



THE SCOTTISH OFFICE

Department of Health

NHS
MEL(1997)53

NHS Management Executive
St. Andrew's House
Edinburgh EH1 3DG

22nd August 1997
Telephone 0131-244
Fax 0131-244 2683

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Dear Colleague

**SCOTTISH NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROGRAMME
REPORT ON ADULT ORAL HEALTH**

Summary

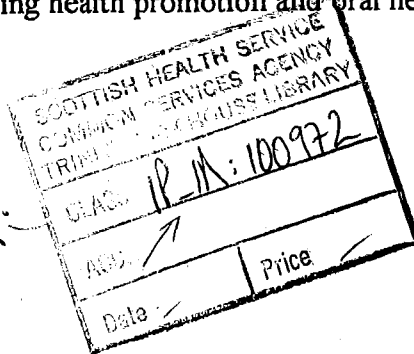
1. A Report on Adult Oral Health prepared by the Scottish Needs Assessment Programme (SNAP) is attached. *
2. The Report provides an overview of the main issues affecting adult oral health, highlights particular areas of concern and makes recommendations for future research and service provision. The most prevalent dental diseases are addressed, as well as the requirements of certain population groups and factors influencing behaviour towards oral health.

Action

3. Health Boards should use this Report when assessing local needs, and in discussions with Trusts and General Practitioner practices in devising Health Improvement Programmes and reviewing health promotion and oral health strategies.

Yours sincerely

KEVIN J WOODS
Director of Strategy and Performance Management



Addressees

For action:

General Managers, Health Boards
GP Fundholders

For information:

Chief Executives, NHS Trusts
General Manager, Common Services Agency
General Manager, Health Education Board for Scotland
General Manager, State Hospital
Executive Director, SCPMDE

Enquiries to:

(For copies of the Report)

Ms Jackie Gregan
SNAP
69 Oakfield Avenue
GLASGOW
G12 8QQ

Tel: 0141 330 5607
Fax: 0141 330 3687

General Information

Miss Margaret Duncan
NHS Management Executive
Policy & Performance Management
Division
Room 275
St Andrew's House
EDINBURGH EH1 3DG

Tel: 0131-244 2291
Fax: 0131-244 2051

COMMON SERVICES AGENCY	
RECEIVED	
17 SEP 1997	
FILE No	
REFERRED TO	ACTION TAKEN

* A COPY IS AVAILABLE TO LOOK AT, FROM ISO LIBRARY.

BACKGROUND

1. Dental disease is a major public health issue affecting three quarters of the population by the age of 14. Amongst adults over the age of 16, 21% have lost all their teeth. The main causes are dental decay and gum disease, both of which are almost totally preventable. Other conditions such as soft tissue disorders, orofacial pain, tooth wear and dento-alveolar injuries have a smaller but significant impact on oral health.
2. The Report discusses the importance of behaviour and attitudes of individuals, and the importance of health promotion and prevention.
3. The Report highlights areas in which research should be concentrated.

STRATEGIC ISSUES

4. The strategic issues identified in the Report include:
 - 4.1 Water fluoridation should continue to be promoted.
 - 4.2 There should be an awareness of the impact of behaviour and attitudes on dental health, and oral health promotion strategies should be reviewed accordingly.
 - 4.3 Research should be encouraged in Primary Care, particularly in relation to the management of dental caries and periodontal disease.
 - 4.4 Medical Practitioners, Pharmacists and other Professionals should work in conjunction with the dental profession to ensure that oral health conditions are identified at an early stage and appropriate care is provided.
 - 4.5 Research and development programmes should take account of the need to establish the prevalence and incidence of soft tissue disorders, orofacial pain, toothwear and dento-alveolar injuries.
 - 4.6 Alternative models of primary care delivery should be investigated and the prevention of disease should be emphasised within the Service.
 - 4.7 Adequate care should be provided for people in the community, in residential and in hospital care.
 - 4.8 More reliable methods of establishing attendance patterns should be developed.
 - 4.9 Appropriate levels of secondary care services should be available.
 - 4.10 Economic analysis should be carried out on the social and economic impact of poor dental health amongst individuals and groups, and on the efficiency and effectiveness of different treatment strategies.