



Survey of Dental Providers: Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), 2020

Dallas County, Texas

Overview

In 2017, Dallas County had the lowest completion rate for human papilloma virus (HPV) vaccinations in Texas.¹ The Department of State Health Services' Oral Health Improvement Program (OHIP) partnered with the Texas HPV Coalition to conduct a survey of dental providers. The survey tests provider knowledge and collects data on what protocols were used by participants who practice in Dallas County at the time of the survey. It also provided insight as to what material and educational resources providers were interested in. This report discusses the findings of the survey.

Results

The survey was hosted online through Survey Monkey™. OHIP shared a link to the survey with the Dallas County Dental Society (DCDS). DCDS sent the link to their members through an email service in two stages, initial contact and a reminder a few weeks later. Members were encouraged to share the survey with their colleagues. A total of 86 surveys were completed between April 30, 2020 and May 27, 2020. Of the completed surveys, 71 dental providers reported their main office was in Dallas County.

Of the 71 dental providers working in Dallas County, 69 (97.2%) were dentists and 2 (2.8%) were dental hygienists. The primary office types for these providers included general (62.0%), other (25.4%) and pediatric (12.7%). Dental providers who selected 'other' were asked to further specify their type of practice. Responses included endodontics, oral surgery, orthodontics, prosthodontics, periodontics, and sleep apnea specialties.

To assess provider knowledge of HPV, the survey included five statements with three possible responses (true, false or unsure/I don't know). Table 1 shows response counts and the percent answered correctly for each



statement. Six dental professionals skipped this section of the survey. Of the remaining 65 dental professionals, only 52 percent knew that most people would get HPV in their lifetime. Alternatively, most knew HPV causes oropharyngeal cancer (96.9%), HPV infections do not cause HIV (90.8%), and the HPV vaccine is recommended for young women and men through age 26 (90.8%). However, only 86 percent knew the HPV vaccine worked best if administered to children 11 to 12 years of age.

Table 1: Provider Knowledge Assessment, Survey of Dental Providers: Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) Vaccination, 2020

Statement	True	False	Unsure/I Don't Know	Answer	Correct
Most people will get HPV in their lifetime.	34	16	15	True	52.3%
HPV infection can cause cancer in the back of the throat, including the base of the tongue and tongue and tonsils (called oropharyngeal cancer).	63	1	1	True	96.9%
HPV infections can cause HIV.	1	59	5	False	90.8%
HPV vaccine is recommended for young women and men through age 26.	59	2	4	True	90.8%
The HPV vaccine works best if administered to children 11 to 12 years of age.	56	4	5	True	86.2%

Dental providers who completed the survey were next asked to rate their level of agreement with general statements about dental practices concerning the HPV vaccine. Response were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale including strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, and strongly agree. Figures 1 and 2 show partial results for several of these statements on the survey. As shown in Figure 1, of the 65 providers that completed this section of the survey, nearly 57 percent agreed or strongly agreed that dental providers should discuss HPV vaccines with their patients. Additionally, around 60 percent felt they should discuss HPV vaccines with parents.

When asked about adequate time to discuss HPV vaccines with patients/parent during the dental visit, nearly 40.0 percent of the 65 dental providers who completed this statement disagree or strongly disagree with the statement. Forty-six (46.2) percent reportedly agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.



Almost half (47.7%) of the dental providers who completed the survey indicated that they have questions about the HPV vaccines. Alternatively, 35.0 percent of the dental providers felt they had adequate knowledge to discuss HPV with patients or parents.

Sixty-three (63.0) percent of the dental providers who completed the survey know where to send patients for the HPV vaccine. Additionally, 49.0 percent were comfortable discussing HPV vaccines with patients or parents.

Figure 1: HPV Discussions in the Dental Office, Survey of Dental Providers: Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) Vaccination, 2020

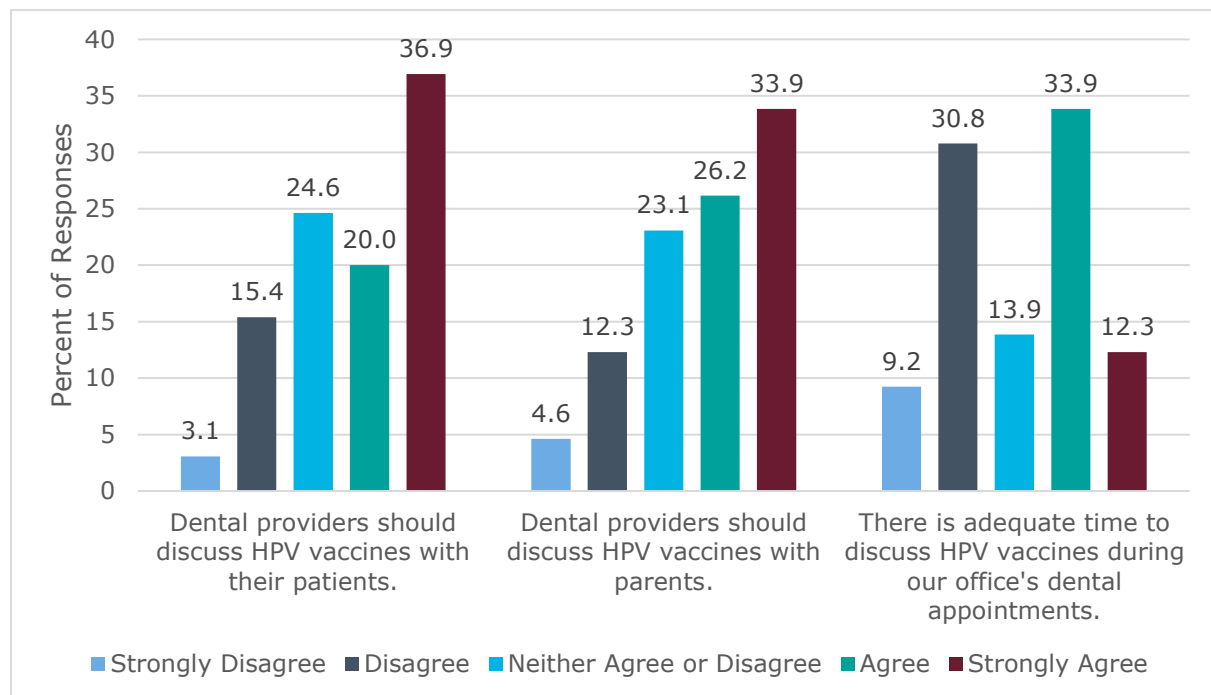
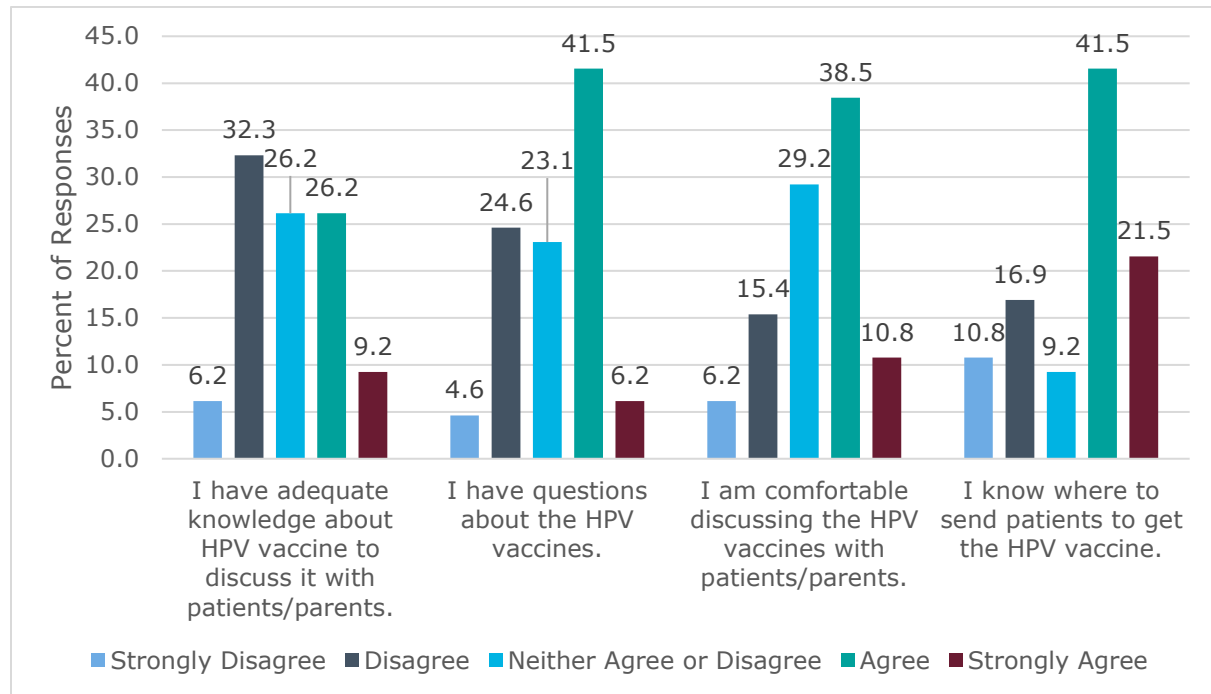




Figure 2: Provider Knowledge and Comfort Levels, Survey of Dental Providers: Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) Vaccination, 2020



Most of the dental providers who completed the survey reported not having any HPV related materials for patients to view or take home (84.6%). Table 2 shows the full breakdown of materials currently available in the offices of dental providers who completed the survey. These dental providers indicated that they received the existing material from vendors such as Oral ID (30%), American Dental Association (30%), and the American Academy of Pediatrics (10%).

Table 2: HPV Discussions in the Dental Office, Survey of Dental Providers: Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) Vaccination, 2020

Response	Count	Percent
Pamphlets	9	13.9
Poster	1	1.5
Inserts for goodie bags	1	1.5
We do not have any HPV related materials.	55	84.6
Other	1	1.5

Approximately 65.0 percent of these dental providers stated they were interested in receiving additional resources for patients to view or take home. The survey asked dental providers to rank several types of educational materials with one being the most preferred and five being the



least preferred. The top three preferred resources were pamphlets (32.3%), fact sheet (29.0%), and other (26.7%). Dental providers who chose other materials requested a digital media or internet-based resource. Table 3 shows all responses.

Table 3: Preferred Educational Materials, Survey of Dental Providers: Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) Vaccination, 2020

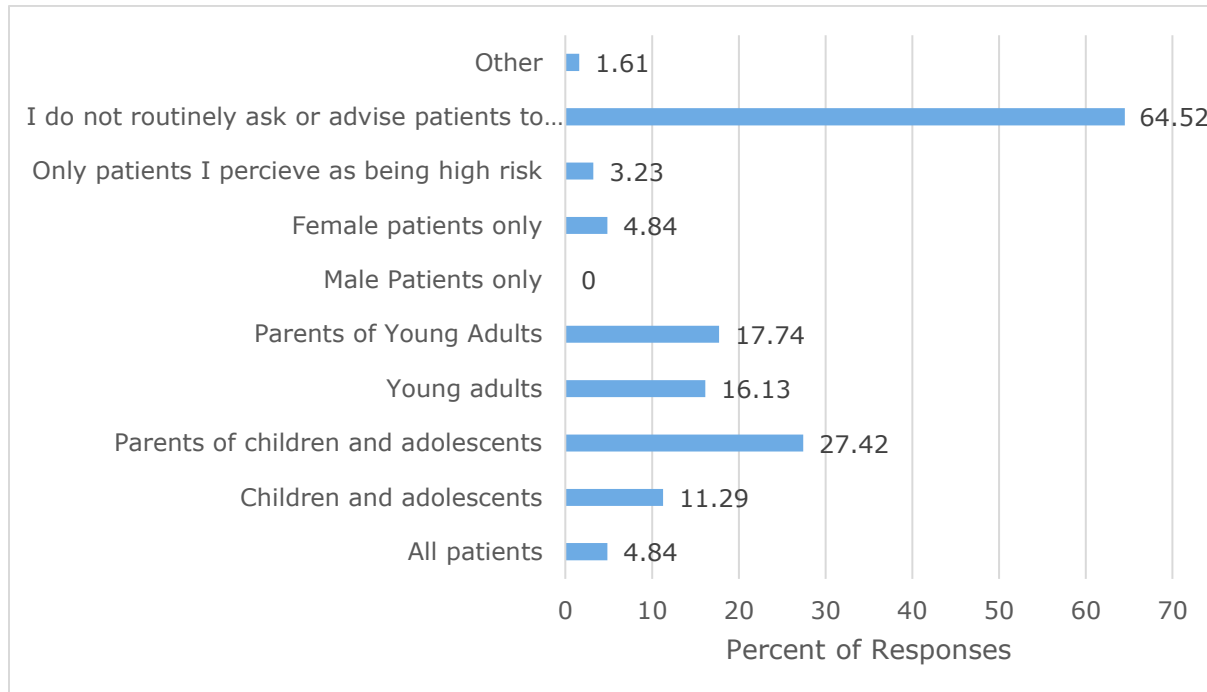
Preferred Material	1	2	3	4	5
Office Poster	6 (20.7%)	3 (10.3%)	3 (10.3%)	6 (20.7%)	11 (37.9%)
Postcard size insert for goodie bags	6 (21.4%)	7 (25.0%)	7 (25.0%)	4 (14.3%)	4 (14.3%)
Pamphlet	10 (32.3%)	4 (12.9%)	6 (19.4%)	6 (19.4%)	5 (16.1%)
Fact Sheet	9 (29.0%)	9 (29.0%)	6 (19.4%)	3 (9.7%)	4 (12.9%)
Other*	4 (26.7%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (13.3%)	2 (13.3%)	7 (46.7%)

*Described as a digital media option.

Nearly five percent of dental providers who completed the survey indicated that they discuss HPV vaccines with all patients. However, the majority stated they do not routinely ask or advise patients to receive HPV vaccines (64.5%).



Figure 3: Which patients do you routinely ask or advise to receive HPV vaccines? Survey of Dental Providers: Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) Vaccination, 2020



Sixty-six (66.1) percent of dental providers who completed the survey stated they would be interested in receiving additional training and materials to make it easier to discuss HPV and HPV vaccines. The top three preferred training methods were online CE course (74.2%), webinar (46.8%), fact sheets on oral cancer and HPV (45.2%).

When these dental providers were asked how likely they were to attend a local continuing education course on HPV, more participants were somewhat or very likely to attend (56.5%) as compared to those who were neutral (14.5%) or unlikely to attend (29.0%).

Dental providers who completed the survey were given the chance to share their comments or concerns. These comments included:

- Dentists are not trained on administering vaccines
- Vaccinations should be primarily discussed by the pediatrician and reinforced by the dentist
- Vaccines are available for people up to age 40 or so
- This is a controversial vaccine with many side effects. For informed consent, we need to provide both sides of this story which is typically



biased toward the vaccine because most of us lack the open mindedness to truly see potential negative side effects over the benefits.

Just over half of the dental providers who completed the survey agreed to being contacted again for feedback and input on HPV related efforts. Thirty-two (32) provided a valid email address.

WHAT'S NEXT

OHIP will work with the Texas HPV Coalition to educate dental providers in Dallas County about the HPV vaccine. Per the results of the survey, preferred resources include an online continuing education course, pamphlets and fact sheets. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, an in-person meeting will not be scheduled for 2020.

Cite As

Survey of Dental Providers: Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), 2020.
Department of State Health Services. July 2020.

References

1. 2017 National Immunization Survey-Teen: Texas Perspective. Department of State Health Services. Retrieved July 2020, from https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/coverage/pdf/2017_NIS_Teen_Full_Report/