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Evaluating Oral Precancerous and Cancer Knowledge Among Tirana Dentists and Hygienists

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Objectives Early detection is the most effective way for survival and reduced mortality in the case of oral cancer. Dentists and dental hygienists play a key role in early diagnosis. The aim of this study was to evaluate the knowledge of dentist and dental hygienists regarding early detection of oral cancer and precancerous lesions, risk factors.

Methods A cross-sectional study was conducted by using a questionnaire was among 300 dental practitioners and hygienists, selected randomly. The purpose of the questionnaire was explained. The questionnaires were distributed by the researchers between September 2023 and December 2023. Despite general information, such as gender, education, qualifications the questionnaires pointed, information on the level of knowledge about risk factors for precancerous lesions, and oral cancer the ability to identify suspected lesions, methods of diagnostics. At least one year of work experience in the current position was a criterion for eligibility to be included in the study.

Results

The study shows that the information of dentists and dental hygienists about precancerous lesions and oral cancer is mostly based on knowledge obtained during university studies. Training courses and continuing education seems to be an essential strategy to increase and maintain knowledge about oral potentially malignant disorders. The developments of aesthetic dentistry and implantology have caused attention to be overlooked by these pathologies. In cases of obvious suspicious lesions, the patients are referred to the University Hospital Center where all data is gathered at the Albanian Cancer Registry

Conclusions Nowadays, oral cancer represents an enormous global issue. According to the latest WHO data published in 2020 Oral cancer Deaths in Albania reached 90 or 0,31% of total deaths. In Albania, as in many other countries of the world, cancer represents a growing concern. Although several efforts to control cancer are underway, oral cancer in Albania is often detected in the later stages. Cost limitations, inadequate technology, and insufficient training of medical personnel for widespread screening measures have severely limited oral cancer screening in Albania. Dentists and dental hygienists should be involved in prevention policies, diagnosis and follow -up.