

Scottish Adult Oral Health Survey

2016-18

An Official Statistics publication for Scotland

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About this release

This release by Information Services Division provides information on the Scottish Adult Oral Health Survey (SAOHS). This publication provides statistics for the combined 2016 and 2018 SAHOS surveys. Data were collected for a total of 3,114 patients aged 45 years and over, by 126 dentists.

Main Points

- This project has shown that collecting survey data in relation to the oral health and behaviour of patients aged 45 years and over as part of a primary dental care examination is feasible.
- In this survey of 3,114 patients, 96% of adults aged 45 years and over who attended primary dental care for an examination had at least one natural tooth.
- Two-thirds (67%) of those with at least one natural tooth had a functional dentition (≥ 21 teeth), that is defined as having enough teeth for general oral function.
- Older patients and those living in the more deprived areas of Scotland were less likely to have a functional dentition.
- This survey will be used to inform the future collection of adult oral health data in Scotland.

Background

The SAOHS was initially carried out as a pilot project in 2015/16 with the support and approval of the Scottish Dental Epidemiology Co-ordinating Committee (SDECC). The principal aim of the pilot project was to assess the feasibility of conducting a survey of adult oral health across Scotland, within an age defined group of people attending primary dental care for an examination appointment.

It was anticipated that, if successful, this would be the first stage in the development of a rolling SAOHS programme for different age groups.

Prior to SAOHS 2015/16 pilot report, the most recent epidemiological survey of the oral health of Scotland's adult population that included a professional oral examination, was carried out as part of the 1998 UK Adult Dental Health Survey (ADHS).

The long-term purpose of the survey is to record levels of adult oral health across Scotland in order to inform policy, plan services, improve and maintain health and to monitor changes over time. Although this survey was fundamentally testing an alternative approach for gathering epidemiological data, it was also designed to provide a picture of oral health for an under-reported cohort of the population: adults aged 45 years and over.

Data were collected as part of dental examinations in the NHS General Dental Service (GDS) and Public Dental Service (PDS). The 2018 SAOHS began in December 2017 when participating dentists were asked during a four-month period (December 2017 - April 2018) to collect and submit data from a minimum of 25 patients aged 45 years and over who were attending the service for either a new patient, unscheduled or recall examination appointment. A notable limitation of the data reported here is therefore that it represents only those people who sought a dental examination either as a new or emergency patient, or as a regular patient of the GDS or PDS. [ISD Dental Statistics](#) show that as at 30 September 2018, 88% of adults aged 45 years and over in Scotland were registered with a dentist. Of those registered, 70% participated in GDS or PDS by attending a dentist for examination or treatment within the previous two years.

This report focuses on the results of the combined 2016 and 2018 surveys. The pilot in 2016 was carried out between December 2015 and March 2016 and details can be found here:

<https://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Dental-Care/Publications/2017-02-21/2017-02-21-SAOHS-Report.pdf>.

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Further Information

The full report and data tables from this publication are available to download from our [web page](#).

The Information Services Division publishes a wide range of dental statistics. You can find all our dental information at the [ISD Dental Website](#).

As this was a pilot project, the date of the next release of this publication is not yet confirmed.

ISD and Official Statistics

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