

Oral health research priorities on the Cochrane Library

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Background

It was necessary for the Cochrane Oral Health Group (Cochrane OHG) to identify the most clinically important titles to maintain on the Cochrane Library, due to limited capacity and funding restraints.

This will enable us also to fulfil the first two goals of the Cochrane Strategy to 2020 by producing high quality, useful, accessible evidence.

Objectives

To identify a core portfolio of priority reviews for maintenance by the Cochrane OHG.

Methods

We categorised 234 registered titles into eight defined areas of dentistry: periodontology, operative (including endodontics) and prosthodontics, paediatric dentistry, dental public health, oral and maxillofacial surgery, oral medicine, orthodontics, cleft lip and/or palate.

Active authors of Cochrane OHG's reviews in each area were invited to rank their 'top 10' titles of clinical importance for that area.

A brief online public consultation survey captured the oral concerns of 81 people (from 15 countries, across five continents) to inform the decision-making process. (See Figure 1 for a categorised spread of reported consumer concerns elicited from the public survey)

Authors' initial pooled rankings and results of the public survey were presented to an international clinical expert panel for each area of dentistry (eight panels, totalling 133 members) for discussion.

This was possible due to the financial support of the Global Alliance, who also provided networks for accessing clinical experts in each area of dentistry.

Results

The process successfully identified a core portfolio of 96 reviews to be considered a priority for the Cochrane OHG, 15 of which are new titles for registration. (See Figure 2 for a list of top priority reviews in each area)

The Cochrane OHG is rationalising and expanding the scope of some reviews where appropriate.

Conclusions

The prioritisation process successfully accomplished its objective, and the resulting core portfolio will be subject to revision periodically to ensure we produce easily accessed, high quality, important reviews.

The next exercise is scheduled for 2017, when the Cochrane OHG will use the same methods as the previous process, but will ensure a broader public survey period.

Figure 1. Categorised reported consumer concerns used to inform decision making

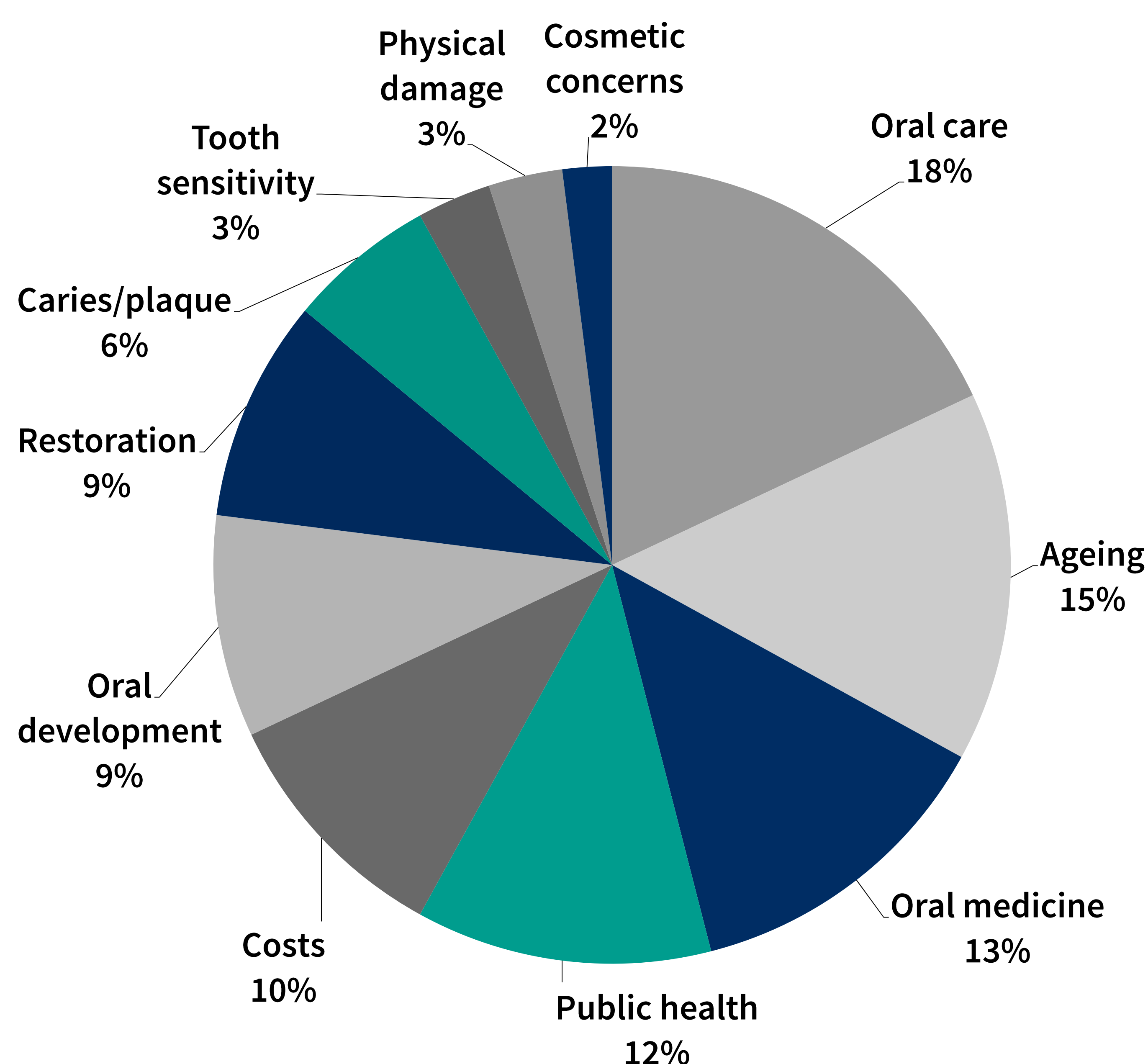


Figure 2. List of top priority reviews in each area of dentistry

Periodontology	Recall intervals for oral health in primary care patients
Primary prevention	Routine scale and polish for periodontal health in adults
Maintenance	Interventions for the maintenance of the dentition in patients treated for periodontal disease Professional interventions for the maintenance of the dentition in patients treated for periodontal disease
Oral Medicine	Screening programmes for the early detection and prevention of oral cancer
Oral cancer diagnosis/screening	Diagnostic tests for oral cancer and potentially malignant disorders in patients presenting with clinically evident lesions
Management of oral conditions	Interventions for temporomandibular disorder (TMD) patients
Operative and prosthodontic dentistry	Operative caries management in adults and children Minimally-invasive interventions for managing caries in adults and children
Operative (incl. endodontic) treatment	Interventions for replacing missing teeth: dental implants in fresh extraction sockets (immediate, immediate-delayed and delayed implants) Interventions for replacing missing teeth: partially absent dentition
Prosthodontic treatment	
Cleft lip and/or palate	Interventions for the management of cleft lip and palate Interventions for the prevention of cleft lip and palate development
Dental Public Health	Community-based, population level interventions for promoting child oral health Oral health promotion interventions in institutionalised care settings (including hospitals) for staff, residents and patients
Oral and maxillofacial surgery	Interventions for the assessment and prevention of osteonecrosis of the jaw bones
Surgical treatment	Interventions for treating medication-induced osteonecrosis of the jaw bones
Oral cancer treatment	Interventions for the treatment of oral and oropharyngeal cancers: an overview
Other priority topics	Interventions for the management of oral conditions resulting from cancer complications: an overview
Management of oral conditions associated with cancer/treatment	
Orthodontics	Orthodontic treatment for prominent upper front teeth (Class II malocclusion) in children Orthodontic treatment for prominent lower front teeth (Class III malocclusion) in children
Paediatric dentistry	Fluoride varnishes for preventing dental caries in children and adolescents Fluoride gels for preventing dental caries in children and adolescents

Full priority titles list

A list of all 81 existing titles identified to form the Cochrane OHG's core portfolio to be maintained on the Cochrane Library can be found at:

ohg.cochrane.org/priority-reviews

Please note that this list is not definitive, as it will be subject to periodic revision over the coming years as new interventions requiring review emerge.

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