

Dental Health Barometer

We know that the dental industry is facing huge pressures. On the other side, many patients are struggling to access NHS dental care.

There is an agreement that preventative oral healthcare advice is important:



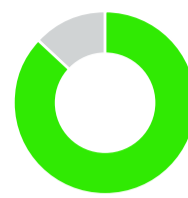
49%

of consumers think preventative oral healthcare is very important, with a further 29% deeming it 'somewhat important'



54%

of consumers say they would prefer to receive preventative oral healthcare advice from their dentist.



87%

of oral health professionals believe preventative oral healthcare advice is beneficial for patients.

Oral health professionals disagree over what constitutes oral healthcare:



50%

said advice on additional oral hygiene products and brushing techniques were key.



41%

pointed to advice on diet as preventative oral healthcare.



44%

said advice on caring for teeth (e.g. trauma prevention and bad habit continuation).

Preventative oral healthcare can play a significant role in sustaining health, and, through better preventive actions, patients are more likely to avoid oral health issues later in life.

Lack of clarity around place of NHS in preventative oral healthcare:



48%

Almost half of patients said preventative oral healthcare advice is offered on the NHS, and over a third (34%) were unsure.



74%

of oral health professionals said preventative oral healthcare advice is offered on the NHS.



59%

of oral health professionals said that they are more likely to offer preventative oral healthcare advice for private patients than NHS patients.

The reasons many oral health professionals don't offer preventative oral healthcare advice is down to:

- Time constraints
- Lack of patient requests
- Longer appointment times needed
- The need for appropriate reimbursement under the NHS

Both patients and oral health professionals agree and clearly understand that preventative oral healthcare advice is beneficial and important, although not all agree on what exactly constitutes this. There is also a lack of understanding over whether it is offered across both private and NHS appointments.

There is guidance out there for oral health professionals:



The vast majority (76%) of oral health professionals are aware of the Department of Health's Delivering Better Oral Health Toolkit.

Some people are still missing out on preventative oral healthcare:

34%

Only 34% of oral health professionals always offer preventative oral healthcare advice to their patients, and almost a fifth (18%) only sometimes offer it.



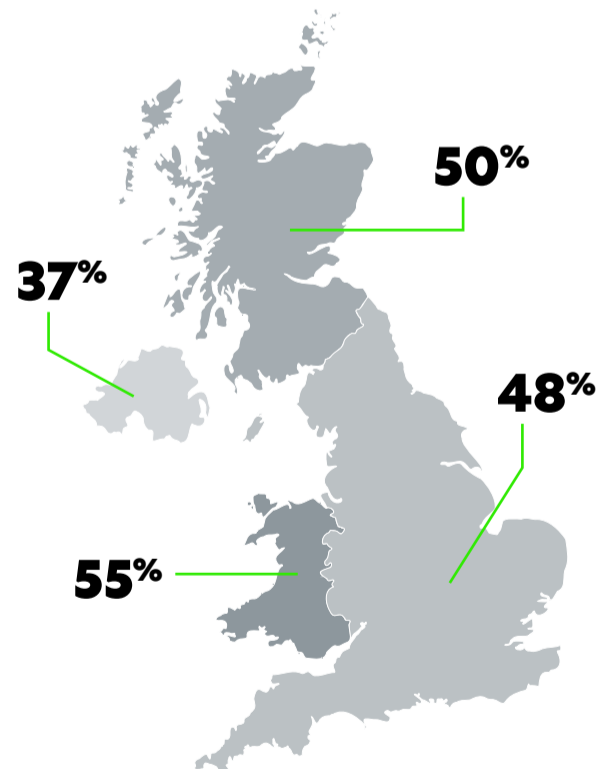
One in four (25%) of NHS patients said that on their most recent trip to a oral health professional they did not receive or see any preventative oral healthcare advice.

15%

of private patients said the same.

Regional disparities around preventative oral healthcare:

Over half (55%) of respondents in Wales said that they recently received preventative oral healthcare advice verbally from their oral health professionals: compared to half of those in Scotland, under half of those in England, and under 2 in 5 in Northern Ireland.



We want to support dentists and oral health professionals, to enable them reach more patients with preventative oral healthcare advice.



HALEON

College of General Dentistry

The surveys were conducted 23.08.2023 - 30.08.2023 and cover a nationally representative sample of 2,000 UK consumers and 505 dental health professionals.