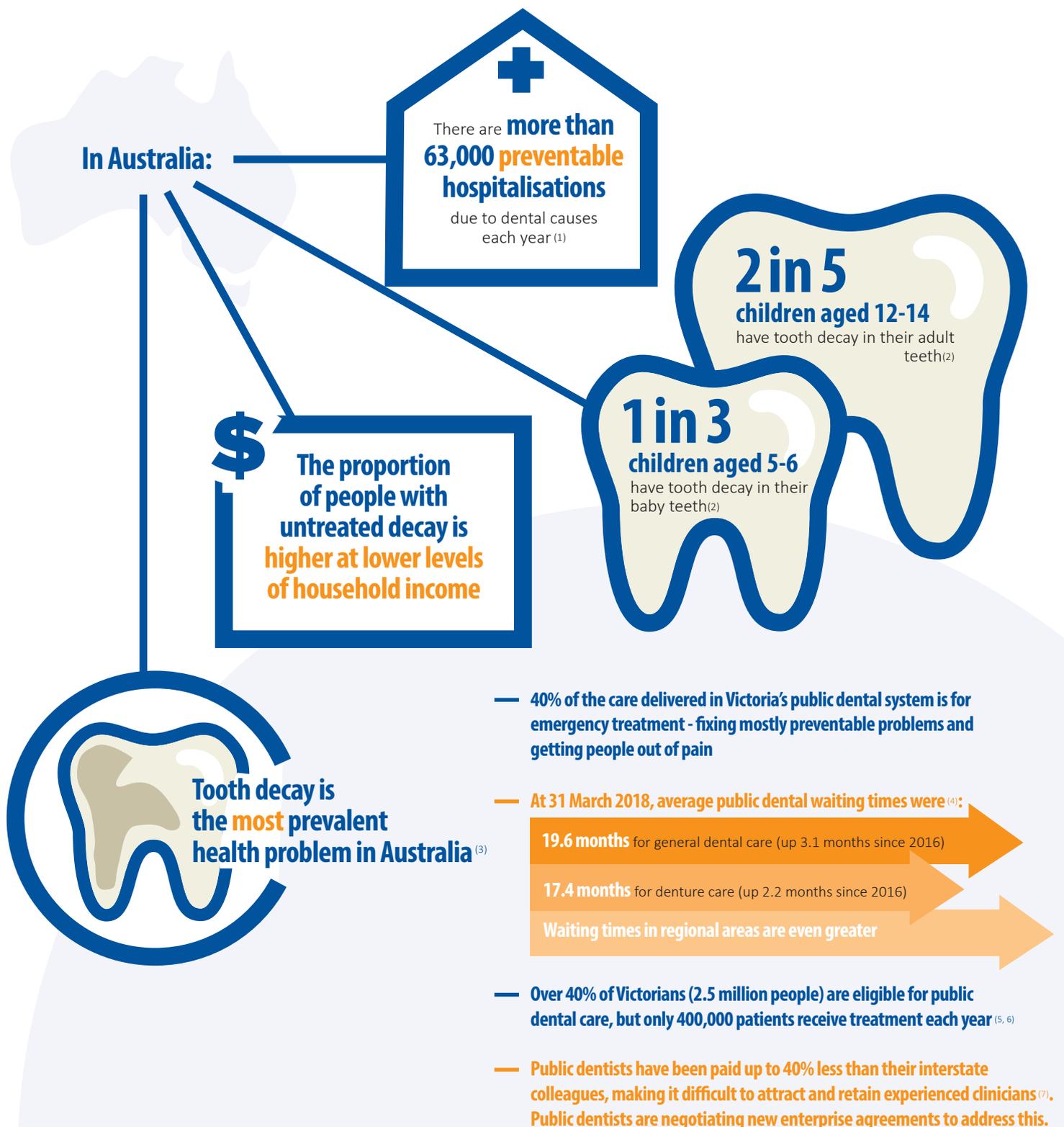


# Oral Health – the Case for Action

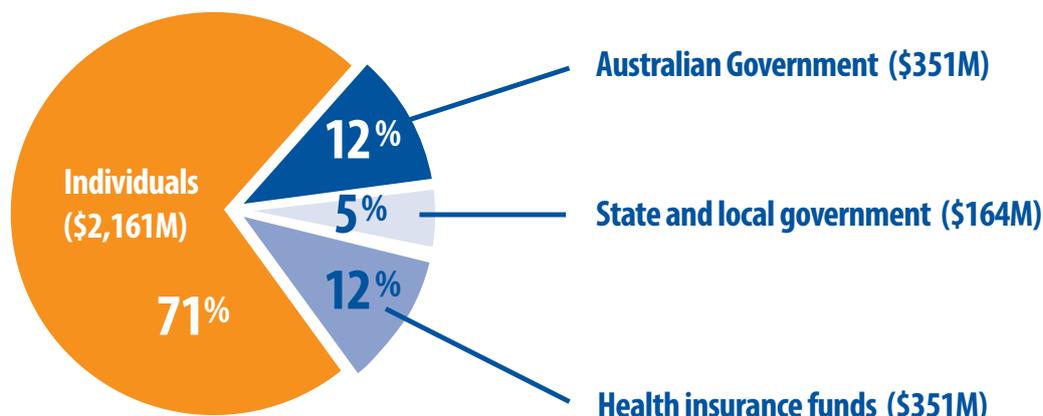
Good oral health is an essential component of general health and wellbeing. Everyone deserves to be able to eat, speak and socialise without pain, discomfort or embarrassment. Poor oral health impacts on people's quality of life, health and well-being, and even their employment prospects. Disadvantaged people are most at risk of poor oral health.

## The facts – oral health, dental care access, and preventable hospitalisations



# Who pays for dental care?

The cost of dental treatment in Victoria in 2015-16 was \$3.03 billion<sup>(8)</sup>, 71% of this was paid for out-of-pocket, by individuals.



## Recommendations

- ✓ **Increase public dental funding** by \$40 million per year to achieve a \$200 million increase within five years
- ✓ **Increase the number of public dental patients treated** per year to 800,000 within five years
- ✓ **Develop a long-term funding strategy**, which recognises the need to invest in shifting the system from a treatment-focused to a prevention-focused system
- ✓ **Introduce new measures to address long waiting times**
- ✓ **Adequately fund and support the public dental workforce**, so that they can continue to deliver the care that Victorians need.

## Background information

### Key modifiable factors influencing oral health

- **Consumption of added sugar in food and drinks. Sugar sweetened beverages are particularly damaging**
- **Regular access to dental care**
- **Exposure to tobacco, alcohol, and some drugs**
- **Social determinants of health, e.g. health literacy and behaviours**
- **Access to the preventive effects of fluoride e.g. fluoridated water and toothpaste**

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