

Senate Community Affairs Committee  
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO  
Budget Estimates 2011-2012, 30 May 2011

Question: E11-531

OUTCOME 0: Whole of Portfolio

Topic: ACCESS TO DENTAL CARE SURVEY

Hansard Page: CA 30

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

The AIHW report, *Trends in access to dental care among Australian adults 1994-2008*, released on 25 May 2011, uses information collected in the National Dental Telephone Interview Survey to examine trends in Australians visiting the dentist.

- a) Can you tell me roughly how many people would have been surveyed as part of this report?
- b) Could you give me any other parameters of the questioning and the general questions that were asked of them?

Answer:

a) The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) report covers six separate surveys conducted between 1994 and 2008. Only visiting patterns for dentate adults were reported in the *Trends in access to dental care among Australian adults 1994-2008* report. The number of dentate adults interviewed for each of the surveys (by survey year) is as follows:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Dentate adults interviewed</b>
1994	5,580
1996	5,939
1999	5,727
2002	5,418
2005	12,606
2008	6,017

Additional interviews were conducted with edentulous adults and children, however, these interviews do not contribute to this particular report.

b) Questions asked are available in published documents as follows:

**1994 National Dental Telephone Interview Survey**

Carter KD, Stewart JF, Davies MJ, Szuster FSP, Allister JH, Slade GD et al. 1994. National Dental Telephone Interview Survey 1994. Adelaide: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Dental Statistics and Research Unit. (Appendix A.1)

**1996 National Dental Telephone Interview Survey**

Used the same questions as the 1994 survey

**1999 National Dental Telephone Interview Survey**

Carter KD & Stewart JF 2002. National Dental Telephone Interview Survey 1999. AIHW cat. no. DEN 109. Adelaide: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Dental Statistics and Research Unit. (Appendix A)

**2002 National Dental Telephone Interview Survey**

Carter KD & Stewart JF 2003. National Dental Telephone Interview Survey 2002. Technical report. AIHW cat. no. DEN 128. Adelaide: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Dental Statistics and Research Unit. (Appendix A)

**2005 National Survey of Adults Oral Health**

Questions are available on the ARCPOH website (follow the link 2. [NSAOH CATI Questionnaire](#)):

<http://www.arcpoh.adelaide.edu.au/project/distribution/NSAOH.html>

**2008 National Dental Telephone Interview Survey**

Questions will be available as an appendix to the forthcoming technical report. In the meantime, a list of questions used in this survey is provided at Attachment A.

## National Dental Telephone Interview Survey 2008 questionnaire

This attachment provides the questions and response categories used in the 2008 National Dental Telephone Interview Survey. Unless otherwise specified, responses were 'Yes', 'No', and 'Don't know'. The response categories used are indicated by italicised text. This attachment does not include: the skip sequences used; inbuilt range and error checking; the numerical coding of responses; additional onscreen notes for interviewers; and lead-in statements to questions or question blocks.

1. Do you have any of your own natural teeth?
2. Have you been without natural teeth for more than 1 year?
3. How many years have you had no teeth?  
*Literal response*
4. Do you have a denture or false teeth {REMOVABLE} for your UPPER jaw?
5. Do you have a denture or false teeth {REMOVABLE} for your LOWER jaw?
6. There are 16 teeth, including wisdom teeth, in the upper jaw. How many teeth do you have remaining in your UPPER jaw?  
*Literal response*
7. There are also 16 teeth, including wisdom teeth, in the lower jaw. How many teeth do you have remaining in your LOWER jaw?  
*Literal response*
8. Currently, which of the following treatments do you think that you need to have:  
*Any filling(s)?*  
*Any extraction(s)?*  
*Scaling and cleaning of your teeth?*  
*Professional clean and polish?*  
*X-rays?*  
*Denture(s) made?*  
*A dental check-up?*  
*Gum treatment?*  
*Dental crown or bridge?*  
*Orthodontic treatment*  
*Any other treatment?*
9. Why do you think you need to have an extraction [tooth pulled out]?  
*Wisdom teeth?*  
*Tooth decayed?*  
*Tooth cracked or fractured?*  
*Filling broken down / fallen out?*

*Tooth abscessed or infected?*

*Tooth loose?*

*Crowding [orthodontics]?*

*Any other reason?*

*Text field to record response: Any other reason?*

10. How soon do you think you need this dental treatment?

*In less than 1 week*

*From 1 week to less than 1 month*

*From 1 month to less than 3 months*

*From 3 months to less than 6 months*

*6 months or more*

*Don't know*

11. How long ago did you LAST see a dental professional about your teeth, dentures or gums?

*Less than 12 months*

*1 to less than 2 years*

*2 to less than 5 years*

*5 to less than 10 years*

*10 years or more*

*Never attended*

*Don't know*

12. Was that dental visit for a check-up or for a dental problem?

13. Was that dental visit necessary for the relief of pain?

14. How many dental visits did you make in the last 12 months?

*Literal response*

15. How many fillings did you receive in the last 12 months?

*Literal response*

16. How many extractions did you receive in the last 12 months?

*Literal response*

17. What problem caused you to have the tooth/teeth extracted?

*Wisdom teeth*

*Tooth decayed*

*Tooth cracked or fractured*

*The filling had broken down / fallen out*

*Tooth abscessed or infected*

*Tooth loose*

*Crowding [orthodontics]*

*Any other reason*

18. How many of the following treatments did you receive in the last 12 months?

*Number of:*

Scalings?

Professional clean and polish treatments?

X-rays?

Denture(s) made? (note: upper & lower denture = 2 treatments)

Dental check-ups?

Sessions of gum treatment?

Teeth crowned or capped?

Bridges?

Teeth that had root canal treatment?

19. Which of the following treatments did you receive in the last 12 months:

Orthodontic treatment?

Any other treatment?

20. Treatment in previous 12 months for people with no natural teeth:

How many of the following treatments did you receive in the last 12 months:

*Denture(s) made? (note: upper & lower denture = 2 treatments)*

*Sessions of gum treatment?*

Any other treatment?

21. Where did you make your last dental visit? Was it at a:

*Private dental practice (including specialist)*

*Government dental clinic (including dental hospital)*

*School dental service*

*Dental technician*

*Clinic operated by health insurance fund*

*Armed Services / Defence Force clinic*

*Other site*

*Don't know*

22. Do you currently have a pension or allowance from the Government; or have a Pensioner Concession Card, a Health Care Card or a Department of Veterans Affairs card; or do you receive a pension or allowance from the Government?

23. Which card(s) are you covered by?

*Pensioner Concession Card*

*Health Care Card*

*Commonwealth Seniors Health Card*

*Department of Veterans Affairs treatment gold card*

*Department of Veterans Affairs treatment white card*

*Other card*

*Don't know*

24. Did you have a Pensioner Concession Card or a Health Care Card when you last visited a dentist [1 year/1-2 years ago]?
25. Did the Government or an insurance fund pay any part of the expenses for your last dental visit?
- Paid all own expenses*
- Health insurance paid some / patient paid some*
- Health insurance paid all / patient paid none*
- Government paid some / patient (or health insurance) paid some*
- Government paid all / patient paid none*
- Other payment arrangement*
- Don't know*
26. Are you currently on a waiting list for public dental care?
27. How many years/months have you been on the waiting list?
- Literal response in months*
28. For your last dental visit, were you on a waiting list before you were given an appointment [at the government dental clinic]?
29. How long did you have to wait before being given an appointment?
- Literal response in months and weeks*
30. Which is your usual reason for visiting a dental professional – for check ups or when you have a dental problem?
- Check ups*
- Dental problem*
- Don't know*
31. Do you usually visit for the relief of pain?
32. How often, on average, would you seek care from a dental professional?
- Two or more times a year*
- Once a year*
- Once in 2 years*
- Less often than that*

- Don't know*
33. During the last 12 months how often have you had toothache? Was it:  
*Very often*  
*Often*  
*Sometimes*  
*Hardly ever*  
*Never during the last 12 months*  
*Don't know*
34. How often have you felt uncomfortable about the appearance of your teeth, mouth or dentures during the last 12 months?  
*Very often*  
*Often*  
*Sometimes*  
*Hardly ever*  
*Never during the last 12 months*  
*Don't know*
35. How often have you had to avoid eating some foods because of problems with your teeth, mouth or dentures during the last 12 months?  
*Very often*  
*Often*  
*Sometimes*  
*Hardly ever*  
*Never during the last 12 months*  
*Don't know*
36. During the last 12 months, have you broken or chipped a natural tooth due to injury?
37. During the last MONTH, have you had pain in the face, jaw, temple, in front of the ear or in the ear?
38. Have you been told by a doctor that you have diabetes?
39. Which of the following best describes your smoking status (includes cigarettes, cigars and pipes)?  
*I currently smoke*  
*I don't smoke now, but I used to*  
*I've never smoked*  
*Don't know / Refusal*
40. During the last 12 months, have you avoided or delayed visiting a dental professional because of the cost?

41. Has the cost prevented you from having any dental treatment that was recommended by a dental professional at a visit during the last 12 months?
42. Did you take up an alternative lower cost option for the treatment that was recommended?
43. In the last 12 months, how much of a financial burden have dental visits been for you? Would you say:
- None*
  - Hardly any*
  - A little*
  - A large burden*
  - Don't know*
44. At most times of the year, how much difficulty would you have paying a \$100 dental bill OUT OF YOUR OWN POCKET? Would you say:
- None*
  - Hardly any*
  - A little*
  - A lot of difficulty*
  - Don't know*
45. And (at most times of the year) how much difficulty would you have paying a \$150 dental bill OUT OF YOUR OWN POCKET? Would you say:
- None*
  - Hardly any*
  - A little*
  - A lot of difficulty*
  - Don't know*
46. Do you have private insurance cover for dental expenses?
47. What is the name of the health insurance company that you have dental insurance with?
48. Would you say that your dental insurance covers General dental only, or does it include Major dental cover?
- General = Basic [covers check-ups, fillings and simple extractions]*
  - Major = Higher level cover [includes crowns, root canal treatment, wisdom tooth extractions]*
  - Don't know / Refusal*
49. Do you have an appointment set for a check-up?
50. Do you expect to receive an appointment or reminder notice for a check-up?
51. Is there a dentist you usually go to for dental care?
52. How would you rate your own GENERAL health? Would you say that it is:



*Excellent*

*Very good*

*Good*

*Fair*

*Poor*

*Don't know*

53. And how would you rate your DENTAL health? Would you say that it is:

*Excellent*

*Very good*

*Good*

*Fair*

*Poor*

*Don't know*

54. How often during the last 7 days did you clean your teeth?

*Literal response*

55. Would you feel afraid or distressed when going to the dentist? Would you say:

*Not at all*

*A little afraid or distressed*

*Moderately afraid or distressed*

*Very afraid or distressed*

*Extremely afraid or distressed*

56. What sex are you?

*Male*

*Female*

*Refusal*

57. Could you tell me your age please?

*Literal response*

58. Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

*No*

*Yes, Aboriginal*

*Yes, Torres Strait Islander*

*Yes, Torres Strait Islander & Aboriginal*

*Don't know / Refusal*

59. In which country were you born?

*Australia*

*England*

*New Zealand*

*Italy*

*Vietnam*

*China*

*Greece*

*Germany*

*The Philippines*

*India*

*Don't know / Refusal*

OR

*Literal response*

60. How long have you been living in Australia?

*Literal response*

61. Were either of your parents born overseas?

*Yes, mother only*

*Yes, father only*

*Yes, both*

*No, both Australian-born*

*Don't know / Refusal*

62. Do you speak a language other than English at home?

63. What language do you mainly speak at home?

*English*

*Italian*

*Greek*

*Chinese (Cantonese)*

*Chinese (Mandarin)*

*Arabic/Lebanese*

*Vietnamese*

*Spanish*

*Tagalog (Filipino)*

*Don't know / Refusal*

OR

*Literal response*

64. Are you studying at school or any other educational institution either full-time or part time?
- Full-time*
  - Part-time*
  - Not at school/TAFE/Uni*
  - Don't know*
65. What kind of educational institution do you attend?
- Secondary school*
  - TAFE*
  - University or other higher education institution*
  - Other*
  - Don't know*
66. What is the highest Year level of schooling you have completed?
- Primary school [Year 7 or less]*
  - Year 8*
  - Year 9*
  - Year 10*
  - Year 11*
  - Year 12*
  - Don't know / Refusal*
67. Have you completed a trade certificate, university degree or any other educational qualification since leaving school?
68. What is the highest qualification / level of education you have completed since leaving school?
- Postgraduate degree level*
  - Graduate diploma / graduate certificate level*
  - Bachelor degree level*
  - Advanced diploma / diploma level*
  - Certificate level*
  - Other*
  - Don't know / Refusal*
69. How would you describe your current employment status?
- Full-time (35+ hours)*
  - Part-time*
  - Not employed*
  - Don't know / Refusal*

Are you currently:

*Retired*

*Home duties*

*Unemployed and looking for work*

*Student*

*Not employed, and not looking for work*

*Don't know / Refusal*

70. What is your usual/current occupation?

*Judge, Manager, Administrator, Farmer*

*Professional, e.g. Doctor, Dentist, Engineer, Scientist, Teacher*

*Para Professional, e.g. Technical Officer, Nurse, Ambulance, Sport, Army*

*Tradesperson, e.g. Electrician, Builder, Carpenter, Plumber, Printer, Cook*

*Advanced Clerical, e.g. PA, Secretary;*

*Intermediate Clerical, e.g. Receptionist, Accounts, Payroll, Bank Clerk*

*Elementary Clerical, e.g. Filing*

*Intermediate Salesperson, e.g. Sales rep, Teller, Waiter, Services, Teacher's Aide, Child Care*

*Low Salesperson, e.g. Sales Assistant, Checkout, Security Officer, Services, Vet Nurse, Assistant*

*Skilled Labourer, e.g. Plant Operator, Driver*

*Unskilled Labourer*

*Other*

*Don't know / Not applicable*

*Literal response*

71. Could you please indicate the category of your total household income?

Per year

Per fortnight

Per week

*Up to \$12,000*

*Up to \$460*

*Up to \$230*

*From 12 to \$20,000*

*\$461 to \$770*

*\$231 to \$385*

*From 20 to \$30,000*

*\$771 to \$1154*

*\$386 to \$577*

*From 30 to \$40,000*

*\$1155 to \$1538*

*\$578 to \$769*

*From 40 to \$50,000*

*\$1539 to \$1923*

*\$770 to \$961*

*From 50 to \$60,000*

*\$1924 to \$2307*

*\$962 to \$1153*

*From 60 to \$70,000*

*\$2308 to \$2692*

*\$1154 to \$1346*

*From 70 to \$80,000*

*\$2693 to \$3077*

*\$1347 to \$1538*

*From 80 to \$90,000*

*\$3,077 to \$3,462*

*\$1,538 to \$1,731*

*From 90 to \$100,000*

*\$3,462 to \$3,846*

*\$1,731 to \$1,923*

*From 100 to \$110,000      \$3,846 to \$4,230      \$1,923 to \$2,115*  
*More than \$110,000      More than \$4230      More than \$2115*

*Don't know*

*Refusal*

72. Is your current dwelling:

*Rented accommodation*

*Being paid off*

*Owned outright*

*Rent-free accommodation*

*Other*

*Don't know / Refusal*

73. Can you please tell me the postcode where you live [or suburb]?

*Literal response*

74. How many people live in this household (including babies and pre-schoolers)?

*Literal response*

Please record age of each person in the household?

*Literal response*