



Results of Quick Poll on Smiles for Sobriety

In June 2019, 360 of the National Dental PBRN members responded to a Quick Poll on Smiles for Sobriety. Almost 60% of respondents treated between 1 and 10 suspected active addicts per month, supporting the assumption that drug addicts seek dental care for drug-induced dental disease. The 2018 Annual National Report of Key Substance Use and Mental Health Indicators in the United (SAMHSA)¹ reports 8% of the US population struggle with substance abuse. The same survey found a 32% increase in methamphetamine use in adults 26-year-olds and older. A 2016 *Journal of Dental Research* article² quantified the increased dental disease burden of drug addiction as a fourfold increase in dental caries with twice the number of decayed missing or filled teeth as non-addicted Americans.

15% of respondents answered they had no patients in drug recovery programs, and 25% didn't know. For the previous question, 22% answered treating no active addicts, while 15% responded they did not know the addiction status of their patients. From these data, it appears up to a quarter of responding dentists use health histories that do not include questions about drug current addiction or history. Or, these dentists do not recognize the patterns of dental caries and drug-seeking behaviors that identify active addicts.

This question identifies almost 60% of practitioners practice within twenty miles of some kind of drug treatment center, and 32% of the respondents reported no knowledge of a drug treatment center within 20 miles of their practices.

Half of the responding practitioners were aware of court-ordered drug rehabilitation programs in their county. This finding is a favorable situation, as our proposed study requires access to these patients. On the other hand, 40 % of responding practitioners reported no knowledge of court-ordered drug rehabilitation programs.

Over 60% of respondents indicated they would treat patients in court-ordered drug rehabilitation programs. An additional 20% would treat these patients in other offices or at nearby community health centers.

1. .US. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2018). NSDUH 2018 Data Collection Final Report Published Date: January 23, 2020 Collected Date:2018; <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/data-we-collect/nsduh-national-survey-drug-use-and-health>

2. Shetty V, Harrell L, Clague J, Murphy DA, Dye BA, Belin TR. Methamphetamine Users Have Increased Dental Disease: A Propensity Score Analysis. *J Dent Res.* 2016;95(7):814–821. doi:10.1177/0022034516640478