

Dr Sandra Meihubers

Dental Public Health Consultant

Dental health is something most of us take for granted, having ready access to countless dental practices in our cities and towns. Dr Sandra Meihubers started her career like many other dentists, with a Bachelor of Dental Surgery at the University of Western Sydney, but her career path has taken her as far away from a comfortable suburban surgery as you could imagine.

Sandra decided very early in her career that she had to be where the needs were greatest and she has taken her mission to a remarkable new level, by championing community based dental health programs and services throughout remote Australia and exporting these proven successful models across the world.

In the days before mobile phones, Dr Sandra Meihubers, set up remote dental programs using 2-way radios for communication in places where the biggest challenges included working out how to keep her dental equipment free from dust. She worked with countless local Aboriginal health workers, to establish and maintain programs that provide both primary health care and address the social and other factors that impact on the health of remote communities.

Sandra has worked with Federal and State governments and NGOs to perform system wide reviews of issues facing remote aboriginal communities and uses her vast and unique experience to initiate projects and programs in response to identified needs, working with a range of stakeholders and funders.

These tasks are clearly too much for one dentist to fulfil, so Dr Sandra co-ordinates rural programs for dental undergraduates. She also conducts curriculum review and development to ensure every successive generation of caregiver and community member will continue to benefit from her life's work. Her manual 'Dentistry in remote Aboriginal communities' has been used extensively by dental practitioners in remote areas and as a teaching tool at Universities.

Sandra co-founded the Timor L'este Dental Program and has been leading dental teams there since 2003, expanding further to Nepal and now to Bangladesh. Her commitment has led her to resign herself to a predominantly nomadic lifestyle as she volunteers further and further afield, promoting her vision for improved standards in community health and healthcare provision.

This successful and inspirational mission to bring such vital services to the places where they are needed most has seen Dr Sandra Meihubers awarded with a Uni of NSW Alumni Award for achievement in community service, a Paul Harris Fellow, Rotary Turnidge Shield, 2010 Churchill Fellowship and now a most deserved District 9685 Rotary Award for Vocational Excellence.