

Self reported occupational health problems among dentists in Himachal Pradesh, India- A descriptive survey

Vinay Bhardwaj

H. P. Government Dental College and Hospital, India

Background: Occupation-related health problems are associated with risk or danger as a consequence of the nature of working conditions. Unique working conditions in dentistry can affect the health of dentists.

Aim: To collect information from dentists in Himachal Pradesh concerning common occupation-related health problems, their knowledge and the precautions they commonly took to avoid such problems.

Settings and Design: Questionnaire survey conducted on a systematic random sample of 465 dentists among 1395 dentists registered in the state dental council.

Methods and Material: Questionnaires were sent by mail in September 2011 to systematic random sample of 465 dentists. The dentists were asked to complete the questionnaire and return it by mail using the stamped addressed envelope provided.

Statistically Analysis Used: The data was analyzed using the software SPSS version 15 (SPSS Inc. , Chicago). 'Z' test was used for statistical comparison.

Results: The response rate from the dentists was 81. 7%. The most common problem experienced was musculoskeletal pain (46. 1%) followed by allergic dermatitis of the hands (7. 6%). Nearly all of the respondent dentists wore gloves (100%) and face masks (97. 4%) during work. 1/10th respondents reported that they had received instructions or training through interactive workshops in occupational health and safety.

Conclusions: There seems to be a substantial demand for continuing education on occupational health and safety among dentists in Himachal Pradesh. Hence more emphasis on occupational health and safety will be put into dental training with more continuing education activities on occupational health and safety to practicing dentists.

dr.viney@gmail.com