The Effect of Oral Health on the Quality of Life of Educare Teachers & Volunteers in Mfuleni & Khayelitsha

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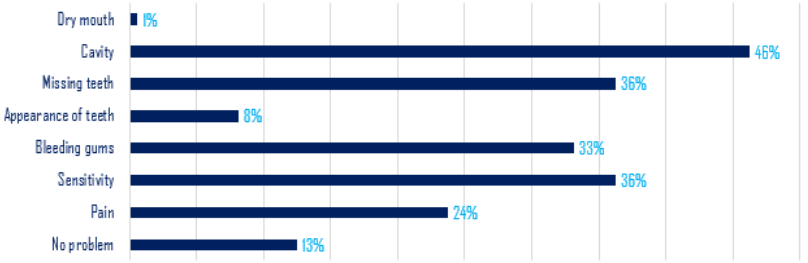
Abstract (300 word limit)

Background: The Dental Wellness Trust (DWT) runs community tailored oral hygiene programmes, empowering individuals in their own communities to drive change. In the townships of Mfuleni & Khayelitsha, teachers and volunteers are responsible for running these programmes. Within South Africa, estimates show that there are 0.085 dentists per 1000 people, which is likely to be markedly lower in the townships. As a result of such scarce resources, service provision needs to as efficient as possible to maximize gain. *Aims: (1)* Assess the oral health status & it's impact on the quality of life of the teachers & volunteers (mamas) in Cape Town townships. *(2)* Use a standardized data set so that information collected could be compared with other populations across the globe.

Method: A total of 161 Educare teachers and volunteers were assessed with questions exploring medical & social histories, the impact of the patient's oral health on their quality of life, and a clinical exam. Each clinician was calibrated & trained to use the data set prior to data capture. History taking was aided by volunteers who helped translate between Xhosa and English.

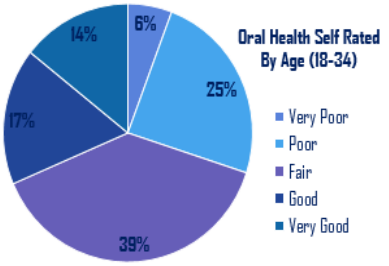
Results: See infographic pictured right. *Conclusion:* With limited resources in the townships, the provision of dental care needs to be allocated efficiently in order to maximize its effect on treating the local population. Despite a high prevalence of caries & periodontal disease, the majority of respondents reported that their oral health did not have a significant negative impact on daily life. It is possible that other health and social needs were being prioritized over dental healthcare. With this in mind, any health promotion proposed should include education as well as intervention, with a spread of downstream, midstream & upstream initiatives, rather than be fixed at a local level alone.

Results Image



How Frequently Are You Bothered By?

Frequency	Dry Mouth	Sensitivity To Hot/Cold	Pain	Your Appearance	Difficulty Eating	Difficulty Speaking	Difficulty Sleeping	Difficulty Interacting
Never	91%	43%	53%	26%	77%	85%	74%	84%
Hardly Ever	1%	3%	1%	9%	3%	2%	4%	3%
Sometimes	3%	14%	9%	6%	6%	4%	6%	4%
Fairly Often	4%	28%	31%	42%	13%	8%	15%	8%
Often	1%	11%	6%	16%	3%	1%	1%	1%



Other Notable Results:

- 76% had bleeding on probing
- 86% had visible plaque
- 69% had caries
- 50% had probing depths >5mm
- 32% of responders brushed once daily
- 97% of responders were female
- 19% had finished college
- 7% had a prosthetic appliance

Biography





Sunmeet Kandhari (Pictured Left): Currently working in a restorative post in Birmingham dental hospital and as an associate in a dental practice in Southwest London. He has a keen interest in clinical education, wellbeing and dental outreach. In the past this has taken him to the depths of the amazon jungle, as well as the townships around Cape Town. (Sunmeet_kandhari@hotmail.com)

Arjun Varma (Pictured Right): Currently working in the East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Trust, in an Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery post. His interest in global health led him to travel to the townships around Cape Town. His work here led to him receiving the King's College London 2029 International Elective Prize. This is based on the King's Vision 2029 which encompasses research, education, serving the world and transforming that research into action. (arjunthedentist@gmail.com)

Notes/Comments: