

Dental public health: An overview.

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Oral illnesses are a serious public health issue in many low- and middle-income nations, and their prevalence is on the rise. The goal of dental public health (DPH) is to enhance the population's oral health by providing preventative and therapeutic treatments. However, its successes in India are being questioned, owing to DPH personnel's lack of expertise and skill.

In India, health has been less important over the last few decades, with oral health being the least important. Oral illnesses continue to be a problem in developing nations like India, particularly among the rural population. Dental caries (50 percent, 52.5 percent, 61.4 percent, 79.2 percent, and 84.7 percent in 5, 12, 15, 35–44, and 65–74 years old, respectively) and periodontal disease (55.4 percent, 89.2 percent, and 79.4 percent in 12, 35–44, and 65–74 years old, respectively) are the two most common oral diseases in India. Oral health has been linked to a variety of systemic diseases, including diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and pregnancy, as well as its influence on quality of life. Orofacial discomfort and loss of sensorimotor skills restrict food choices and eating pleasures, as well as social interaction and intimacy.

Understanding the distribution and causes of oral illnesses, as well as educating, motivating, and promoting oral health in various groups, is the primary goal of public health dentistry. Over the last few decades, dental public health (DPH) research and practise have focused on two key issues: dental caries and periodontal disease. According to estimates, around 50% of schoolchildren have dental caries, while more than 90% of adults have periodontal disease. This rise in the incidence of oral disorders has occurred in tandem with the recent fast dietary

shift, and it may be one of its implications. Furthermore, India is known as the world's "oral cancer capital" due to its heavy consumption of both smoked and smokeless tobacco products, both of which are significantly linked to oral cancers. The majority of these common oral illnesses is generally avoidable and can be decreased by a variety of health promotion and prevention methods.

In India, the environment of DPH initiatives has quickly changed during the last 15–20 years. As a result, dentistry programmes' scope and curriculum have shifted. With his or her knowledge of dental problems and ability to deal with community issues, the public dental health professional may have a significant impact on the creation of health initiatives that benefit both the public and the dental profession. Despite the fact that the speciality has been contributing to the improvement of oral health since its establishment in 1969, there has been nothing to say about its successes in India.

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