Professor Marc Tennant

ZERO! Where and what is it and what does it cost?  
(…and other conundrums in dental health in the 21st century.)

Tuesday 2 June, 2015 at 1.00pm

Room 1.81, Anatomy, Physiology & Human Biology Building North
The University of Western Australia  (off Hackett Entrance No. 2)

The Seminar: Everyone understands the concept of zero. But do we? In physics zero is easy to define, in mathematics its simple too (on the surface). However, in public health and public good it’s far harder. Over the last 12 months the team have been interested in the question of “where and what is zero in public health problems?” The seminar will share a tour of stories of health and attempts to tease out what we actually mean. To achieve global “absolute zero” for a health condition is a complex and often expensive exercises. But, is there a point where “relative zero” is a more likely outcome and not an unreasonable goal. How does step innovation change the calculus of relative and absolute zero and how systems should be align as we approach relative zero and what is the expectation in health system reform. The talk will look at some data for various conditions (not just dental) and examine the cost-benefit curves of addressing tough public health problems in the 21st century. Marc will talk about these sorts of conundrums facing the world and is looking for some vibrant discourse on the discussion.

The Speaker: Marc is the Director (and founder) of the International Research Collaborative - Oral Health and Equity (formally the Centre for Rural and Remote Oral Health) at Anatomy, Physiology and Human Biology. This decade old, collaborative has given WA leadership in understanding the issues associated with marginalised people and in particular rural, remote and Indigenous oral health in Australia. It has been recognised by WHO for its global efforts. The team Estie, Kate and Marc now has over 150 global partners and more than 30 graduate students. Marc completed his Doctorate, in Anatomy, the early 1990’s. For the last 20yrs Marc’s research has been focused on social equity and justice though public health. He has about 200 peer-review publications and over $US17million in R&D funding. Marc’s efforts have made a significant impact in Australia and in particular groups who are disadvantaged. In 2009 Marc was recognised by the Health Consumers’ Council of WA for services to the community and in 2010 with a meritorious service award from the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons for services to education and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander equity. In 2013 UWA named a newly opened café at the dental school in honour of Marc and John McGeachie’s services to dental education. In 2014 he became just the second WA to be made a Fellow of the RACDS by acclamation again focused on his innovative education and service to society. In 2015 the University of Malaya awarded Marc their highest academic award for his work. Also in 2015, Marc was awarded a Guide of Undergraduates Student Choice Awards for his teaching. Marc previous roles include Director of Operations and Deputy Head of School at the Dental School (UWA); Head of School and Clinical Dean at Griffith University’s new dental school (the first new school in Australia for 60 years), inaugural Head of Dentistry at La Trobe University; principal consultant to Charles Sturt University where he supported the development of a new dental school in NSW; Adjunct Professor at James Cook University (QLD) where he was part of the small team that development their new dental school (the fourth in Australia). Marc is Adjunt Professor at Bond University advising on proposals to start Australia’s first private dental school. Marc was one of the team who founded service-linked education for dental students in Australia and continues to provide advice nationally and internationally on the development of these programs. He continues to lecture in dental programs across Australasia and is Chief Examiner (primaries) for the RACDS. His dental teaching material on YouTube has had over 200,000 viewers from 130 countries and he has one of Australasia’s largest twitter followings in oral health where he talks about dental public health and marginalisation (@MarcTennant)