

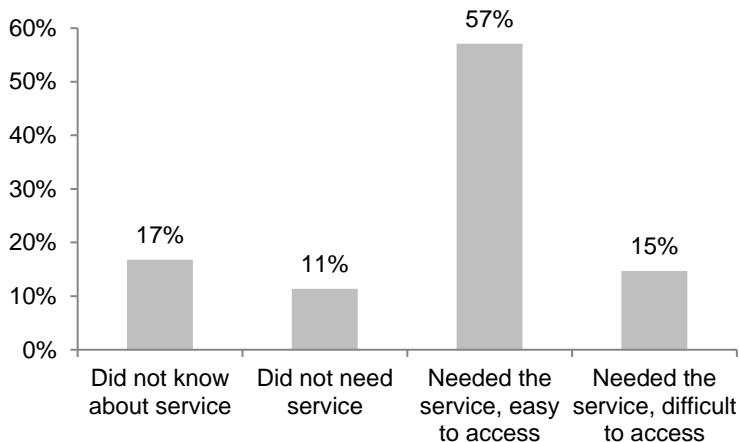
ORAL HEALTH CARE

Oral health care, or dental services, refers to the diagnostic, preventative, and therapeutic services provided to persons living with HIV (PLWH) by a dental health care professional (such as a dentist or hygienist). This includes examinations, periodontal services (such as cleanings and fillings), extractions and other oral surgeries, restorative dental procedures, and prosthodontics (or dentures).

(Graph 1) In the 2020 Houston HIV Care Services Needs Assessment, 72% of participants indicated a need for *oral health care* in the past 12 months. 57% reported the service was easy to access, and 15% reported difficulty. 17% stated that they did not know the service was available.

(Table 1) When barriers to *oral health care* were reported, the most common barrier type was wait-related issues (35%). Wait-related barriers reported include placement on a waitlist, long waits at appointments, and being told to call back as a wait list was full/unavailable. Of note, at least seven participants reported unprompted that their provider stated Ryan White does not cover prosthodontics, and that the participants would need to pay several hundred dollars out of pocket for treatment. Administrative agent and agency staff were notified immediately to resolve this issue.

GRAPH 1-Oral Health Care, 2020



(Table 2 and Table 3) Need and access to services can be analyzed for needs assessment participants according to demographic and other characteristics, revealing the presence of any potential disparities in access to services. For *oral health care*, this analysis shows the following:

- More males than females found the service accessible.
- More Hispanic/Latino PLWH found the service accessible than other race/ethnicities.
- More PLWHA age 18 to 24 found the service accessible than other age groups.
- In addition, more out of care, recently released, and MSM found the service difficult to access when compared to all participants.

TABLE 1-Top 5 Reported Barrier Types for Oral Health Care, 2020

	No.	%
1. Wait (W)	20	22%
2. Interactions with Staff (S)	16	18%
3. Health Insurance Coverage (I)	12	13%
4. Education and Awareness (EA)	11	12%
5. Administrative (AD)	9	10%

TABLE 2-Oral Health Care, by Demographic Categories, 2020

Experience with the Service	Sex (at birth)		Race/ethnicity				Age		
	Male	Female	White	Black	Hispanic	Other	18-24	25-49	50+
Did not know about service	18%	12%	6%	19%	19%	15%	24%	22%	8%
Did not need service	11%	12%	22%	12%	8%	4%	14%	9%	14%
Needed, easy to access	57%	59%	49%	55%	63%	54%	52%	52%	65%
Needed, difficult to access	14%	17%	22%	14%	10%	27%	10%	17%	12%

TABLE 3-Oral Health Care, by Selected Special Populations, 2020

Experience with the Service	Homeless ^a	MSM ^b	Out of Care ^c	Recently Released ^d	Rural ^e	Transgender ^f
Did not know about service	34%	15%	34%	20%	9%	8%
Did not need service	6%	10%	9%	11%	20%	13%
Needed, easy to access	45%	59%	34%	50%	69%	67%
Needed, difficult to access	15%	16%	22%	19%	3%	13%

^aPersons reporting current homelessness ^bMen who have sex with men ^cPersons with no evidence of HIV care for 12 mo.

^dPersons released from incarceration in the past 12 mo. ^eNon-Houston/Harris County residents ^fPersons with discordant sex assigned at birth and current gender