VOICE OF THE ORAL HEALTH PATIENT IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Summary Report

February 6, 2026

BCCOHP British Columbia College of Oral Health Professionals

PIVOTAL RESEARCH Inc.™

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SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Oral health patients reported higher satisfaction across all measures. In 2025, all satisfaction measures increased by four to eight percentage points compared to 2024, with overall satisfaction with the oral health care experience reaching 79%. Most of these increases were statistically significant.

Three new patient journey measures were added in 2025 to reflect updated professional standards, and each received high satisfaction scores: "My oral health care team maintained appropriate boundaries" (79%), "Treated me fairly and with respect" (82%), and "My oral health care team communicated effectively with each other" (74%).

Equity patterns persist across demographic groups. Lower satisfaction remains more common among younger adults, individuals with lower incomes, respondents identifying as racialized minorities, and people who do not speak English as their first language, as well as Indigenous respondents on some aspects.

Cost and insurance coverage remain central barriers to accessing oral health care. Cost, lack of insurance, and insufficient coverage continue to be leading reasons some respondents have not accessed oral health care in the past 12 months.

Three-quarters of patients were aware that professional standards for oral health care exist, and nearly half of those aware knew the standards are accessible online. While most consider understanding the standards important, fewer said they would read them.

Dental insurance coverage remains high, with increased uptake of the CDCP. Most patients reported having dental insurance at their most recent visit (89%), and nearly one-in-five reported using CDCP coverage (18%).

Discrimination remains a concern, particularly among Indigenous patients. About one-quarter of patients agreed that discrimination in oral health care is a serious issue in BC, compared with fewer non-recent patients. Agreement continues to be higher among Indigenous respondents (34%).

Awareness of BCCOHP declined from 2024, though views among those who are aware are positive. Over one-quarter of patients (28%) and 14% of non-recent patients reported having heard of BCCOHP, down from 32% and 20% in 2024. Among patients who were aware of BCCOHP, most agreed that the regulator fulfills its public protection mandate.

Confidence in safe, competent care aligns with rising perceptions of quality. Alongside a four-point increase in the share of patients who rated oral health care quality in BC as high (62%), a new 2025 measure found that nearly three in four recent patients (73%) felt confident services are delivered safely and by competent oral health professionals.

Recent patients are defined as receiving or accompanying a dependant for oral health services in the past 12 months, whereas non-recent patients have not.

RESEARCH BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

Background and Research Objectives

The British Columbia College of oral health professionals (BCCOHP) is the regulatory body for certified dental assistants, dental hygienists, dental therapists, dental technicians, dentists and denturists in BC.

BCCOHP's mandate is to serve and protect the public by regulating oral health care professionals. Specifically, there are three main ways:

As part of its strategic plan and the focus on accountability through measurement, BCCOHP is conducting a survey through a Voice of the Patient research study among BC residents to measure public experience and perceptions. This study will be shared with oral health professionals to enhance the delivery of safe, effective, competent, and team-based oral health care.

Research Methodology

BCCOHP contracted Pivotal Research Inc., a third-party Canadian research consulting firm, to conduct this study. The survey, developed in collaboration with BCCOHP, was designed to explore perspectives on oral healthcare experiences, perceptions of the profession, and awareness of oral healthcare regulation. The survey includes key metrics tracked over time to support year-over-year comparison. Additional questions are added as needed in collaboration with BCCOHP to address emerging areas of interest. The study used an online survey with 2,000 BC residents, ensuring broad demographic representation. The sample was designed to be representative of BC's population across health regions, age, and gender, with 8% of respondents self-identifying as Indigenous.

Data Collection

Data collection took place from November 24, 2025, to December 18, 2025. The survey was conducted on behalf of BCCOHP and carried out by the sample and data collection experts at Pivotal Research. The survey was deployed using Cint, a globally recognized provider of online sample solutions. Cint's platform connects researchers with a diverse network of pre-recruited individuals who have agreed to participate in surveys and research studies, ensuring a broad and representative reach.

A soft-quota approach ensured geographical, age, and gender representation across the province. Feedback was gathered from a diverse sample, including Indigenous respondents, members of the 2SLGBTQQIA+ community, newcomers to Canada, among others. Although the initiative used a non-probability sample, the comparable margin of error is ±2.19 at the 95% confidence interval.

RESEARCH BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

To participate, respondents were required to meet the following criteria:

- Reside in British Columbia,
- Be 18 years or older, and
- Not be a regulated or certified oral health professional.

The survey gathered feedback from both recent and non-recent patients (as defined below), with no quotas set to allow for natural distribution. The survey took approximately 12 – 15 minutes to complete.

- **Recent patients**: Individuals who had received oral health services or were responsible for accompanying dependants who received such services within the 12 months leading up to the survey period.
- **Non-recent patients**: Individuals who had neither received oral health care service nor accompanied a dependant for such services within the past 12 months.

Survey questions were compared with those from the previous annual cohort (2024). Additionally, within the 2025 cohort, we examined differences across demographic characteristics and health regions were examined, highlighting statistically significant differences where applicable. It is important to note that the demographic and sub-group analysis is directional in nature, as the sample is designed to reflect the overall population rather than specific subgroups.

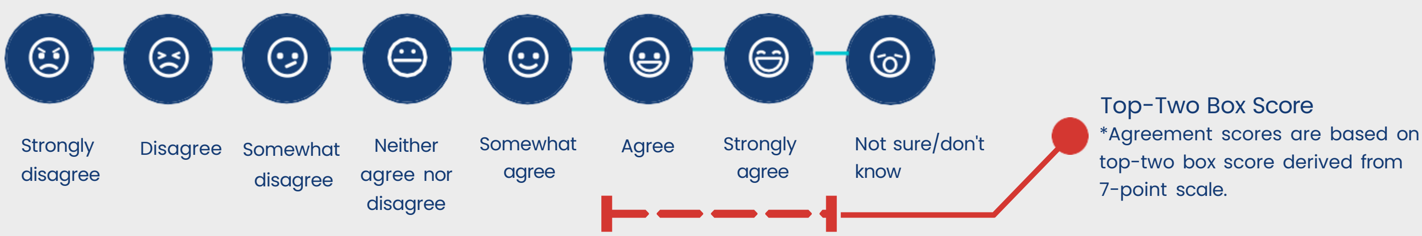
Note that percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding and instances where respondents were able to select multiple applicable responses.

PERCEPTIONS OF ORAL HEALTH CARE IN BC

Respondents rated their level of agreement with several statements pertaining to oral health care and regulation of oral health care in BC for the following categories:

- Overall perceptions of oral health care;
- Access to oral health care services;
- Patient agency;
- Concerns about an oral health professional;
- Discrimination; and
- Oral health costs;

For each statement, respondents were presented with a seven-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree as shown in the graphic below.

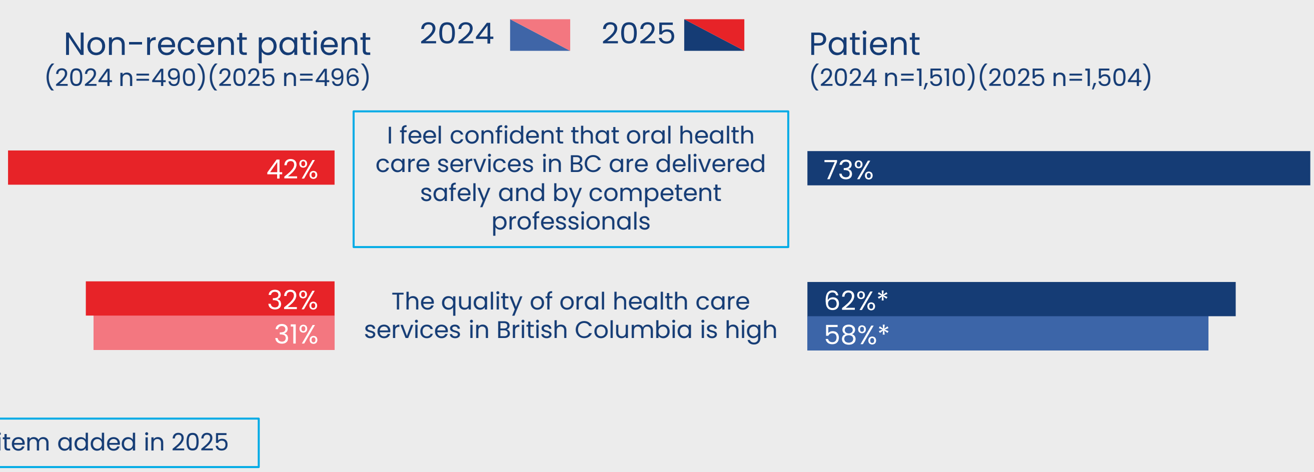


Overall Perceptions of Oral Health Care

Recent patients in BC generally held more favourable views of oral health care than non-recent patients. In 2025, a new measure showed 73% of recent patients and 42% of non-recent patients are confident services are delivered safely and by competent professionals. Agreement was lower among persons with disabilities (58%), Indigenous respondents (54%), and newcomers to Canada (42%) compared to the overall sample (65%).

In 2025, 62% of patients rated oral health care quality as high—a 4-point increase from 2024—while only 32% of non-recent patients agreed. Males (60%) reported higher agreement than females (52%). Additionally, agreement rose with income (42% for under $40,000 and 64% for $150,000+) and was higher among older adults (61% for ages 55–64; 71% for 65+).

Overall Perceptions of Oral Health Care in BC



PERCEPTIONS OF ORAL HEALTH CARE IN BC

Access to Services

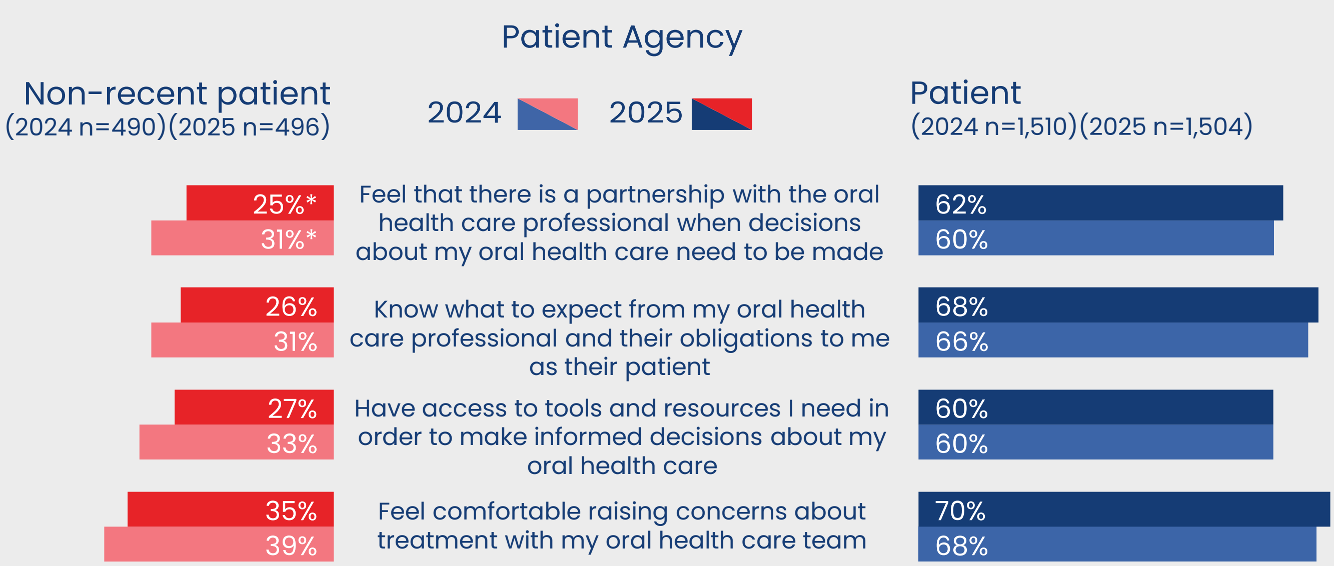
Over two-thirds (72%) of patient and 38% of non-recent patients agreed or strongly agreed that they could find a suitable dental office in their community, consistent with scores from 2024.

Respondents new to Canada (living in Canada less than five years; 43%), identifying as Indigenous (53%), persons with a disability (54%), and individuals with basic to intermediate English proficiency (43%) were less likely to find a suitable dental office in their communities than the overall sample (64%).

Patient Agency

Respondents rated their agreement with statements related to patient agency. Between 60% and 70% of patient respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the various patient agency statements. Agreement levels for most statements remained consistent for both patients and non-recent patients compared to last year. However, in 2025, fewer non-patients agreed that they had a partnership with their oral health care professional when making decisions about their oral health (25% vs. 31% in 2024).

A variation across health regions was observed. Specifically, respondents in Island Health Region expressed higher agreement with having a partnership with oral health team (61%), knowing what to expect from team and their obligations to patients (64%), and feeling comfortable about raising concerns (68%) compared to overall sample (53%, 58%, and 61%, respectively).



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PERCEPTIONS OF ORAL HEALTH CARE IN BC

Concerns about an Oral Health Care Professional

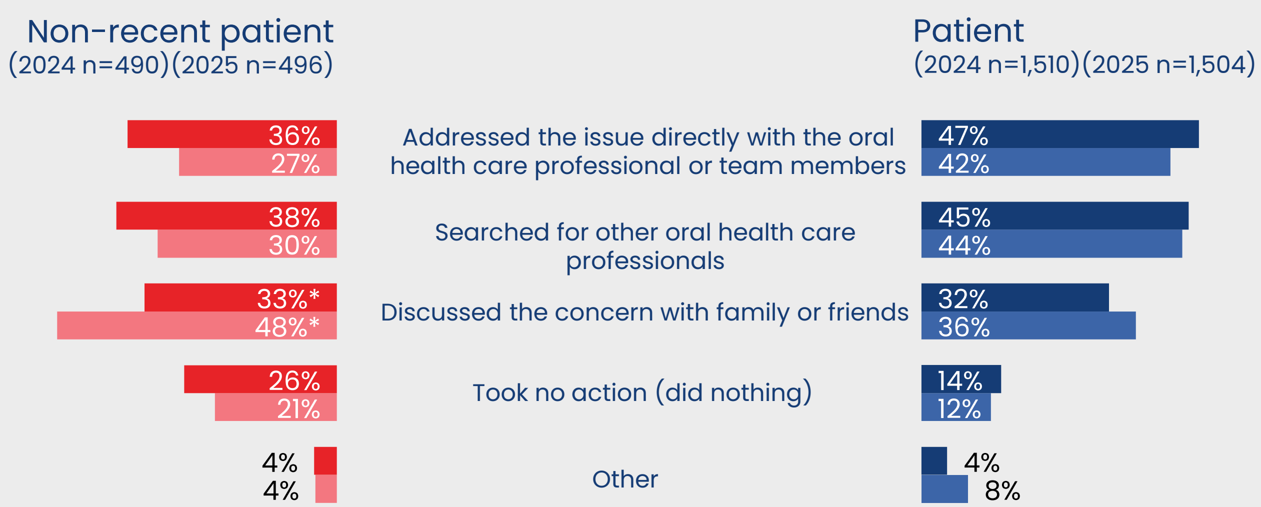
Respondents were asked if they had ever raised concerns about the competence of their oral health care professional. Similar to 2024, 15% of patients and 21% of non-recent patients reported experiencing a concern or issue.

However, females (18%) and those with dependants (19%) reported higher rates of concern compared to males and those without dependants (15% each). Additionally, respondents who have an income of under $40,000 (21%), identifying as racialized minority (22%) and with a disability (22%) were more likely to have a concern than the overall sample (17%).

Concern with Conduct of an Oral Health Care Professional

Respondents who reported concerns with an oral health care professional were asked about their actions following the issue. Searching for other oral health care professionals and addressing the issue directly with the oral health care professional or their team were the most frequently taken actions for both patients and non-recent patients. There were no notable year-over-year differences among recent patients across any measured aspects. However, non-recent patients were less likely to have discussed their concern with family or friends in 2025 (33%) compared to 2024 (48%).

Addressing Concerns with an Oral Health Care Professional



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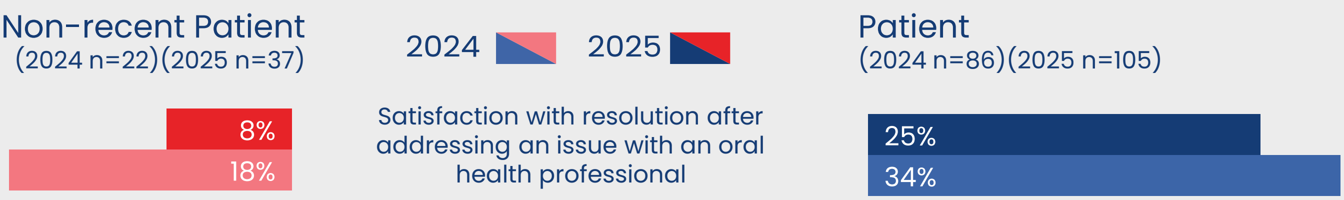
PERCEPTIONS OF ORAL HEALTH CARE IN BC

Satisfaction with Resolution

One-quarter (25%) of patient respondents and nearly one-tenth (8%) of non-recent patients expressed satisfaction with how their concerns were resolved when they addressed it with their oral health professional. The satisfaction was consistent across respondent profiles.

Satisfaction with Resolution



Discrimination

Overall, one-quarter of patient respondents (25%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that "race-based or other types of discrimination in oral health care is a serious issue impacting patients in BC." Among non-recent patient respondents, 11% shared this view.

Respondents identifying as Indigenous (34%) were more likely to view discrimination as a serious issue compared with the overall sample (22%). Higher levels of agreement were also observed among respondents identifying as racialized minorities (27%), newcomers to Canada (35%), 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals (34%), those with basic to intermediate English proficiency (40%), and younger adults aged 18–24 (36%) and 35–44 (27%). Females (23%) also expressed greater concern than males (19%).

Perceived Discrimination in Oral Health Care

Overall

Among Indigenous respondents specifically, two-fifths (39%) of patients and one-fifth (21%) of non-patients held this view.

Indigenous Respondents

PERCEPTIONS OF ORAL HEALTH CARE IN BC

Oral Health Care Costs

All respondents were asked if they feel clear on what fees are being charged. Approximately three in five recent patients (59%) and one-fifth of non-recent patients (18%) reported that they have clear understanding of fees for treatmenst or procedures. Critically, patients reported better clarity on dental procedure fees in 2025 compared to the previous year (55%). Compared to the overall (49%), respondents with household incomes under $40,000 were less likely to report understanding costs (39%).

Understanding of Oral Health Cost in BC

KEY TAKEAWAYS

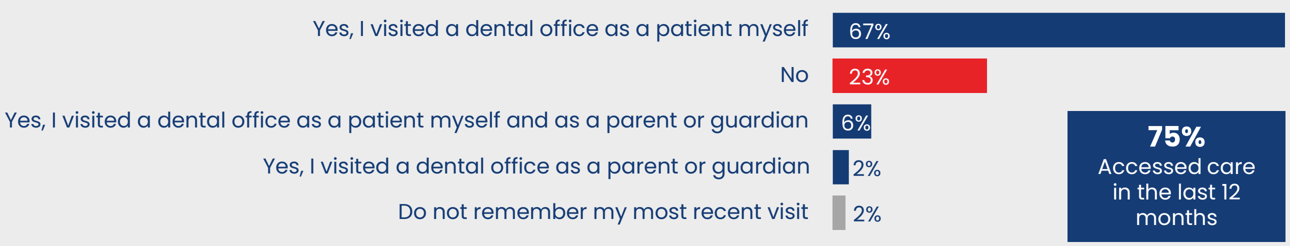
1. In 2025, recent patients' perceptions of the overall quality of oral health care in BC increased by four points compared to 2024, reaching 64%. Nearly three in four recent patients (73%) reported feeling confident that oral health care services in BC are delivered safely and by competent professionals.
2. The majority of recent patients feel they have access to a suitable dental office in their community (72%), while fewer non-recent patients (38%) share this view.
3. Perceived patient agency measures remained stable since last year. Notably, respondents in Island Health Region expressed higher agreement with patient agency attributes.
4. Concerns about an oral health care professional were reported by 15% of patients and 21% of non-recent patients. Those who had concerns most often discussed them with their provider and/or sought a new provider, though satisfaction with how concerns were resolved remained low.
5. Concerns about discrimination were reported by 25% of patients and 11% of non-recent patients. Indigenous respondents, among other groups, were more likely than their counterparts to report this concern.
6. Compared to 2024 (55%), recent patients reported greater clarity about the charges for each dental procedure in 2025 (59%).

VISIT TO DENTAL OFFICE

Visit to Dental Office in Past 12 Months

All survey respondents were asked whether they had visited a dental office for oral health care services in the past 12 months. Three-quarters (75%) reported visiting either as a patient themselves (67%), both as a patient and as a parent/guardian (6%), or as a parent/guardian only (2%). In contrast, 23% reported not visiting in the past 12 months, while 2% reported that they did not remember. As this question is asked annually, it is notable that three-quarters of respondents' report accessing oral health care services each year, despite natural year-to-year variation in the sample.

Incidence of Visiting a Dental Office
n=2,000



Non-recent Patients

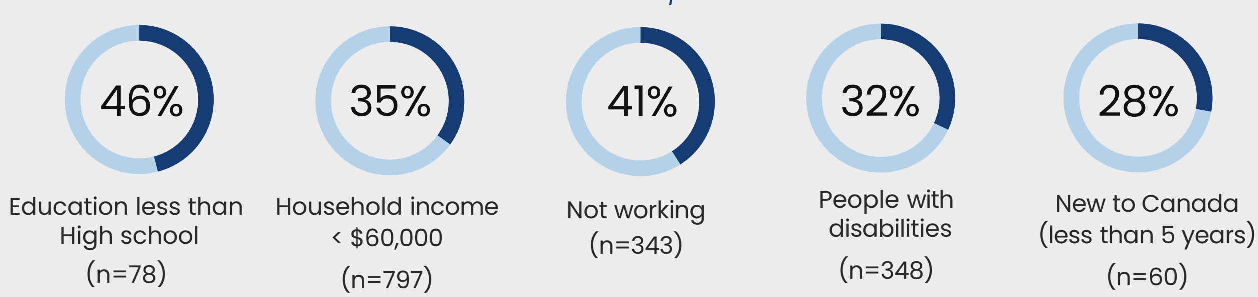
Demographic Profile

One quarter (25%) of respondents reported not accessing care in the past 12 months or not remembering their most recent visit. This proportion is notably higher among those in Northern Health (38%) and Interior Health (32%), whereas, Vancouver Coastal Health had a lower share of non-recent patients (17%) relative to the overall sample.

Health Region
Non-recent patients

Just under half (46%) of respondents with a high school education or less reported not visiting a dental office in the past 12 months. Over one-third (35%) of respondents with a household income below $60,000 were non-recent patients, as were 41% of those not working and 32% of those with disabilities. Additionally, 28% of respondents who were New to Canada (living in Canada for less than five years) were non-recent patients.

Other Demographic Factors
Non-recent patients



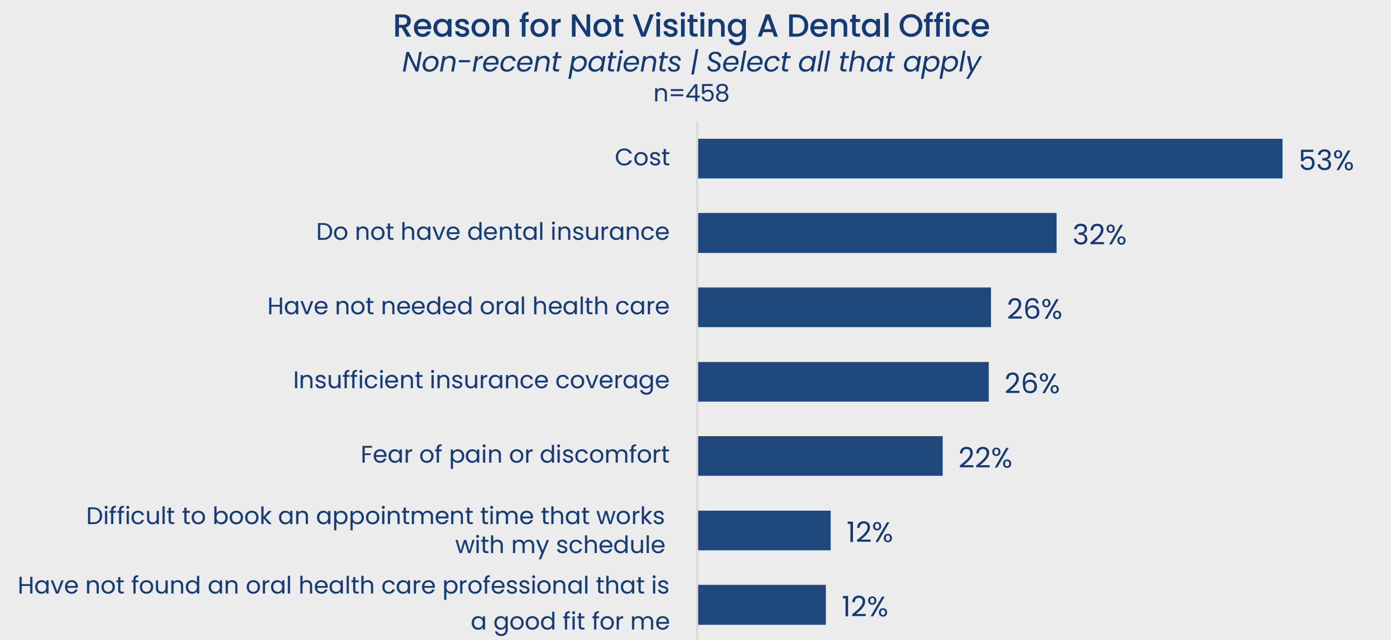
VISIT TO DENTAL OFFICE

Non-recent Patients

Reasons for Not Accessing Care

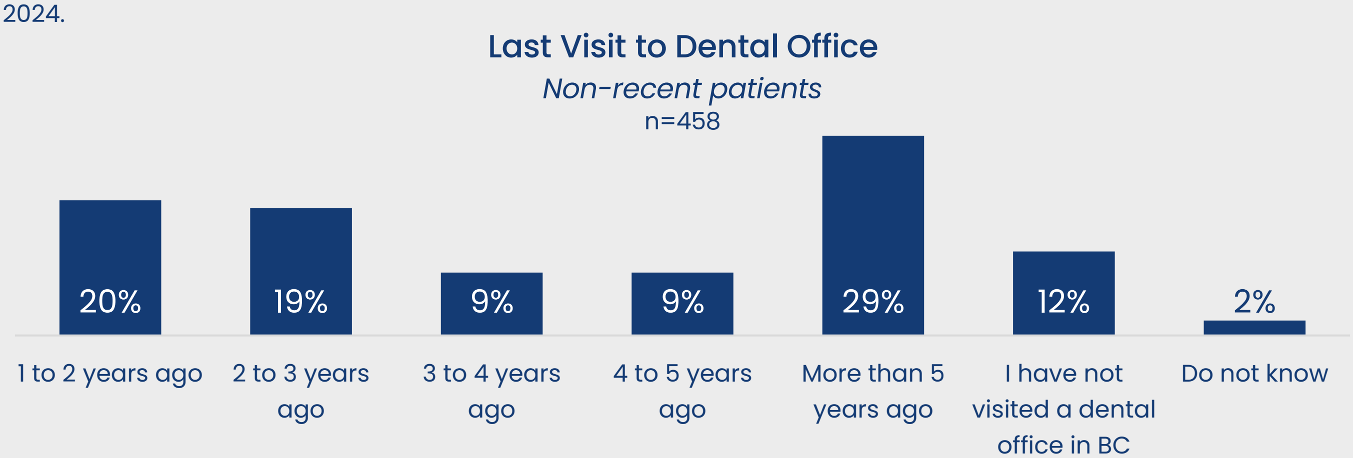
Respondents who did not visit a dental office in the past 12 months—or could not recall their last visit—were asked to select all reasons that impacted their decision to not access care. Respondents most commonly cited cost (53%) and lack of dental insurance (32%). Other most frequently mentioned factors included not needing oral health care (26%), insufficient coverage (26%), and fear of pain or discomfort (22%). Only a small proportion of respondents mentioned that dental offices not accepting the Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP) or other government programs influenced their decision (3% and 2%, respectively).

When asked to identify the single most impactful reason, 54% cited cost, followed by fear of pain or discomfort at 11%. Males were more likely than females to report not needing oral health care (12% vs. 5%), while adults aged 65+ were more likely to mention past negative experiences (15% vs. 4% in the overall sample).



Last Visit to a Dental Office

Among non-recent patients, 29% stated that their most recent visit to a dental office was over five years ago, while 12% reported never having visited a dental office in BC. Overall, this reflects a pattern similar to what was observed in 2024.



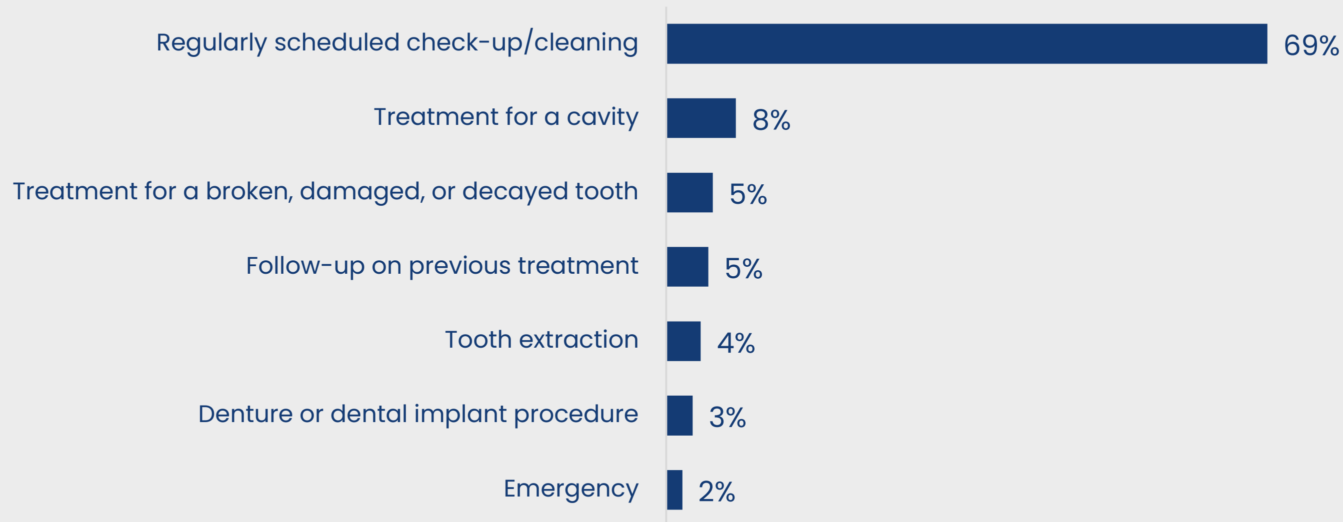
VISIT TO DENTAL OFFICE

Recent Patients

Reasons for Most Recent Dental Visit

When recent patients who received oral health care in the last 12 months in BC were asked the reasons for their last visit to a dental office, the majority (69%) of respondents cited that they visited for their regularly scheduled check-up/cleaning, which was mentioned more frequently by individuals with higher incomes ($100K+). In contrast, persons with disabilities (49%, n=236), respondents identifying as Indigenous (53%, n=115), and new to Canada (51%, n=43) were less likely to visit a dental office for a regularly scheduled check-up/cleaning, and more likely to report visits prompted by immediate oral health needs (e.g., emergencies, cavities, extractions).

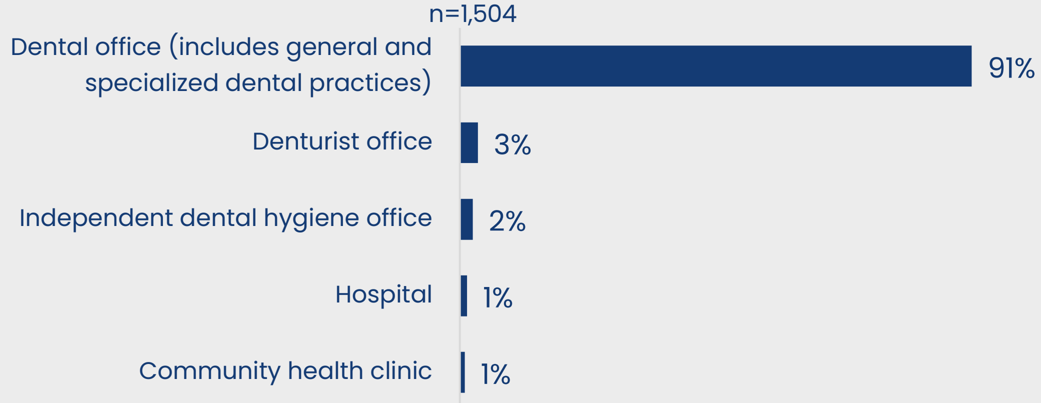
Primary Reason for Last Visit
Recent Patients
n=1,504



Location of Most Recent Oral Health Care

Nine-in-ten (91%) respondents reported that they accessed their most recent oral health care through a dental office. This was somewhat lower among younger adults (aged 18–24: 84%, n=103; 25–34: 83%, n=246), those with lower household income (<$40K: 84%, n=295), and those new to Canada (60%, n=43), who were more likely to report using other settings for their most recent care.

Location of Most Recent Oral Health Care
Recent Patients
n=1,504



VISIT TO DENTAL OFFICE

Recent Patients

Last Visit to a Dental Office

One-third (33%) of patient respondents reported that their last dental visit was between one to three months ago, while over one quarter reported visiting within the last month (27%) or three to six months ago (26%). A smaller proportion (13%) reported visiting more than six to twelve months ago.

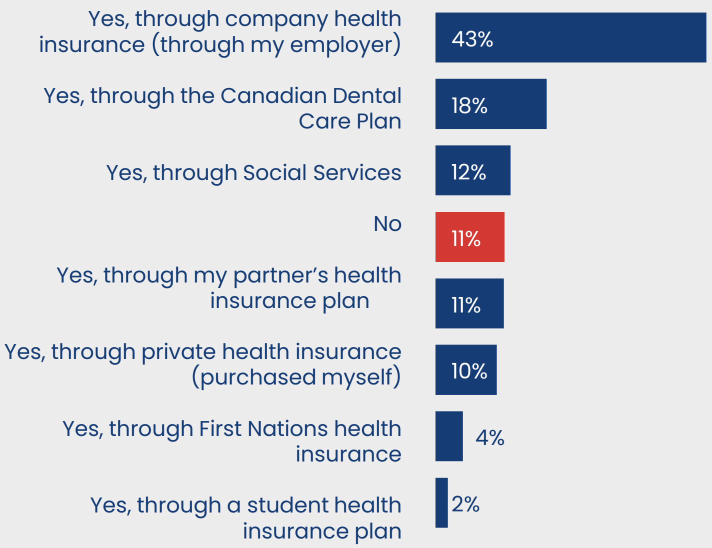
Last Visit to Dental Office
Recent Patients
n=1,504

Insurance Coverage

Patient respondents were asked whether they had dental care insurance at their most recent visit, with the option to select multiple insurance types if applicable. Nine-in-ten respondents (89%) reported having access to dental care insurance, with the majority obtaining coverage through their employer (43%). Other sources of insurance included Social Services (12%), their partners' health insurance plan (11%), self-purchased plans (10%), First Nations health insurance (4%), and student health insurance plans (2%).

The CDCP initiated its phased implementation in December 2023, and in May 2025 it significantly broadened eligibility to cover adults between 18 and 64. In 2025, 18% of respondents reported using the CDCP.

Dental Care Insurance Coverage
Recent Patients | Select all that apply
n=1,504



KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. A significant proportion of non-recent patients in BC have limited or no dental care history, with one-third not visiting a dental office in over 5 years or ever.
2. BC respondents who have low-income, basic to intermediate English proficiency, or who have disabilities are less likely to have accessed oral health care services.
3. Costs and lack of or insufficient insurance coverage remain top barriers to accessing care.
4. The use of the Canadian Dental Care Plan has increased since 2024, covering the targeted demographic groups.

ORAL HEALTH PATIENT JOURNEY

Satisfaction Along the Oral Health Journey

Dental Office

- Maintain a clean and safe clinic environment: 82%
- Ability to access oral health care in case of an emergency: 57%

Pre-Treatment

- My oral health care team maintained appropriate boundaries*: 79%
- The time taken to explain treatment options and answer questions: 74%
- Given enough time and space to think about treatment before making a decision: 72%
- Putting my oral health care above all other interests: 71%
- The information provided to me about the risks and benefits of undergoing (or not undergoing) a treatment: 65%
- The information about costs of recommended treatments or procedures: 62%

Treatment Procedure

- Feelings of safety and comfort while undergoing treatment.: 78%

Post-Treatment

- Oral health care treatment was delivered as anticipated.: 80%

Staff Interaction/ Communication

- 82% Treated me fairly and with respect*
- 77% Clear and understandable communication (verbal and written).
- 74% The oral health team were communicating effectively with each other*
- 74% Educating me on how to best take care of my/my dependant's oral health.
- 73% Taking time to build rapport and understand my individual needs

Payment

- Costs were as estimated, or any changes were satisfactorily explained and agreed upon.: 68%

Consent

- Providing consent when a decision needs to be made.: 76%
- Participating in decisions about my (or my dependant's) oral health care.: 74%
- Not feeling pressured to choose a particular option.: 71%

Overall Oral Health Care Experience

- 63% Importance of Oral Health
- 79% Overall Experience Satisfaction
- 49% Overall Health Rating

ORAL HEALTH PATIENT JOURNEY

Satisfaction Trends Across Demographic Groups

It continues to be observed that younger adults (18–24), individuals with annual incomes below $40,000, students, respondents identifying as racialized minorities, those new to Canada (living in Canada for less than five years, n=43), and people who speak English with basic to intermediate proficiency (n=41) or as a second language often reported lower satisfaction levels across multiple stages of the oral health patient journey. In 2025, unless otherwise noted, individuals identifying as Indigenous (n=115) provided satisfaction ratings that were similar to the overall results, whereas in previous years, their ratings were comparatively lower on nearly all items. Detailed satisfaction scores for these groups, along with corresponding sample sizes, can be found in the Appendix. Conversely, older adults (55+) and individuals with higher annual income continue to report higher satisfaction across various aspects of the journey. While these trends provide useful insights, they should be interpreted as directional rather than conclusive, as the sample was designed to represent the overall population rather than specific subgroups. Other notable subgroup differences are highlighted in the narrative as they arise.

Statistically significant differences are highlighted throughout the narrative where they emerge at different stages of the oral health patient journey. Satisfaction scores marked with an exclamation mark (!) in the bar charts indicate a statistically significant difference overall between 2025 and 2024. Three statements were added in 2025 and are denoted by an asterisk (*) for reference.

Dental Office

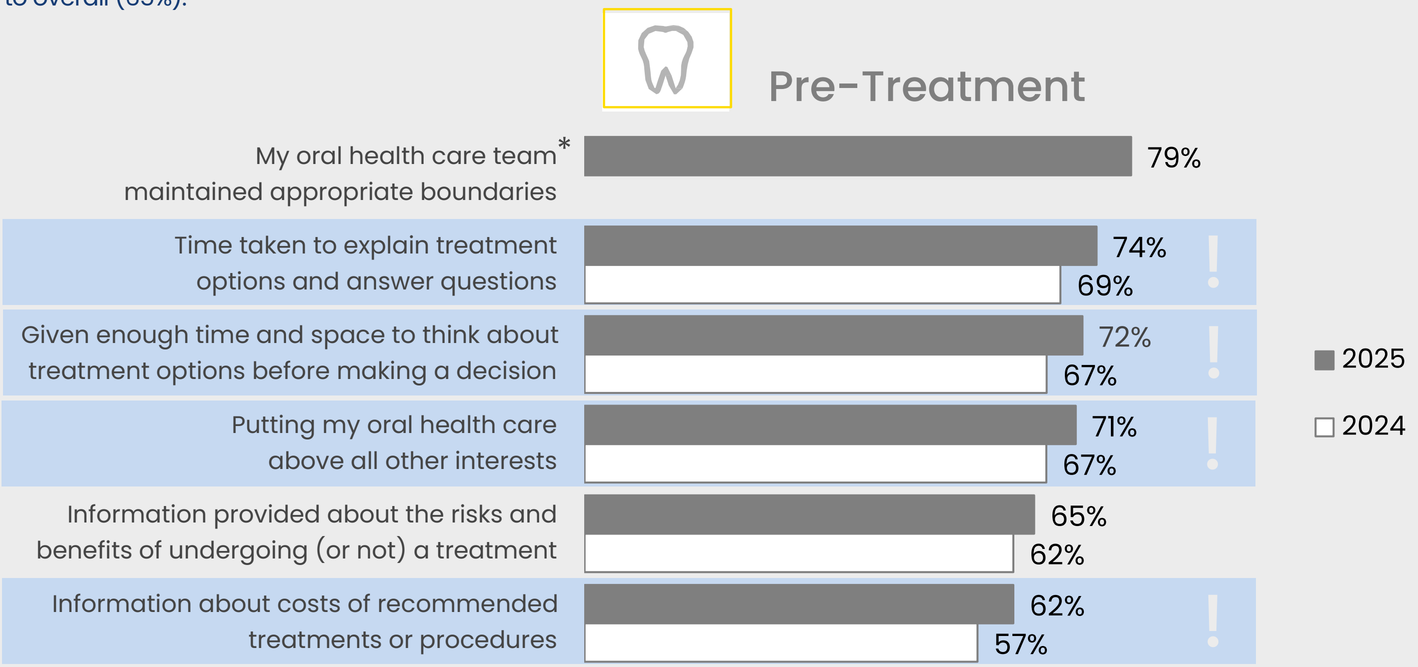
Compared to 2024 (75%), patients expressed higher satisfaction with cleanliness and infection control measures in 2025 (82%), which was also one of the highest ranked aspects of patient journey. Notably, patients residing in the Island Health authority reported even higher satisfaction, with a score of 88%, while respondents in Vancouver Coastal Health (76%) reported slightly lower satisfaction. Although access to oral health care in emergencies showed a four-point increase since 2024 (53%), it still remains the lowest rated item throughout the oral health patient journey with a satisfaction score of 57% in 2025.

Dental Office

ORAL HEALTH PATIENT JOURNEY

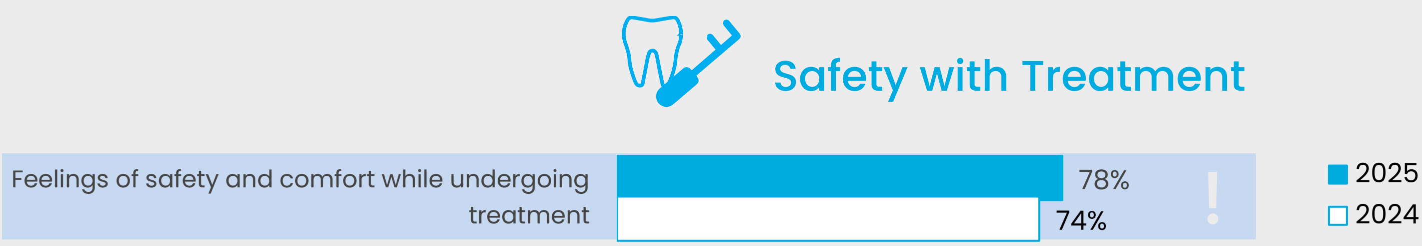
Pre-Treatment

In 2025, a new measure for pre-treatment phase was introduced—maintaining professional boundaries—which was one of the highest rated aspects overall, with 79% of patients satisfied. Time spent explaining treatment options (74%) increased up five points from 2024 (69%). This was followed by time and space to consider options (72%) and prioritizing oral health care (71%), both improving from 67% in 2024. Satisfaction with information on risks and benefits was at 65%, while treatment cost details remained lowest at 62%, despite a five-point increase from 57%. Notably, respondents identifying as Indigenous (49%) reported lower satisfaction with the information about costs of recommended treatments or procedures compared to overall (65%).



Safety of Treatment

Satisfaction with safety and comfort during treatment was rated at 78%, indicating a four-point increase from 2024 results (74%). Critically, individuals identifying as Indigenous (70%) reported lower satisfaction with the safety aspect than the overall sample.



ORAL HEALTH PATIENT JOURNEY

Post-Treatment

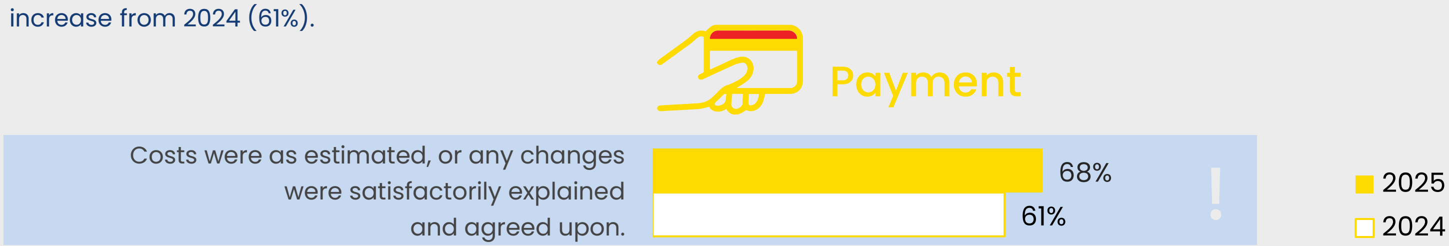
Most patients (80%) expressed satisfaction with oral health care treatment meeting expectations – being delivered as anticipated, showing an improvement since previous year (74%).

Staff Interaction/Communication

Staff interaction and communication metrics showed notable improvement compared to the previous year. Approximately three-quarters of respondents reported satisfaction with clear and understandable communication (77% vs. 72% in 2024), receiving education on how to care for their oral health (74% vs. 68% in 2024), and the time staff took to build rapport (73% vs. 65% in 2024). Two new metrics introduced in 2025 were also well-received. Most respondents agreed that the oral health care team treated them fairly and with respect (82%), making it one of the highest-rated components of the patient journey. Similarly, a strong majority felt that the team communicated effectively with one another (74%). Regional differences were observed. Respondents in the Island Health Region reported higher satisfaction with both team communication (80%) and oral health education (82%). However, respondents identifying as Indigenous reported lower satisfaction in key areas, including clear and understandable communication (66%) and fair and respectful treatment (72%).

Satisfaction with Payment

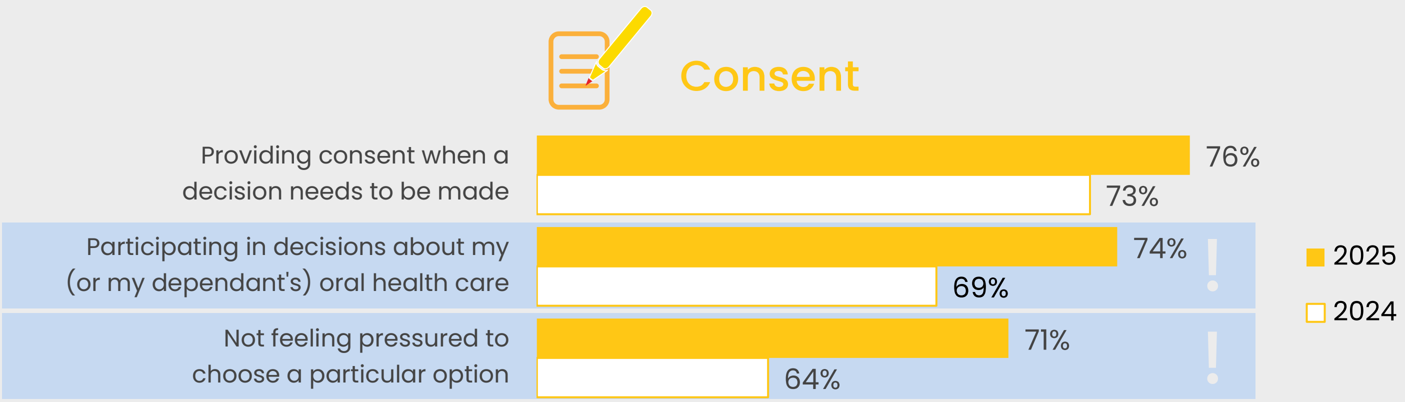
Overall, 68% of patients were satisfied with cost estimates and explanations of changes, marking a significant increase from 2024 (61%).



ORAL HEALTH PATIENT JOURNEY

Satisfaction with Consent

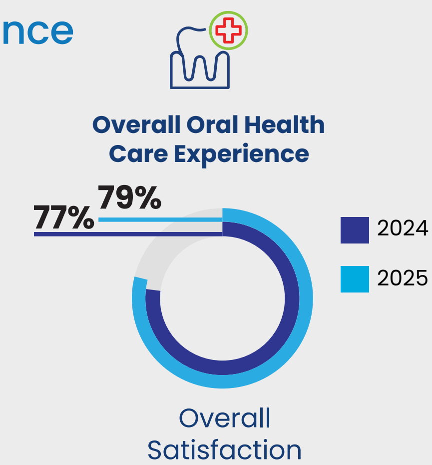
Satisfaction with consent-related statements was highest for providing consent when a decision needs to be made (76%), consistent with 2024 results. Participating in decisions about oral health care (74%) and not feeling pressured to choose a particular option (71%) marked a notable increase since 2024 (69% and 64%, respectively).



Overall Satisfaction with Oral Health Care Experience

The majority of patient respondents (79%) expressed satisfaction with their overall oral health care experience, consistent with 2024 results. Satisfaction was similar across health regions.

Patients new to Canada (less than five years; 58%, n=43), speaking English with basic to intermediate proficiency (61%, n=41), aged 18-44 (69%-73%), and students (69%) reported the lowest satisfaction, followed by those with incomes under $40,000 (71%), speaking English as a second language (71%), and racialized minority (72%). Those respondents identifying as Indigenous (79%) or having a disability (75%) reported overall satisfaction in line with the overall sample. The highest satisfaction was observed among respondents aged 55 and older (87%) and those with annual incomes exceeding $80,000 (82%).



Satisfaction Scores by Demographic Characteristics

	Overall n=1,504	New to Canada (less than 5 years) n=43	Racially minority n=237	Income under $40,000 n=295	Income over $150,000 n=161	Ages 18-24 n=103	Age over 55 n=586
Overall Satisfaction	79%	58%	72%	71%	88%	69%	87%

ORAL HEALTH PATIENT JOURNEY

Patient Reported Outcomes with Last Experience

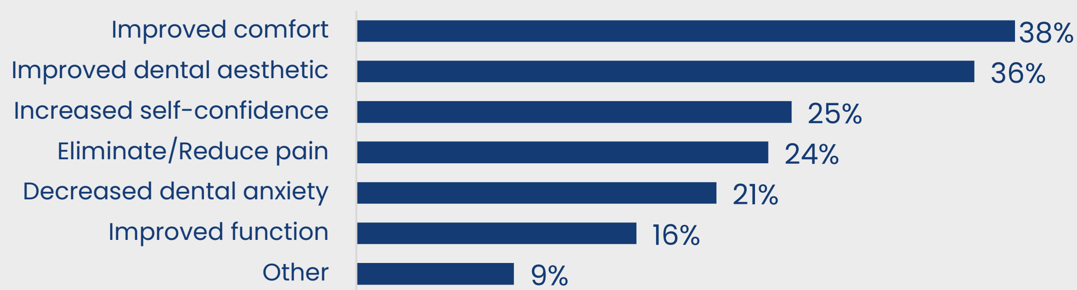
When patient respondents were asked to identify outcomes of their last dental visit, 38% reported improved comfort. Additionally, 36% observed enhancements in dental aesthetics, and 25% experienced a boost in self-confidence. About a quarter (24%) noted a reduction in pain, 21% reported decreased dental anxiety, and 16% highlighted improvements in functions such as chewing or jaw mobility.

Compared to 2024 results, improvements in dental aesthetics increased noticeably (36% vs. 30%). However, outcomes related to self-confidence and reduced dental anxiety showed slight year-over-year declines in 2025 (25% vs. 29% and 21% vs. 24%, respectively).

Patient Reported Outcomes

Select all that apply

(n=1,504)



Overall Health Indicators

All respondents, regardless of when their last dental visit took place, ranked their overall health on a seven-point scale from very poor to excellent. Over half (54%) of patients and one-third (33%) of non-recent patients rated their health as good or excellent. When considering the importance of oral health in overall well-being, 69% of patients and 45% of non-recent patients placed greater emphasis on their oral health. Compared to 2024, perceptions of overall health and the importance of oral health remained consistent.

Youth aged 18-24 (46%), individuals with incomes under $40,000 (57%) and those who speak English with basic to intermediate level (48%) ranked the importance of oral health lower than the overall average of 63%.

Health Indicators by Demographic Characteristics

	Overall n=2,000	Person with a disability n=348	Basic to Intermediate English Proficiency n=67	Income under $40,000 n=475	Income over $150,000 n=182	Ages 18-24 n=144	Age over 55 n=752
Overall Health	49%	26%	46%	35%	65%	44%	53%
Importance of Oral Health	63%	58%	48%	57%	75%	46%	72%

ORAL HEALTH PATIENT JOURNEY

Drivers of Satisfaction with Oral Health Care Providers in BC

To gain deeper insights into the oral health care patient experience in British Columbia, an advanced key driver analysis was conducted to identify service attributes with the greatest impact on overall satisfaction. This analysis helps inform opportunities for performance enhancement. A regression analysis was performed on all 19 service attributes along the oral health patient journey. Following this, the service attributes were ranked from high to low based on patient satisfaction. The model identified four key attributes that have a significant impact on overall satisfaction and present opportunities for improvement in the performance of oral health care professionals.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. In 2025, 79% of patient respondents reported to be satisfied or extremely satisfied with the overall oral health care they and/or their dependant(s) have received, which is consistent with 2024 (77%).

2. Two of three new items introduced in 2025, fair and respectful treatment and maintaining appropriate boundaries, received highest satisfaction scores. In parallel with previous year, cleanliness and infection control measures, feelings of safety and comfort, and the delivery of treatments and procedures were also highly appreciated by respondents.

3. Overall, satisfaction has increased from 2024 to 2025 across all 16 service attributes of the oral health patient journey. Three new service attributes also contributed to high satisfaction.

4. The largest gaps in satisfaction with oral health care experience are observed among younger adults (ages 18–24), individuals with lower incomes, those new to Canada, and those who do not speak English as a first language.

5. While satisfaction improved from the previous year, several patient journey aspects remained key drivers in 2025: oral health teams taking time to build rapport, not feeling pressured to choose a particular option, and teams putting patient care above all other interests. Information about the costs of recommended treatments or procedures also emerged as a key driver of satisfaction in 2025.

The key driver analysis indicates that patients expect more from their oral health care team, particularly in four areas: having time to build rapport, not feeling pressured to choose a particular option, prioritizing their oral health above all other interests, and Information about costs of recommended treatments or procedures.

Key Drivers of Satisfaction for Patient Respondents

Attribute	Patient Journey	Satisfaction Score (%)
Taking time to build rapport and understand my individual needs.	Staff Interaction/ Communication	73
Not feeling pressured to choose a particular option.	Consent	71
Putting my oral health care above all other interests.	Pre-treatment	71
The information provided to me about costs of recommended treatments or procedures (including any costs not covered by insurance) when applicable.	Pre-treatment	62

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Pivotal Research respectfully acknowledges that our office is headquartered on the traditional and ancestral land of the Nêhiyawak, Anishinaabe, Niitsitapi, Métis, Dene and Iyãhé Nakoda in Treaty 6 Territory and Métis Region 4.