

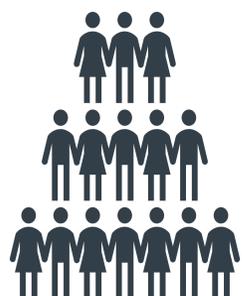
Integrating Oral Health and Addiction Care: a Feasibility Study at Jacobi Medical Center in the Bronx, NY

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INTRODUCTION

People with substance use disorders (SUDs) have **high rates of tooth decay and gum disease, yet are 50% less likely** to receive dental care than the general population. The objectives of this feasibility study were to **assess the oral health needs of individuals with SUDs** at the Jacobi Comprehensive Addiction Treatment Center (CATC) and refer to dental care as needed.

METHODS



Adults ≥ 18 years were recruited through convenience sampling (**group sessions, scheduled visits, staff referrals, walk-ins**).

An “**Adult CATC Oral Health Screening and Risk Assessment**” tool was designed to capture **clinical conditions and substance use-related factors** and experiences.



Descriptive statistics and log binomial regression analyses were conducted to examine the **association** between the exposure variable (**dental visit in the last 12 months**) and the outcome variables (**dental and oral conditions**).

RESULTS

Clinical characteristics of sample (N=137)	N	%
Periodontal conditions	123	90
Missing teeth	93	68
Obvious tooth decay	86	63
Mouth pain	50	37
Intraoral bleeding	83	61
Current or former tobacco smoker	104	76

75%
of referred patients
received a complete
dental examination

Participants who did not have a dental visit in the last 12 months were **25% more likely** to have obvious tooth decay than participants who had seen a dentist in the last year. (PR = 1.25; 95% CI: 0.92-1.71)

DISCUSSION

This is the **first study at H+H** to capture the oral health status of individuals with SUDs. Integrating oral and behavioral health services provides an opportunity for **interprofessional collaboration** guided by a **common risk factor** approach. Targeting modifiable risk factors such as smoking, high sugar containing diets, and its sequelae can **decrease the morbidity** associated with chronic diseases. The provision of oral healthcare leads to improvements in **self-esteem, employability, and overall quality of life**. Ongoing studies address **oral health literacy** and optimize **referral pathways** between Jacobi Medical Center and Gotham Health sites.

CONCLUSION

Poor oral health is highly prevalent among individuals with SUDs. These findings may help inform **feasible oral health delivery models** that can be integrated into comprehensive addiction care frameworks.

REFERENCES

