

**KINGSTON BAYSIDE PRIMARY CARE
PARTNERSHIP**

**BENTLEIGH BAYSIDE
COMMUNITY HEALTH**

**CENTRAL BAYSIDE COMMUNITY HEALTH
SERVICES**

DENTAL HEALTH SERVICE VICTORIA

**Oral Health Literacy Project –
Empowering Adults to Make
Healthy Choices
FINAL REPORT
2011**



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Bentleigh Bayside Community Health	Dental Health Services Victoria
Central Bayside Community Health Services	Dental Health staff and Health Promotion Staff
Deakin University	Kingston Bayside Primary Care Partnership

We wish to convey appreciation and acknowledgement for the contribution of all who played a part in the development of this report including students and consumers.

Acronyms:

ACRONYM	TITLE
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
B BCH	Bentleigh Bayside Community Health
CBCHS	Central Bayside Community Health Service
KBPCP	Kingston Bayside Primary Care Partnership
DHSV	Dental Health Services Victoria
DHS	Department of Human Services
NSAOH	National Survey of Adult Oral Health
WHO	World Health Organisation

Abstract:

Oral health surveys were disseminated to adult dental clients on the waiting list at Bentleigh Bayside Community Health and Central Bayside Community Health Services. Dental health information was mailed to 500 clients in addition to the survey. The educational material increased the level of knowledge regarding oral health practices, when compared to a second group who did not receive this information. It can be concluded that by providing oral health information, awareness of good oral health practices is increased. Due to the lack of information available to adults in the community regarding oral health care, more resources need to be developed and more education delivered to prevent oral health diseases in the adult population.

Introduction:

The World Health Organisation (WHO, 2007) defines oral health as ‘...being free of chronic mouth and facial pain, oral and throat cancer, oral sores, periodontal (gum) disease, tooth decay and tooth loss, and other diseases that affect the mouth and oral cavity...’. Oral disease and dental issues can be a significant personal burden for individuals due to pain and discomfort resulting in eating difficulties and poor diet which may then affect one’s appearance, self-esteem and quality of life (DHS, 2003).

The most common oral diseases worldwide are dental cavities and periodontal (gum) disease (WHO, 2007). In Australia, tooth decay is the most common disease, affecting 24% of adult patients (AIHW, 2008). Plaque is also the leading cause of gum disease, which is the second most common oral health issue among Australian adults (Better Health Channel, 2010).

According to the National Survey of Adult Oral Health (2004-2006), 24% of Victorian respondents had untreated tooth decay, and 23.7% had inflamed gums. 26.4% had moderate to severe gum disease. 59.7% of respondents stated that they had visited a dentist within 12 months of the survey, with key indicators of dental attendance including: residential locality, socio economic status, government health card status and dental insurance status (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2007).

Evidence indicates that certain population groups are at increased risk of oral health issues. These groups are comprised of vulnerable and disadvantaged people including:

- People with a mental illness
- People living in Supported Residential Services
- Homeless People
- People with a disability

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

These groups have been identified following research and consultation as: likely to have poorer oral health than average, less likely to access available dental care and likely to be more difficult to provide with appropriate and acceptable care (DHS, 1999).

The cost of oral health problems incorporates far more than monetary costs. For example: lost work days, lost school days, and reduced quality of life are considered costs to the individual and society as a result of poor oral health. The direct cost of oral health care in Australia is currently estimated at \$3.4 billion per annum (Meagher and McGregor, 2007).

To date, there is no local evidence to support the prevalence of oral health issues community members face within Bayside, Kingston or Glen Eira municipalities. It has also been identified that there is a lack of information for adults to support good oral health practices.

The Kingston Bayside Primary Care Partnership with member agencies, Bentleigh Bayside Community Health and Central Bayside Community Health Services initiated a project to identify whether the provision of clear and simple written material would improve oral health literacy of key oral health promoting messages. This model is being used in an attempt to address the gap in available resources targeting oral health promotion in adults compared to children. The outcome of this project will contribute to the evidence base in oral health promotion. In particular, the value in using Community Health Dental Health Services, as a setting to reach those people who may be among those who have the highest levels of oral health disease.

Aim:

To improve the oral health literacy of adults who are currently registered on the waiting lists of Bentleigh Bayside and Central Bayside Community Dental Health Services. These clients are in receipt of a health care card and have not previously attended the service.

Objective:

By December 2009, 80% of participants who received written information in the 'Oral Health Literacy' project will be able to identify 3 things they can do to maintain good oral health. BBCH and CBCHS dental health teams will be actively engaged in the development, implementation and evaluation of the project.

Method:

Written information was mailed to up to 500 adults (based on eligibility to participate in the project) on both the Bentleigh Bayside and Central Bayside Community Health Services dental waiting lists. Those selected to receive the information were seen within 6 months following the mail out. Written information promoted the 3 key messages of Eat Well, Drink Well and Clean Well derived from the Oral Health Guidelines for Victorians as developed by Dental Health Services Victoria (DHSV).

The 'Oral Health Literacy' project will be evaluated utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data:

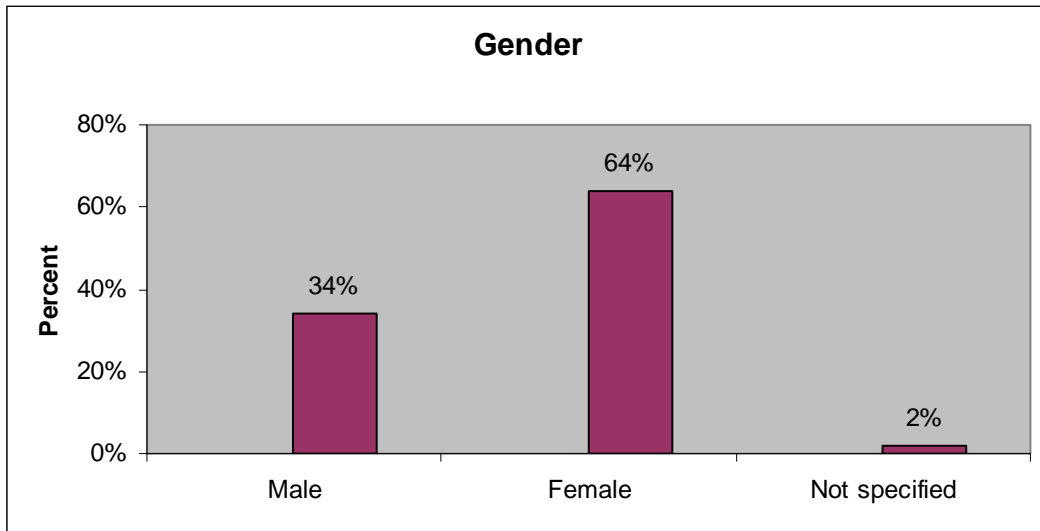
- A control group at the two dental health services will be used to provide a comparison in knowledge between those people who received the written information and those who did not.
- Those in the control group will be asked to complete a short written questionnaire on the three key messages – Eat Well, Drink Well, and Clean Well, when they attend the dental health service.
- Participants receiving written information will also be asked to complete a written questionnaire when they attend for their first appointment.

The questionnaire designed to assess the knowledge of the key messages has been developed in consultation with Dental Health Services Victoria – Oral Health Promotion Unit.

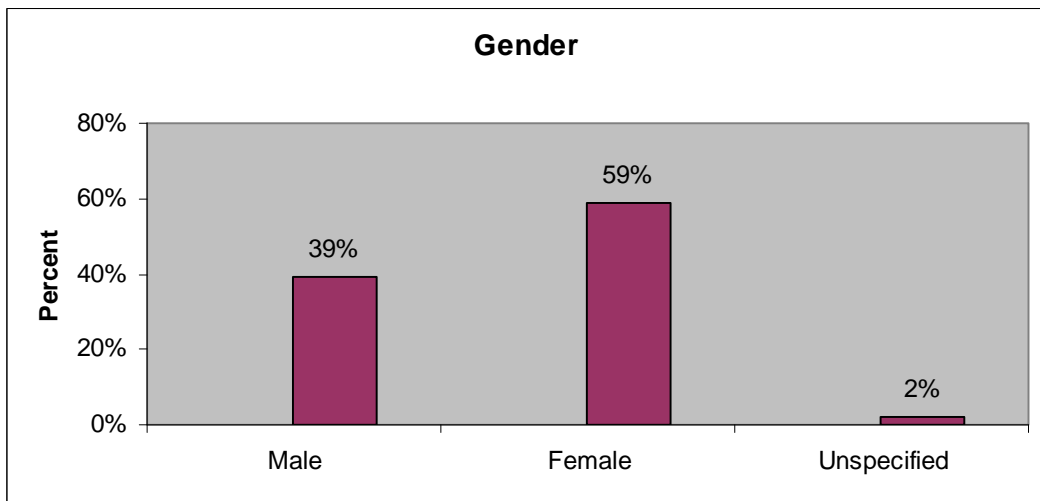
Results: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Gender

Pre-education:
(n= 108)

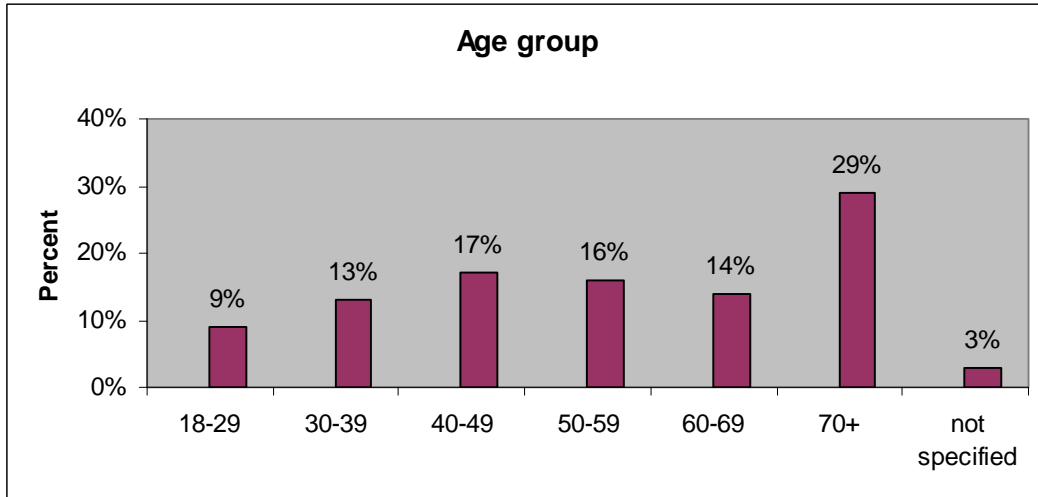


Post education:
(n=280)

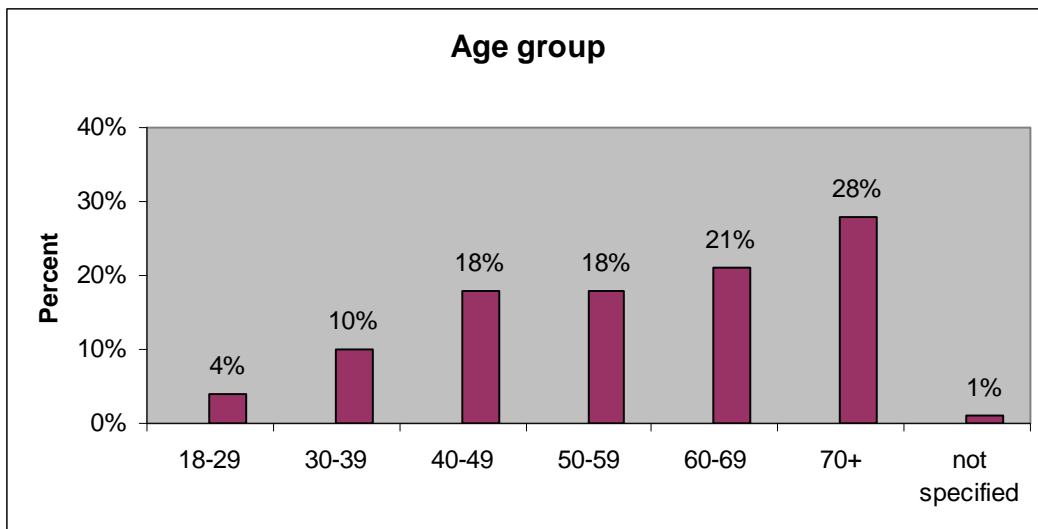


2. What is your age group?

Pre-education:
(n=108)



Post education:
(n=280)



3. What is your postcode?

Pre-education:
(n=108)

<u>Postcode</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Number of responses</u>
3144	Malvern	1
3150	Glen Waverly	1
3162	Caulfield	1
3163	Carnegie	5
3165	Bentleigh East	6
3166	Oakleigh	3
3167	Oakleigh South	6
3169	Clarinda	3
3170	Mulgrave	2
3172	Dingley	2
3174	Noble Park	2
3186	Brighton	2
3188	Hampton	3
3189	Moorabbin	4
3190	Highett	6
3192	Cheltenham	6
3193	Beaumaris	1
3194	Mentone	5
3195	Aspendale	10
3196	Chelsea	8
3197	Carrum	2
3198	Seaford	1
3201	Carrum Downs	1
3202	Heatherton	1
3204	Bentleigh	8
3687	Wahgunyah	1
3803	Hallam	1
3926	Balnarring	2
3936	Dromana	1
3941	Rye	2
Incomplete		1
Not specified		9

Post education:

(n=280)

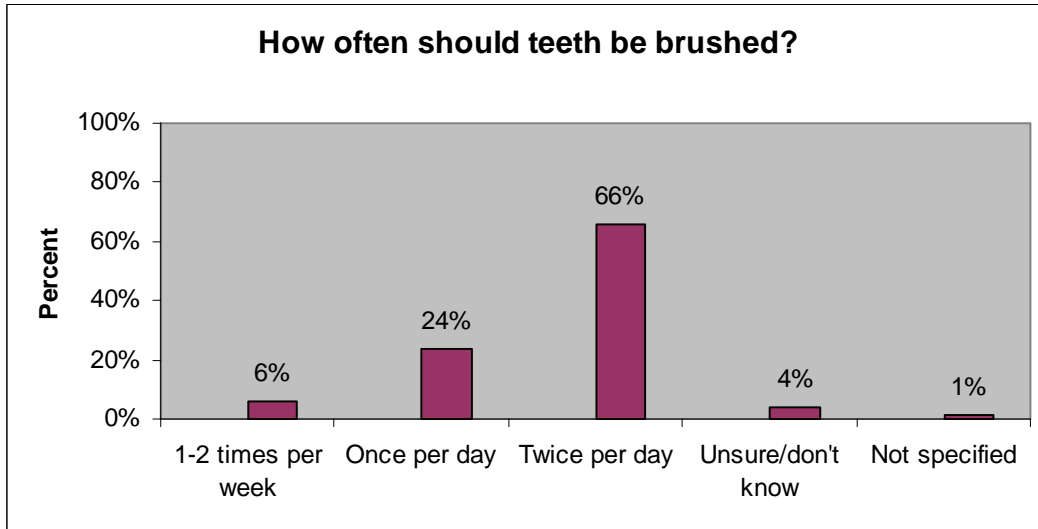
<u>Postcode</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Number of responses</u>
3072	Preston	1
3161	North Caulfield	1
3162	Caulfield	1
3165	Bentleigh East	9
3166	Oakleigh	1
3167	Oakleigh South	2
3168	Clayton	2
3169	Clarinda	11
3170	Mulgrave	10
3171	Springvale	28
3172	Dingley	16
3173	Keysborough	11
3174	Noble Park	25
3175	Dandenong	1
3183	Balaclava	1
3187	Brighton East	2
3188	Hampton	7
3189	Moorabbin	5
3190	Highett	3
3191	Sandringham	3
3192	Cheltenham	13
3193	Beaumaris	5
3194	Mentone	7
3195	Aspendale	28
3196	Chelsea	27
3197	Carrum	7
3198	Seaford	3
3199	Frankston	2
3201	Carrum	5
3202	Heatherton	1
3204	Bentleigh	10
3712	Thorton	1
3756	Darraweir Guim	1
3871	Allambee South	1
3912	Pearcedale	1
3931	Morington	2
3976	Hampton Park	2
3977	Cranbourne	3
Incomplete		1
Not specified		20

ORAL HEALTH RESPONSE DATA

4. How often should you brush your teeth?

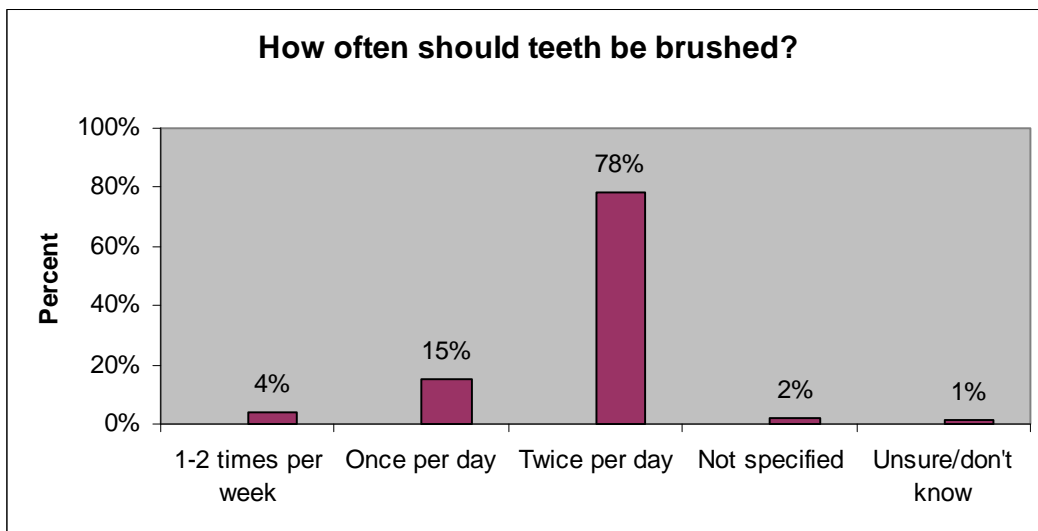
Pre-education:

(n=108)



Post education:

(n=280)



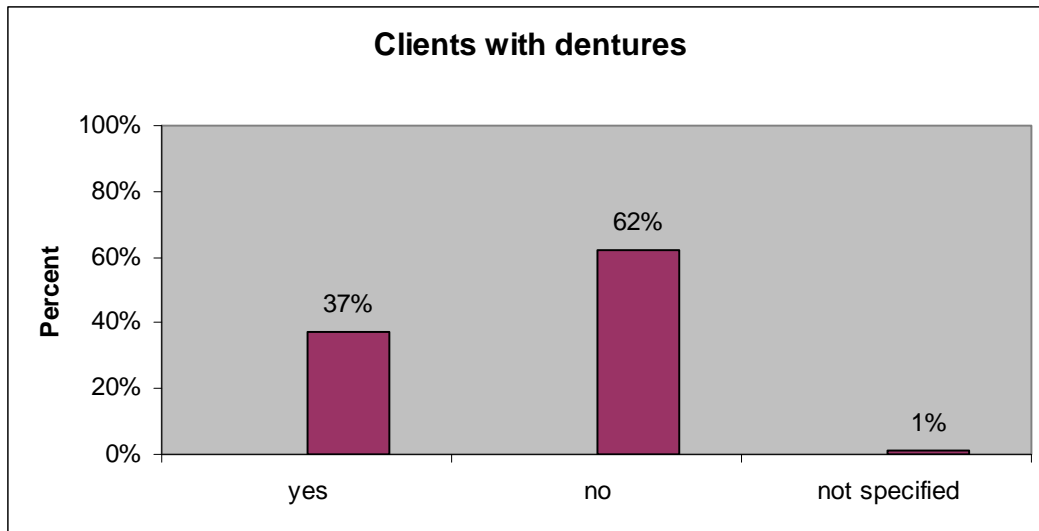
Client comments included:

- Every day
- Sometimes 3 times per day

5. Do you have dentures?

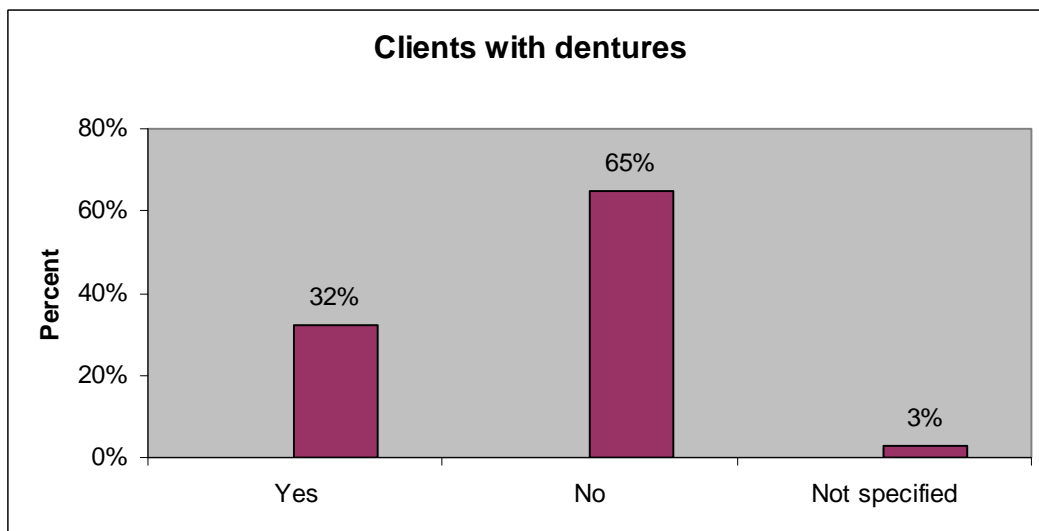
Pre-education:

(n=108)



Post education:

(n=280)



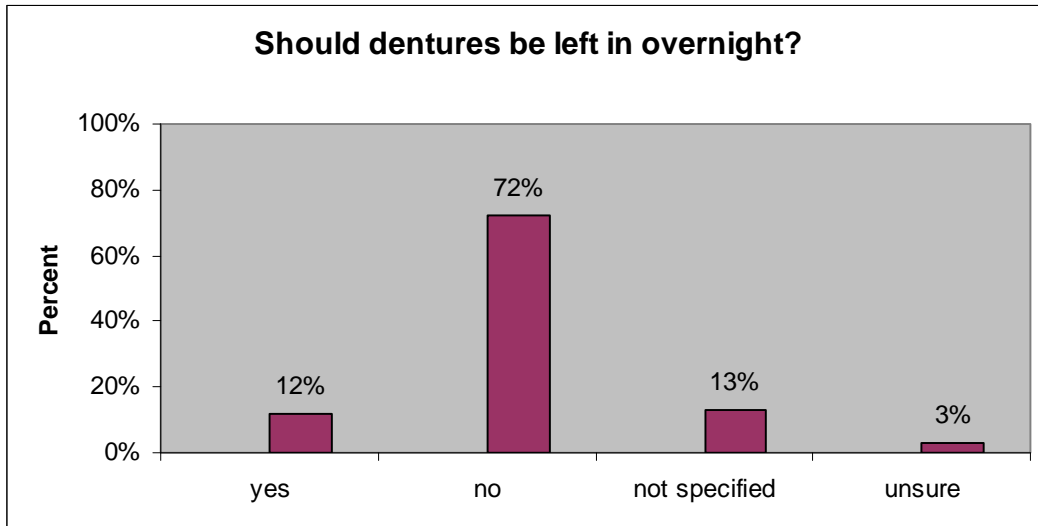
Client comments included:

- Not yet
- Bridge
- Partial plate
- Top only

6. You should leave dentures in your mouth overnight:

Pre-education:

(n=108)

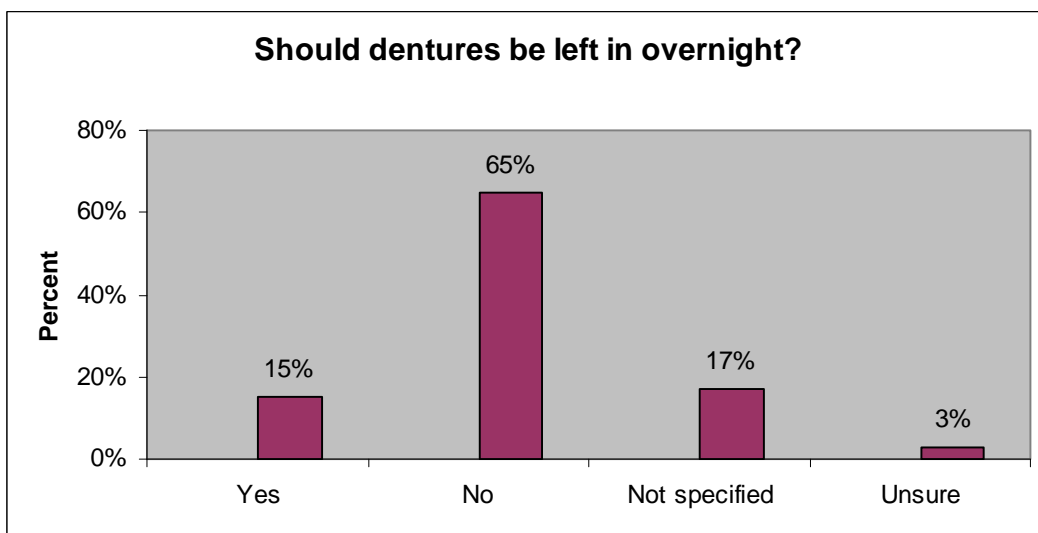


Client comments included:

- Ok but I don't have them, what do I do?

Post education:

(n=280)



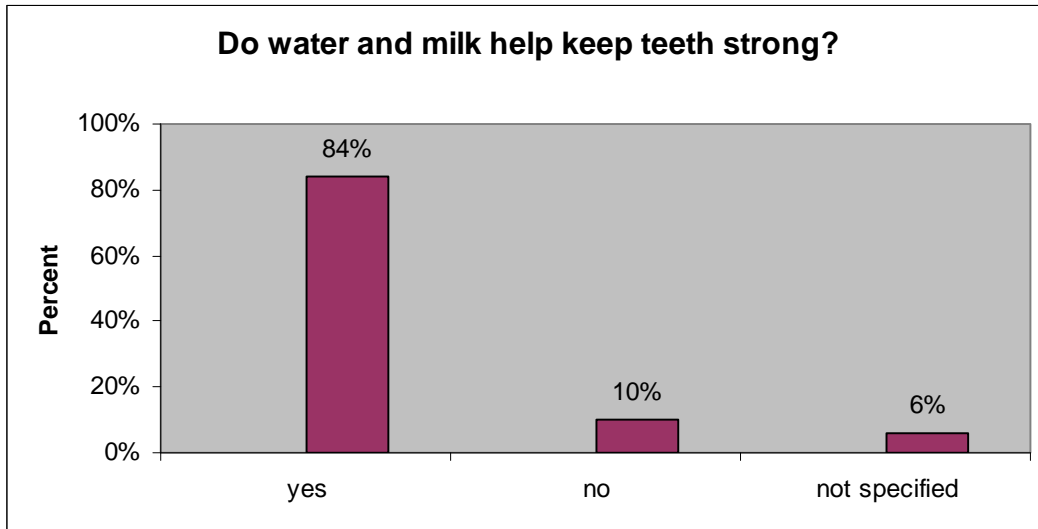
Client comments included:

- No idea - I meant to use plaque at night

7. Water and milk help keep your teeth strong:

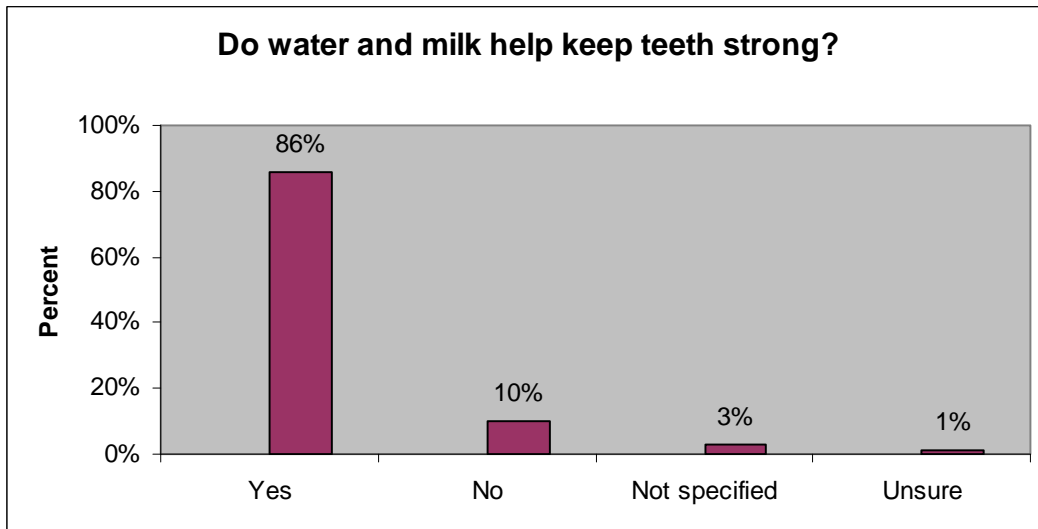
Pre-education:

(n=108)



Post education:

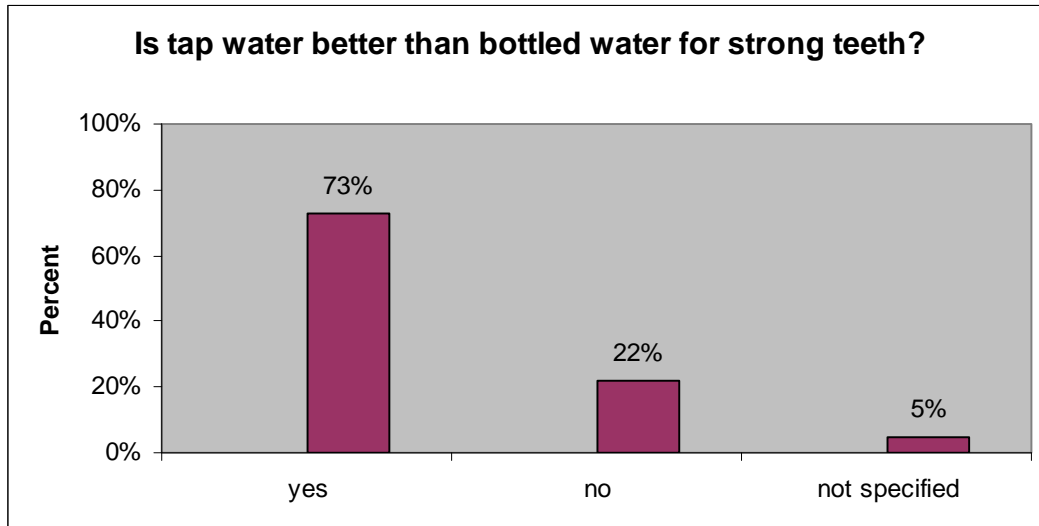
(n=280)



8. Tap water is better than bottled water for strong, healthy teeth:

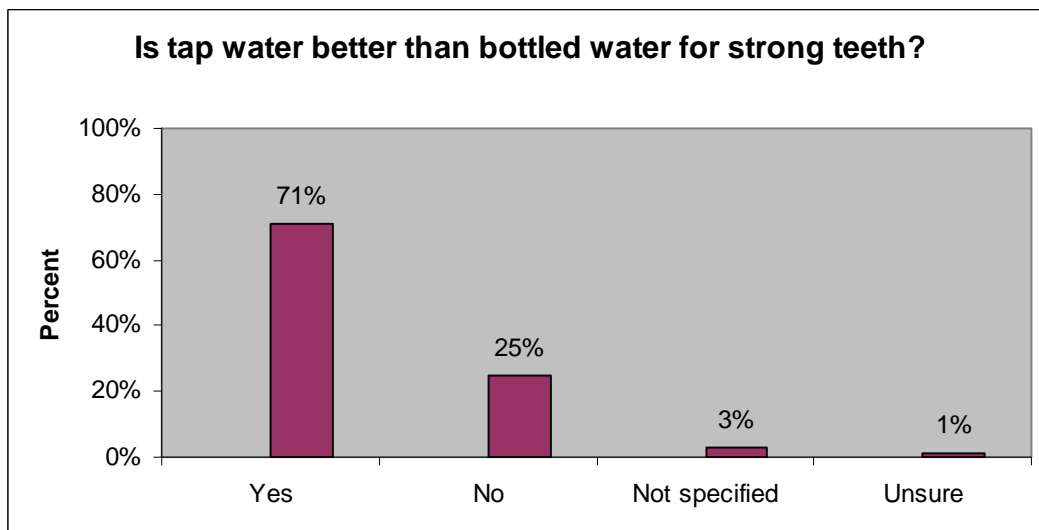
Pre-education:

(n=108)



Post education:

(n=280)



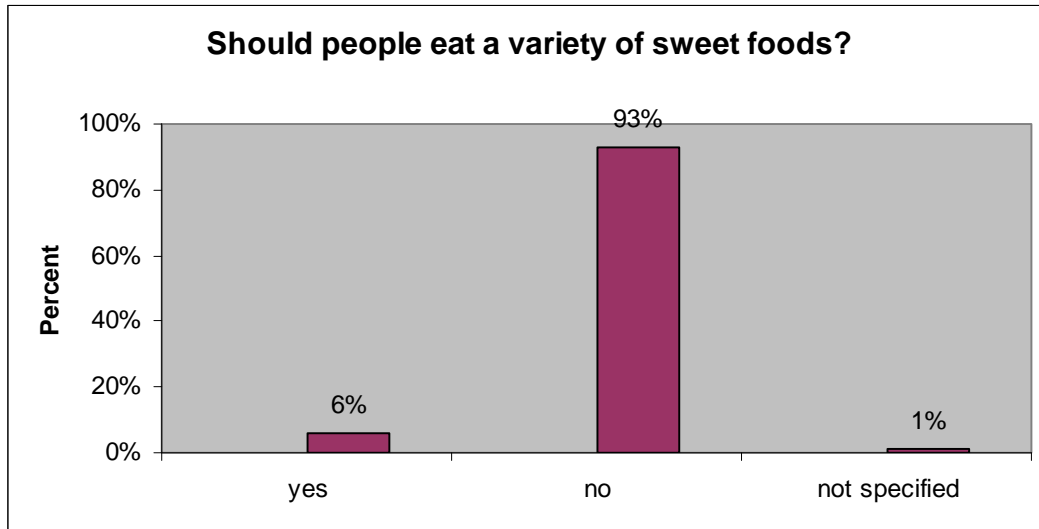
Client comments included:

- Probably true but I filter my water
- Fluoride
- Both are good

9. You should eat a variety of sweet foods (i.e. lollies):

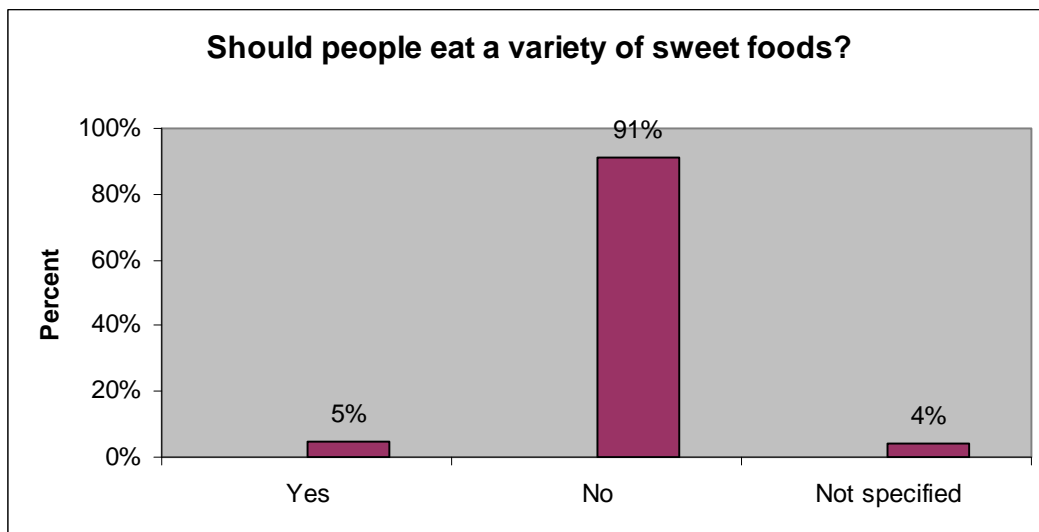
Pre-education:

(n=108)



Post education:

(n=280)



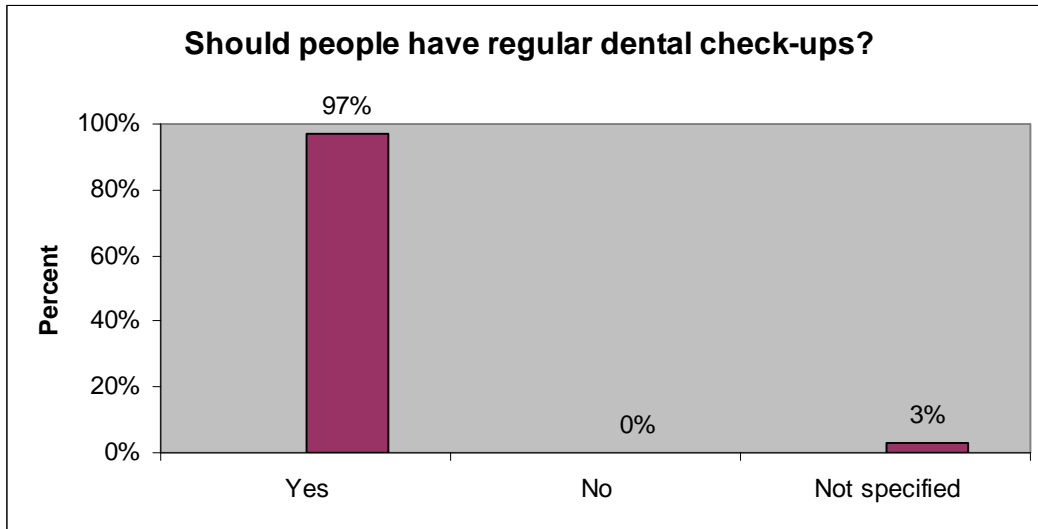
Client comments included:

- In moderation – foods containing calcium e.g. Salmon, sardines, soymilk should be eaten.

10. Should people have a regular dental check-up?

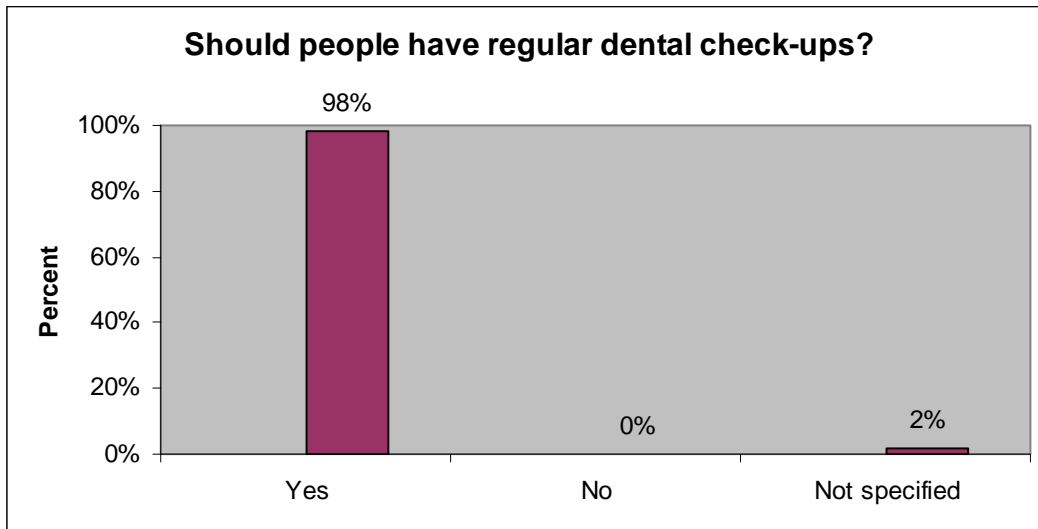
Pre-education:

(n=108)



Post education:

(n=280)



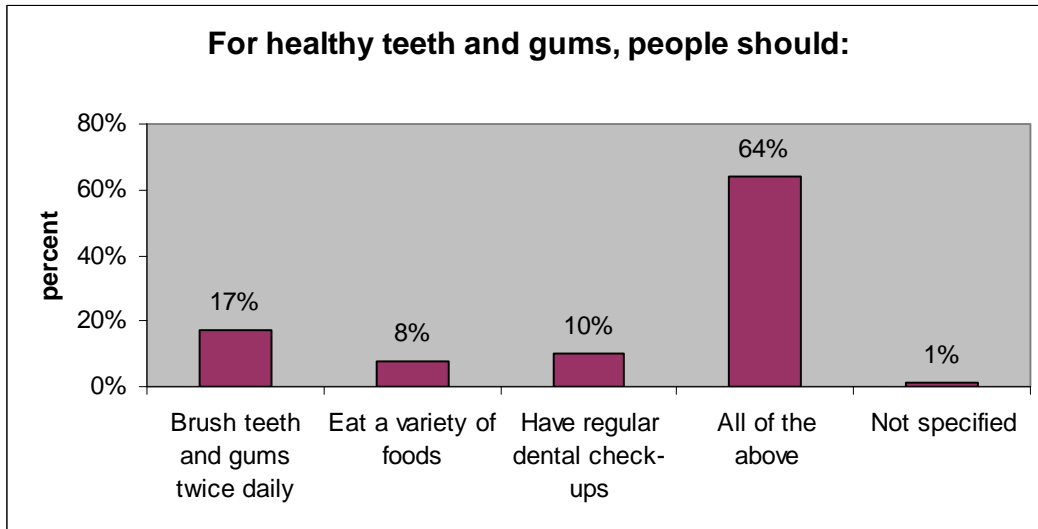
Client comments included:

- Yes, but I'm terrified of dentistry

11. For healthy teeth and gums, people should:

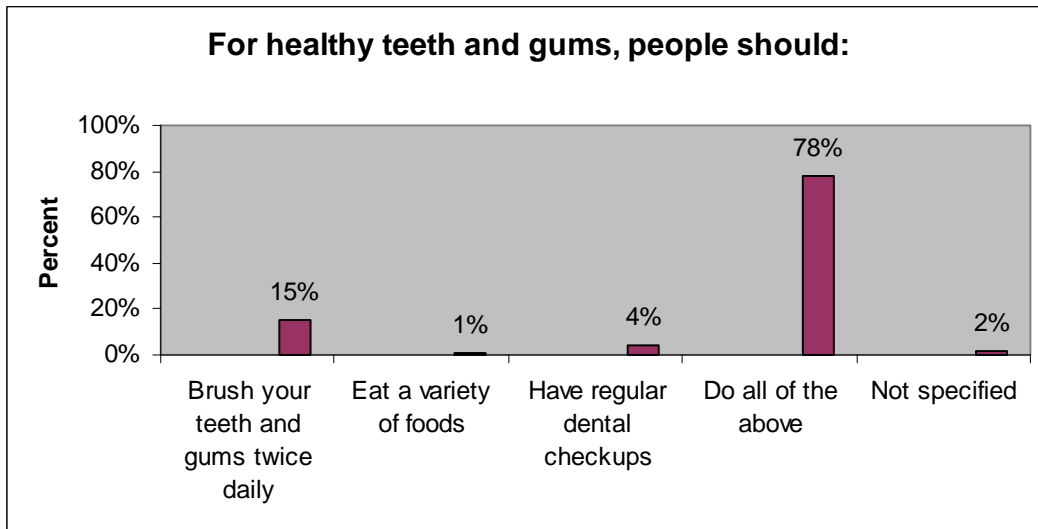
Pre-education:

(n=108)

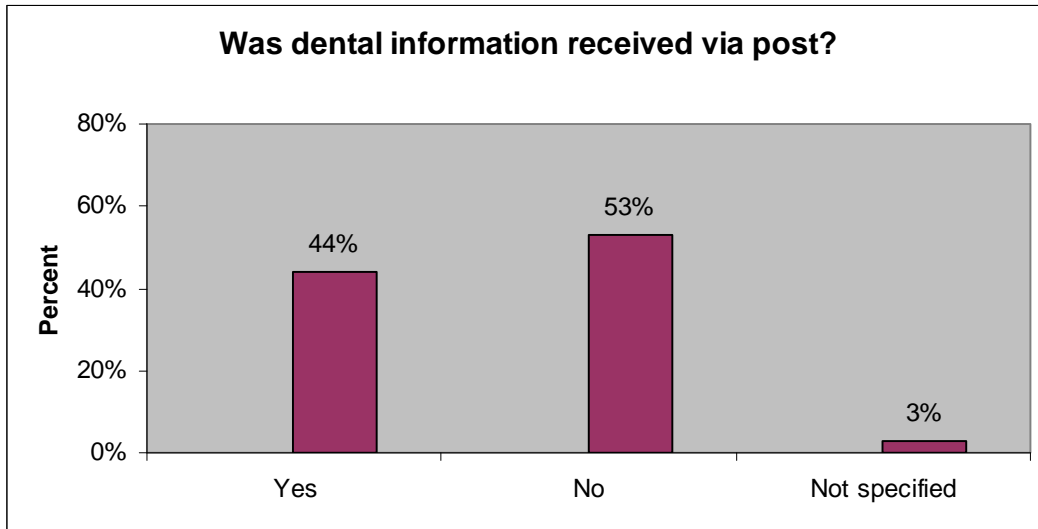


Post education:

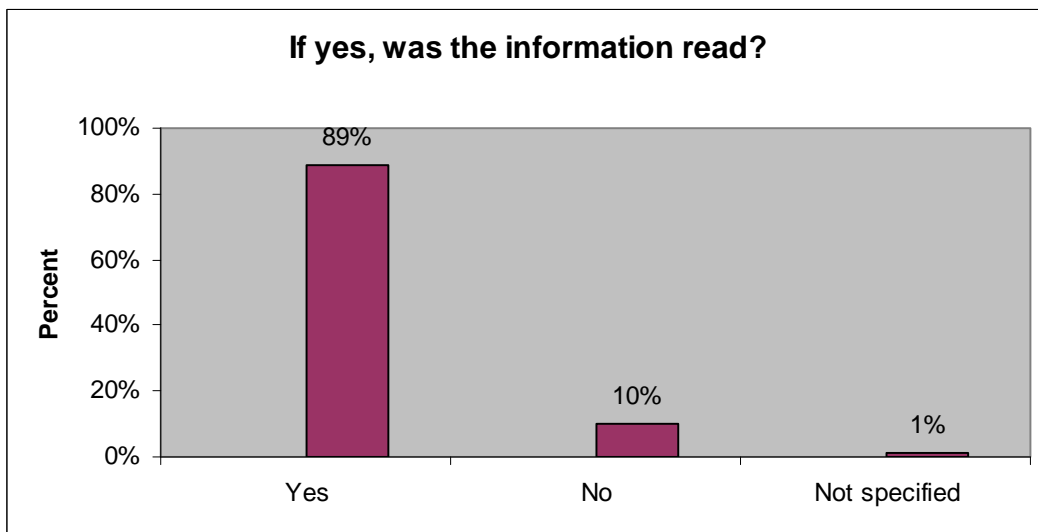
(n=280)



**12. Did you receive dental health information via the post?
(Post education group only)**
(n=280)



13. If yes, did you read the information? (Post education group only)
(n=122)



Further comments:

(Pre-education group):

- The government should put more money into dental health. If they cant, why not, they waste so much money on bridge lights etc.
- Your survey is a good idea.
- The tap water I use is filtered. I prefer the idea of no added fluoride to tap water with the option to add as a matter of choice.
- There is an error in question 6.
- This survey is ambiguous. It doesn't tell me who is conducting the survey. The Commonwealth of Australia and the State of Victoria are not referred to in this survey.
- Smoking is a big issue
- Thanks so much for the interest taken by you to improve adult dental health.
- Should do all ticked answers, but don't always follow them.
- Don't have any comments
- Dental services in the private sector can be very expensive. The government should provide financial assistance wherever possible to develop a healthier population thus regarding demands on public hospitals that are already overloaded.
- My thanks to Bentleigh Bayside Community Health for services rendered.
- Excellent Care by staff.

(Post education group):

- Don't know about dentures, don't have them!
- Kept dentist treatment all my life, come to this dentist since I had a stroke 10 years ago.
- Always glad to get an appointment.
- Thanks for professional service!
- Need more loos here for the number of clients using.
- Good advice and helpful service for pensioners.
- Thank you for the excellent treatment and courtesy of all the staff.
- Very happy with my treatment.
- I have always found central bayside dental service to be caring, helpful and thoughtful – many thanks.
- Very polite and good service from southern health.
- I only knew about the service through my dad – he comes here.
- Patient does not understand survey.
- I read it briefly. It's always helpful to remind us all about healthy dental care.
- This is my first time coming here. Thank you for giving me the opportunity.
- This questionnaire should be asked to children and teenagers.
- I wish the time between dental check-ups was shorter.
- People do need to know more about teeth. Good idea.
- This is a great service.
- I liked it because I was able to prove my friend wrong. He thought you needed a lot of toothpaste on the brush.
- Looking after your teeth comes from parental support and guidance, especially in childhood years. Developing healthy habits early in life helps.
- Unable to have regular dental checks because of dental costs.

- This was my first visit – appointment was on time, courteous and good advice provided.
- This form should be completed after dental examination and/or treatment.
- I think I will follow the information from the leaflets.
- I suggest teeth should be checked once a year by the dentist.
- I have gum disease and I always have problems with my teeth.
- Dr and staff are friendly – keep up the good work.
- The past 4 or 5 years all parts of our family have bad teeth. We do clean daily and brush once a day and use mouth washes, but still no good.
- Wonderful service – everyone is so kind and efficient.
- Better no pay for aged pensioners (65+).
- Lovely team!
- So far everyone has been very helpful.
- I don't know yet the exact cause of bad teeth or tooth decay.
- Too long to wait for a check up.
- Excellent service offered by Bentleigh Bayside.
- The private dental services are prohibitively expensive. Therefore I do not visit the dentist regularly.
- Patient does not speak or read English.

Discussion:

Of the total number of respondents, it was identified that approximately 50% more females than males took part in this project. This may be due to the fact that more females seek and attend healthcare services, therefore a higher number of females were available to take part in the survey (Young, 2003). Both pre and post education groups had a majority of respondents aged over 70, with the post education group being slightly older overall. It can be seen that the majority of respondents from both groups resided in postcodes of 3195 (Aspendale, Aspendale Gardens, Braeside, Mordialloc and Parkdale) and 3196 (Bonbeach, Chelsea, Chelsea Heights and Edithvale).

Respondents were asked how often an individual should brush their teeth. 66% of the pre-education group stated that teeth should be brushed twice per day, with some respondents stating '3 times per day' or 'everyday'. This number increased to 78% in the post education group, which clearly indicates that the educational material was of use. 6% of the pre education group and 4% of the post education group stated that teeth should be brushed '1-2 times per week'. It is evident that there was a decrease in the amount of respondents who thought this from pre to post education, however it may also be possible that the question was misinterpreted and respondents stated their current brushing habits.

37% of the total respondents in the pre-education group had dentures, as did 32% of the post education group. Some respondents indicated that they have a 'part', 'bridge', 'partial plate' or 'top only'. It could be interpreted that the clients that responded 'no' to the question could actually have a partial denture and not realize, due to lack of awareness of different types of dentures, which may have altered the results slightly.

Respondents were then asked whether dentures should be left in their mouths overnight. 72% of the pre-education group stated they should not be left in overnight, and 12% stated they should be. Of the total number of respondents in the post education group, 65% stated that dentures should not be left in overnight and 15% stated they should be. It was evident that there was some confusion regarding whether dentures should be left in overnight or not as two respondents stated 'no idea' and 'don't know'. Overall, there was an increase of 3% in the amount of respondents stating that dentures should be left in overnight from the pre to post education groups, potentially indicating that the question may have been misinterpreted. Respondents may have thought that the survey was asking for their current overnight denture habits.

When asked whether water and milk help to keep teeth strong, 84% of the pre education group said 'yes' and 10% said 'no'. 86% of the post education group

also said 'yes', with 10% saying 'no'. It was noted that there was a 2% increase in the 'yes' responses from the pre to post education groups, however the amount of 'no' responses remained the same at 10%. This can be explained by a decrease in the number of 'unspecified' responses in the post education group. The pre-education group had 6% unspecified, whereas the post education group had 3% unspecified.

According to Victorian Chief Health Officer, John Carnie, '...water fluoridation helps protect teeth against decay...and tap water fluoridation is the most effective way allowing everybody access to the benefits of fluoride...' (Reference needed). 73% of the pre-education group stated that they believe tap water is better than bottled water for strong healthy teeth, and 22% didn't think this was so. Among the post education group, 71% believed that tap water was more beneficial than bottled water, and 25% felt that bottled water was better. A comment from a respondent was 'both are good'. These results suggest a possible need for education around water fluoridation. Another explanation may also be that bottled water is readily available and chemical-free which may lead people to believe that it's safer than tap water which contains chemicals such as chlorine (Australian Bottled Water Institute, 2004).

The survey asks whether people should eat a variety of sweet foods and 93% of the pre-education group stated 'no'. 91% of the post education group also stated 'no' meaning there was a 2% decrease from the pre to the post education group. This can be explained by an increase in the amount of 'unspecified' responses from 1% in the pre-education group to 4% in the post education group. One respondent stated 'in moderation: foods containing calcium e.g. Salmon, sardines and soymilk should be eaten', which demonstrates a good level of knowledge about oral health practices.

It is obviously well-known among all respondents in both groups that people should have a regular dental check-up. 97% of the pre-education group and 98% of the post education group indicated that they thought the statement 'people should have a regular dental check-up' was true. No responses of 'false' were recorded, with the remainder of responses 'unspecified'. It was noted that although the majority of both groups knew that regular dental check-ups are necessary, one respondent commented that they are '...unable to have regular dental checks because of dental costs'. Other comments included '...the private dental services are prohibitively expensive; therefore I do not visit the dentist regularly' and 'better no pay for aged pensioners (65+)'. This indicates that a possible reason for people not having regular dental check-ups is the cost associated with seeing a dentist.

In order to maintain healthy teeth and gums, the majority of respondents from both pre (64%) and post (78%) survey groups stated 'do all of the above'. The

response 'brush teeth and gums twice daily' was the second most common response for both groups. The 14% increase in the post survey group for the 'all of the above' response shows a good understanding of the educational material. However on some surveys, a number of respondents ticked more than one response option, including the 'all of the above' option. This could indicate that the number of response options may have caused some confusion among respondents and also the collation and analysis of quantitative data.

Of the 280 respondents in the post education group, 44% claimed they received dental health information via the post. This number was significantly lower than expected, as the educational material was distributed to 500 dental clients who also received the survey. Of those who received the dental health information, 89% stated that they read the information which is clearly reflected in the results of this survey.

Barriers:

- Quantity of response options in some questions (i.e. Q11)
- Language barrier – some clients do not speak English
- Wording of questions (lack of editing i.e. Q6)
- Long waiting times between dental appointments – may result in decline of good oral health knowledge among clients
- Different respondents in pre and post groups made it impossible to compare pre and post results, or whether the educational material made a comparative difference.

Enablers:

- Collaborative partnership between KBPCP, BBCH, and DHSV- Oral Health Promotion Unit
- Many questions had true/false response options, making it easier for the respondent to answer
- Dental health information via the post allowed clients to read it at their leisure
- Participation was voluntary
- Content of the surveys was simple, however the way it was presented was not so clear

Conclusion:

The analysis of the results identified that the post survey group demonstrated a greater level of knowledge in relation to good oral health practices compared to the pre survey group. More females than males took part in the survey, with the majority of respondents aged over 70 years. Oral health practices such as brushing teeth often and removing dentures overnight as well as information about the benefits of tap water compared to bottled water presented a need for more education. However the majority of both groups clearly identified that it was good practice to have regular dental check-ups, brush twice daily and eat a variety of foods in order to maintain healthy teeth and gums. Overall, the project demonstrated that providing adults with oral health information enables improved knowledge of oral health practices. However it is acknowledged that a range of strategies is required to support adults to apply this knowledge to prevent teeth or gum disease

Recommendations:

- More true/false questions – less chance of confusion or answering more than one response option
- Consultation with dental health clients to identify the most appropriate presentation of oral health educational material
- Look at the feasibility of dental health educational material being distributed to all clients on the waiting list at BBCH and CBCHS in order to improve oral health practices
- More accurate editing of the wording of questions in the surveys
- More accurate selection/recording of respondents for pre/post studies – ensure the same number of participants are in both groups.

Budget:

REQUESTED BUDGET		EXPENDED BUDGET	IN KIND CONTRIBUTION	
Postage for mail out	\$500	\$375	Health promotion Coordinators time	\$6720
Envelopes	\$300	\$65	Dental team time	\$2200
Development survey	\$200	\$320	Stationery	\$ 100
Printing costs	\$500	\$396	Photocopying	\$ 100
Educational flyer and Survey	\$350		Administration worker/Student	\$1200
Collation evaluation data		\$560		
Evaluation Report and Launch of project findings	\$200	\$471		
Total Budget Requested	\$2050	\$2187	Total 'In-Kind' Budget	\$10,320

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Appendices:

- Pre Survey
- Post Survey
- Educational Material
 - Clean Well, Drink Well, Stay Well
 - How to brush your teeth

To assist us in our endeavours to improve the dental health of adults, we ask you to please complete the following questionnaire and place in the box provided.

DENTAL HEALTH PRE - SURVEY

Please tick (✓) your answers to the following;

1. Male Female

2. What is your age group?

- 18 – 29 50 – 59
 30 – 39 60 – 69
 40 – 49 70+

3. What is your postcode?

4. How often should you brush your teeth?

- 1-2 times a week
 Once a day
 Twice a day
 Unsure/don't know

5. Do you have dentures?

- Yes No

6. You should leave dentures in your mouth overnight?

- True
 False

7. Water and milk help keep your teeth strong?

- True
 False

8. Tap water is better than bottled water for strong healthy teeth?

- True
 False

9. You should eat a variety of sweet foods (lollies, ice creams, chocolate)

- True
 False

10. You should have a regular dental check up?

- True
 False

11. For healthy teeth and gums you should;

- Brush your teeth and gums twice daily
 Eat a variety of foods
 Have regular dental checkups
 Do all of the above



COMMENTS.....
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To assist us in our endeavours to improve the dental health of adults, we ask you to please complete the following questionnaire and place in the box provided.

DENTAL HEALTH POST - SURVEY

Please tick (✓) your answers to the following;

1. Male Female

2. What is your age group?

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 18 – 29 | <input type="checkbox"/> 50 – 59 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 30 – 39 | <input type="checkbox"/> 60 – 69 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 40 – 49 | <input type="checkbox"/> 70+ |

3. What is your postcode?

Please answer the following questions by ticking the appropriate box

4. How often should you brush your teeth?

- 1-2 times a week
- once a day
- Twice a day
- Unsure/don't know

5. Do you have dentures?

- Yes No

6. You should leave dentures in your mouth overnight:

- True
 False

7. Water and milk help keep your teeth strong?

- True
 False

8. Tap water is better than bottled water for strong healthy teeth?

- True
 False

9. You should eat a variety of sweet foods (lollies, ice creams, chocolates)

- True
 False

10. You should have a regular dental check up?

- True
 False

11 For healthy teeth and gums you should;

- Brush your teeth and gums twice daily
- Eat a variety of foods
- Have regular dental checkups
- Do all of the above

12. Did you receive dental health information via the post?

- Yes
 No

13. If yes, did you read the information?

- Yes
 No

COMMENTS

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Educational Material:

Clean Well



Natural Teeth

- Brush your teeth twice a day, after breakfast and before bed.
- Using a toothbrush with toothpaste brush your teeth and gums



Dentures

- Clean dentures every day, using a toothbrush and soap
- Before bed leave your dentures in a glass of water

Drink Well



- Drink lots of tap water or milk
- Water and milk help keep your teeth clean and strong
- Avoid drinking juice, cordial, fizzy drinks and alcohol between meals

Eat Well



- Eat a variety of healthy foods
- Avoid eating sweet foods
- If you would like to eat something sweet, do so with a meal

Stay Well



- Have a dental check up
- Ask your dentist how often you should return
- Quit smoking
- Limit the amount of alcohol you drink
- Protect your face and body from the sun with sunscreen, a hat and clothing



dental health services victoria
oral health for better health

Dental Health Services Victoria is the state's leading public oral health agency, promoting oral health, purchasing services and providing care to Victorians. www.dhsv.org.au
February 2009

how to brush



1.

Smear a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste onto a small head, soft toothbrush. Use low fluoride toothpaste for children 2-6 years of age unless otherwise recommended by a dental professional.



2.

Aim the toothbrush bristles at an angle towards the gum line.



3.

Gently jiggle the brush and move it in small circles over the teeth and gums.



4.

Repeat for inside surfaces of all teeth.



5.

For chewing surfaces use a light back and forth motion. Children should be encouraged to spit out the toothpaste after brushing.

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health promotion