



Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Oral Health Program

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) surveyed more than 5,000 oral health providers in Michigan to uncover attitudes and behaviors around performing oral cancer screening during exams, including discussing the human papilloma virus (HPV) and its vaccine.

Challenge

The Michigan State Department of Health and Human Services needed to survey dental practitioners about their understanding of various oral cancer screening and prevention activities. Working with Delta Dental Plan of Michigan, they compiled a list of more than 5,000 dental practices, and they needed a partner to guide them through administering the survey and collecting results.

More than anything else, they needed a one-stop shop who could design the survey to their specifications, administer the survey, and collect responses—a job they couldn't handle in-house with their existing resources.

They needed the results to inform their outreach efforts, improve oral cancer screenings, and increase HPV vaccination rates in the state.

Enter Scantron Survey Services.

Implementation

Scantron Survey Services worked closely with MDHHS throughout all the phases of an extensive survey. “We particularly appreciated the solid review process,” says Susan Deming, early-childhood oral health specialist. “Scantron always asked for input and offered their advice.”

Solution Snapshot

Funded in partnership with Delta Dental Plan of Michigan

Needed one-stop solution from start to finish, configured to specific requirements

Using a small financial incentive, experienced a 33% response rate

Results used to educate oral health providers about oral cancer screenings and HPV vaccine promotion.

“We saw a response rate of 33%,” notes Christine Farrell, the program’s director. “Scantron provided timely and accurate results. We discovered that even just asking about their oral cancer screening increased engagement and awareness with these practitioners.”

“We couldn’t have accomplished this project without Scantron’s help. Scantron had the resources and the experience to provide us the guidance we needed for a statewide survey. They also had the capability to collect responses, organize them, and deliver results.”

*Christine Farrell, RDH, BSDH, MPA
Oral Health Program Director, Division of Child and Adolescent Health, MDHHS*



**"The project
went very smoothly.
Scantron was always
there for us."**

**- Susan Deming, RDH, RDA, BS
Early-Childhood Oral Health
Specialist, MDHHS**

MDHHS uncovered some crucial awareness statistics that will help them effectively educate dentists, particularly around HPV and its vaccine:

- **71% of respondents indicated they perform an oral cancer screening on all their patients. Ages screened and how the cancer screening was performed varied greatly.**
- **63% did not have a written policy or defined procedures on screening for oral cancer.**
- **Most respondents refer to an oral surgeon or ENT specialist when necessary.**
- **More than 82% of oral health professionals do not routinely ask or advise on the HPV vaccine; although, they would welcome more education on the topic.**
- **Fewer than 25% of respondents felt that they had adequate knowledge about HPV vaccinations.**

Knowing these statistics and the answers to other questions asked on the survey helps MDHHS design effective education around HPV and its vaccine. "Now that we have the baseline knowledge," says Farrell, "we can design specific programs and materials to increase practitioner and public awareness about this important oral health issue."

Fifty percent of respondents provided free-form comments, deepening the department's understanding of how to focus their efforts and outreach. "Scantron was able to include open-ended questions right in the survey," states Farrell. "And they were able to transcribe those comments for us when they collected the data, making it very easy to review the comments and learn from them."

"Overall, we were so pleased with Scantron and how smooth the process was," states Farrell. "Most of our respondents were dentists. We are seeking funding for a follow-up survey to dental hygienists, since those practitioners are even more on the front lines of providing oral cancer screening. We plan to work with Scantron on that effort, as well."

Deming agrees. "This was a big job, and we simply could not have handled it without Scantron. The whole project went very smoothly, and the best part is that we got important results we can use to improve our services."

Scantron Survey Services is pleased and proud to partner with the MDHHS Oral Health Program in its quest to improve oral health care for Michigan residents.



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