



# Roles of Dentists in Society

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# Lecture Outline

## **Roles of Dentists in society:**

- Oral healthcare providers
- Preventive care advocates
- Public health roles
- Research and innovation

## **ILO:**

Identify the roles and responsibilities of dentists and dental specialists in healthcare systems.

# Introduction

Treat the patients as a whole not a hole

- 1** Prevention  
Preventing oral diseases.
- 2** Education  
Educating patients on oral hygiene.
- 3** Research  
Advancing dental knowledge.



# Dentists as Oral Healthcare Providers

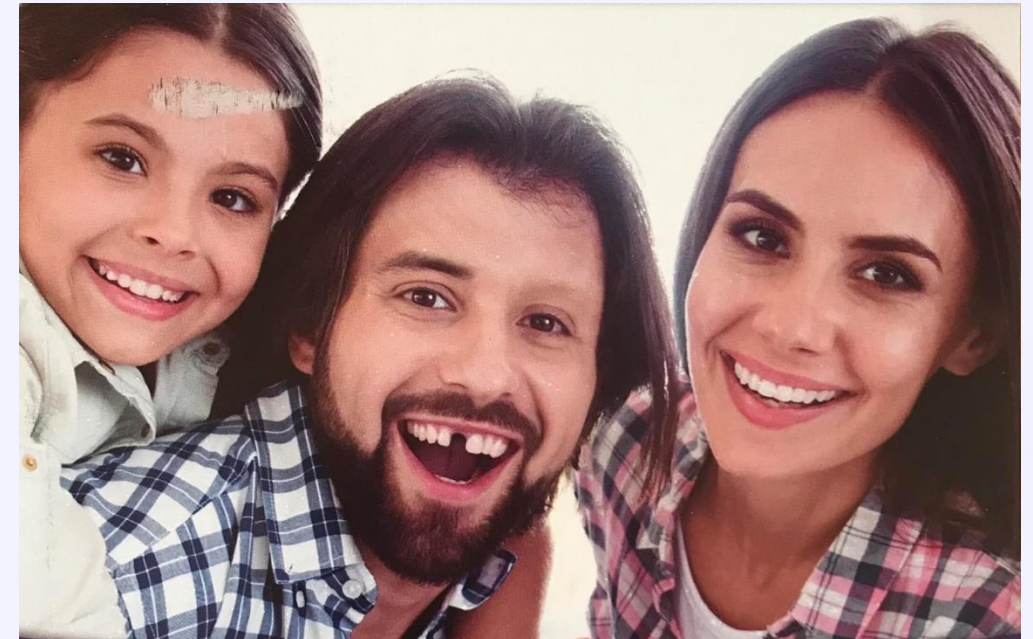
## Clinical Importance:

Prevent and treat oral diseases

Restores function and aesthetics.

Improves quality of life and patient confidence.

Maintains proper occlusion and prevents future complications.



# Dentists as Oral Healthcare Providers

## Key Dental procedures:

- Restorative Dentistry (fillings)
- Endodontics (Root canal therapy)
- Prosthodontics (dentures, implants, crowns, bridges)
- Orthodontics for occlusion correction.
- Periodontics (scaling and polishing)
- Paediatric Dentistry managing paediatric patients
- Oral and maxillofacial surgery (Extractions, maxillofacial surgery)
- Oral medicine and oral pathology (oral diseases)

## Restorative Dentistry

Restorative dentistry involves any dental process which focuses on repairing or restoring damaged oral structures. This can include procedures such as fillings (restorations), bridges, and implants among many other services.



# Endodontics

The specialty dealing with the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of diseases of the dental pulp and periapical tissues, including root canal therapy.



# Prosthodontics

The branch of dentistry focused on the design, manufacture, and fitting of artificial replacements for teeth and other parts of the mouth, including crowns, bridges, dentures, and implants.



## **Orthodontics:**

The specialty that diagnoses, prevents, and corrects misaligned teeth and jaws using braces, aligners, and other orthodontic appliances.



## Periodontics

The study and treatment of diseases affecting the supporting structures of teeth, such as gingiva, periodontal ligament, and alveolar bone. It includes procedures like scaling, root planning, and gingival grafts.



## Paediatric Dentistry

Specializes in the oral healthcare of infants, children, and adolescents, including preventive care, behaviour management, and treatment of developmental dental issues.



## Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery

Focuses on surgical procedures involving the mouth, jaws, face, and skull, including extractions, dental implants, corrective jaw surgery, and treatment of facial trauma.



## Oral Medicine and Oral pathology:

A specialty that deals with the diagnosis and management of complex oral diseases, including those related to systemic conditions, such as oral cancer and autoimmune disorders

**Oral medicine** is more **clinically oriented**, focusing on **diagnosing and managing** diseases affecting the oral cavity

**Oral pathology** is more **laboratory-based**, dealing with **disease identification and research** through biopsy analysis.



# Dentists as Preventive Care Advocates

- Prevention is more effective and cost-efficient than treatment
- .Key preventive measures:
  - Patient education:** Oral hygiene, diet, and lifestyle.
  - Fluoride treatments:** Prevents decay in high-risk populations
  - Routine check-ups & early detection:** Identifies caries, periodontal disease early.

## Impact:

Reduces disease burden.

Encourages lifelong oral hygiene habits.

Prevents systemic diseases linked to poor oral health.



# Dentists in Public Health

Dentists contribute to community health initiatives. They reduce costs by preventing oral diseases.

Public health dentistry is a crucial yet **often overlooked aspect of the profession.**

Governments rely on dentists for **policy recommendations**, such as water fluoridation and affordable care programs.

## School Programs

Oral health programs for school children.

## Mobile Clinics

Dental clinics for underserved areas.

## Water Fluoridation

Initiatives for water fluoridation.

## Advocacy

Advocating for better policies.

## School Programs

Local or international campaigns

FDI World Dental Federation (FDI) serves as the principal representative body for more than one million dentists worldwide and has a bold vision to *lead the world to optimal oral health*.

FDI headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

<https://www.fdiworlddental.org/>

# TEACHING CHILDREN TO ACT ON MOUTH HEALTH



provides teachers with the tools to help educate children on the importance of good oral health

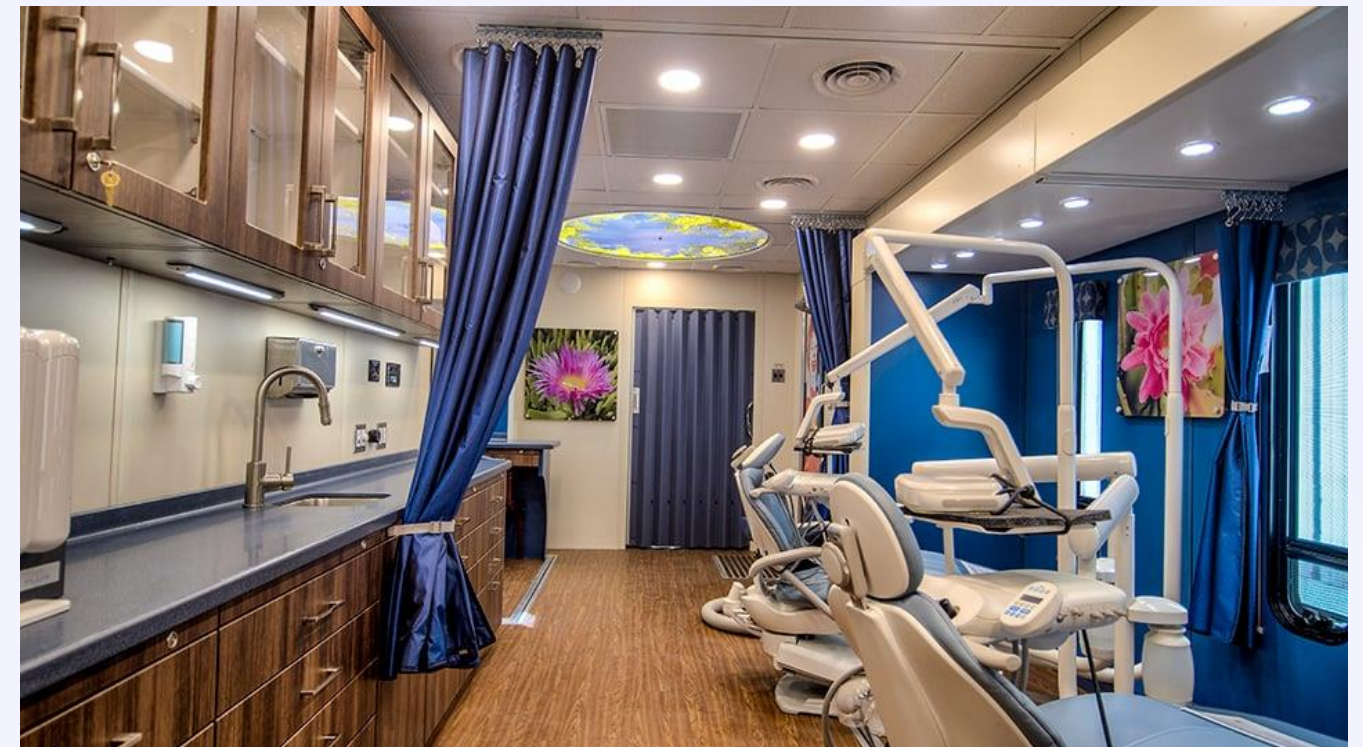


[www.worldoraldental.org](http://www.worldoraldental.org)

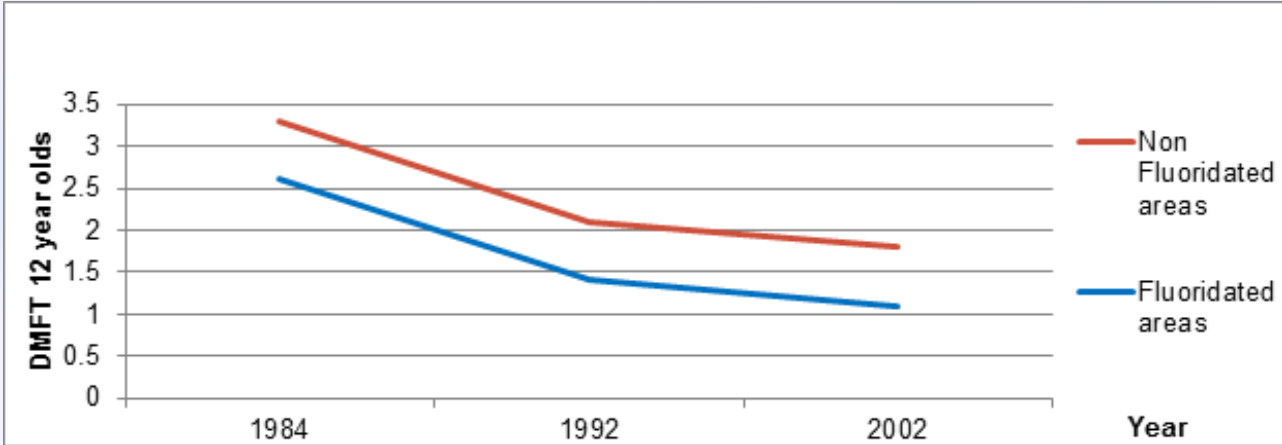


\*FIGURES: YouGov Plc. Sample Size: 16,477 adults of which 4,367 were parents with children aged 5-16. FIELDWORK: 18 February–4 March 2019. COUNTRIES SURVEYED: Australia, Brazil, Germany, UK, USA, Mexico Poland, Algeria, China, India, Indonesia, Morocco and Saudi Arabia.

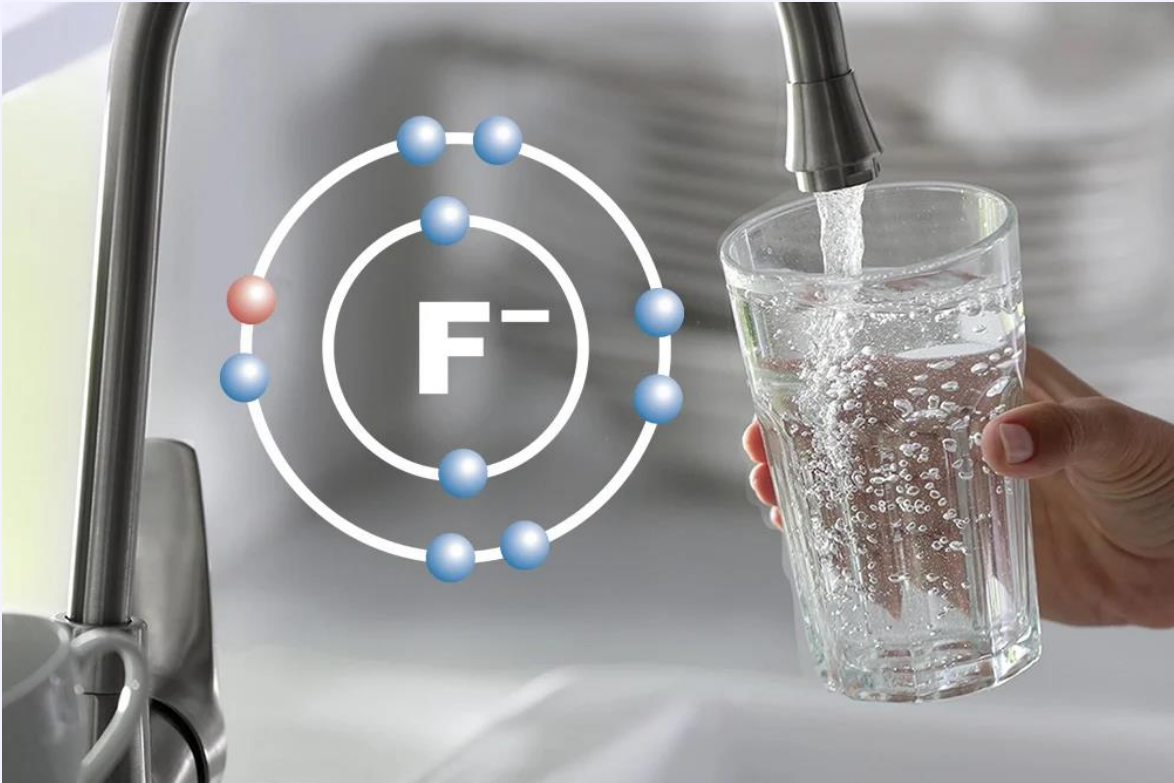
# Mobile Clinics



# Water Fluoridation

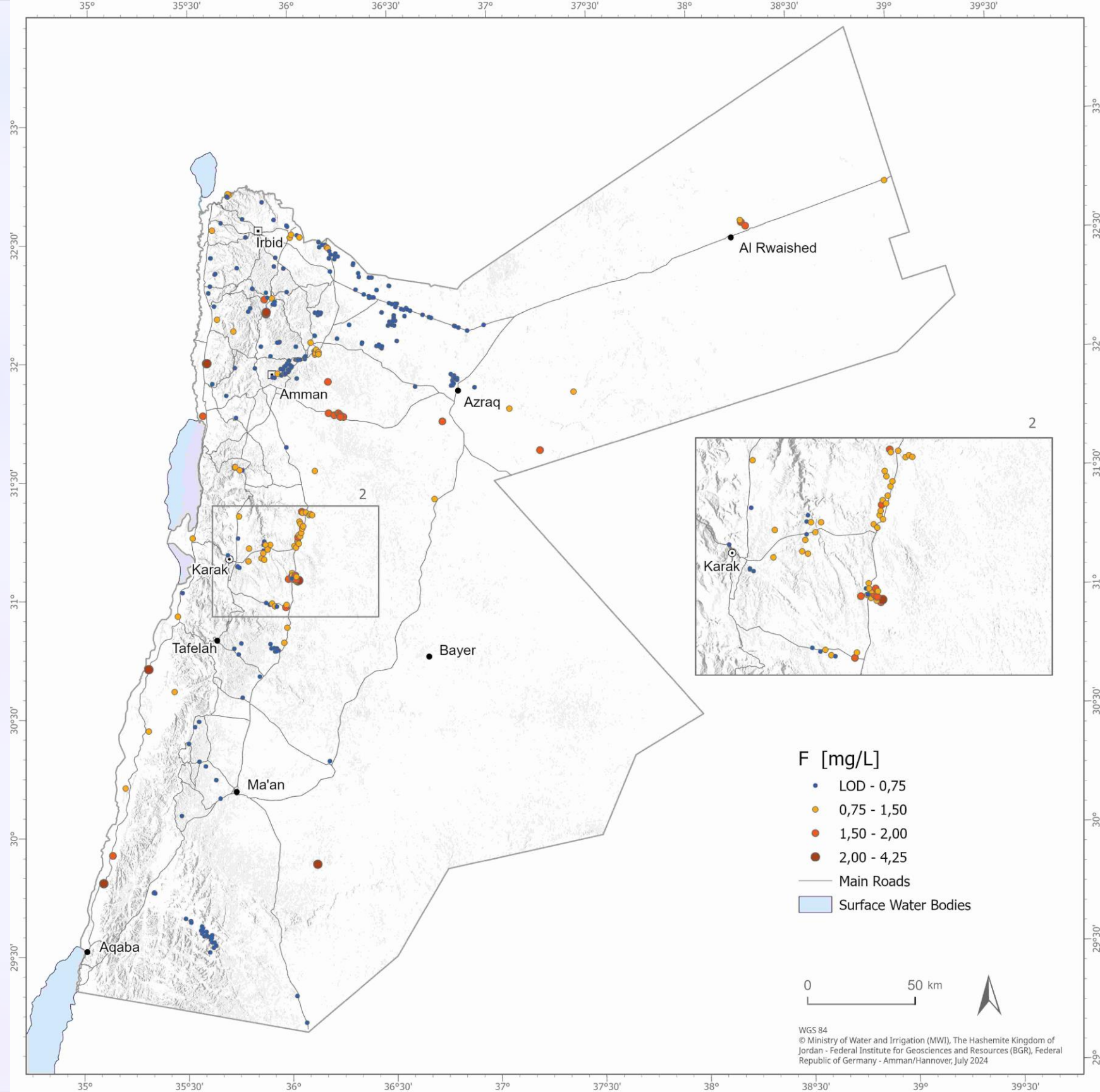


Mean DMFT 12-year-olds in Ireland by Water Fluoridation Status, Data from the World Health Organization database.



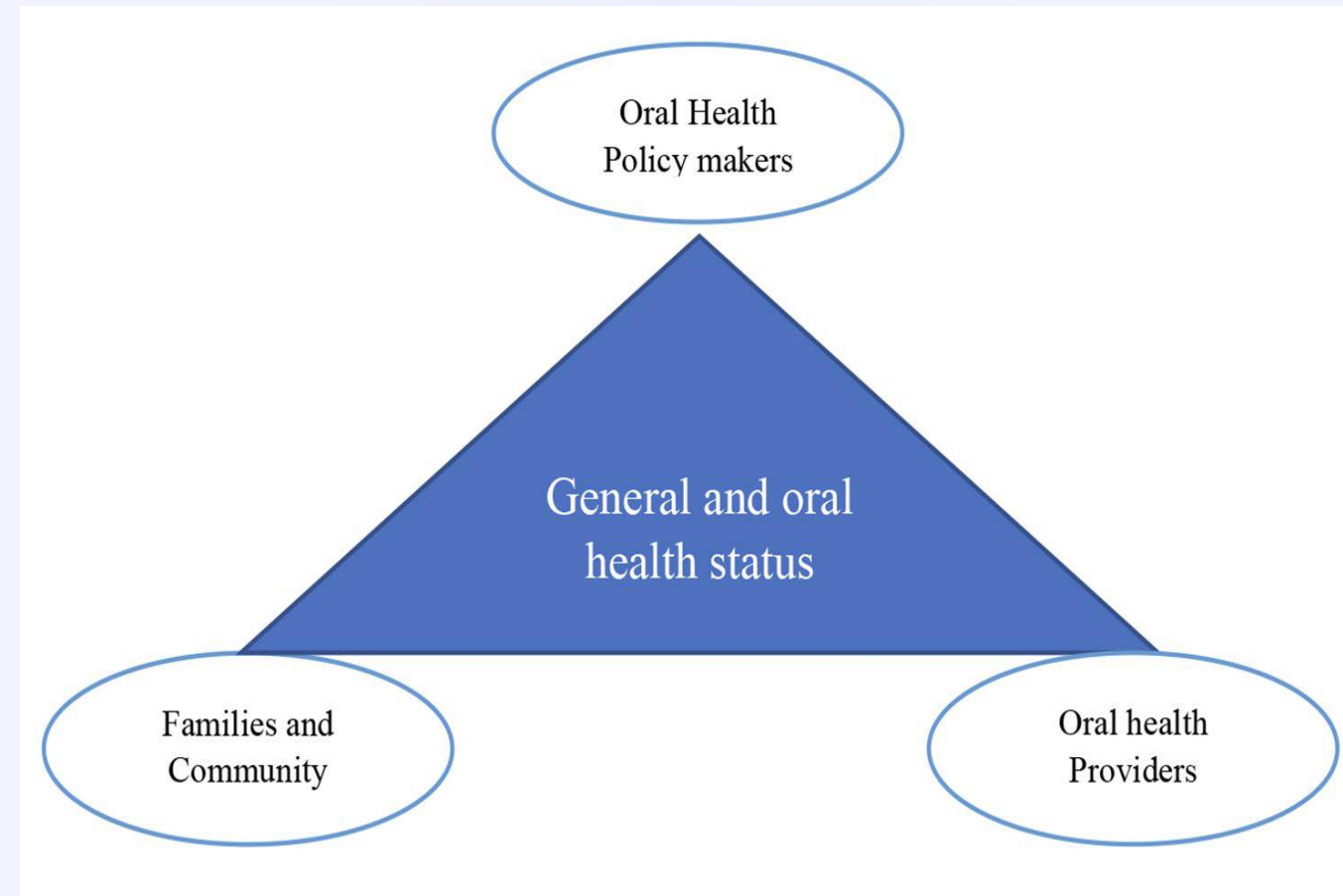
## Water Fluoridation

The National Groundwater Quality Baseline study is based on data from a one-off sampling campaign, which was conducted between 2021 and 2023, comprising in total 520 sampling locations.



## Advocacy for better policies

*Oral health policymakers* affect the mechanism for funding dental care and supporting schemes, affordability of oral health services, regulations and standards and public education.



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# Dentists in Research and Innovation

Dentistry is continuously evolving. Key advancements enhance patient outcomes.

They reduce procedural time and costs. They improve early disease detection.

- 1** Restorative Materials  
Improved durability and biocompatibility.
- 2** Digital Dentistry  
CAD/CAM for precise restorations.
- 3** Minimally Invasive  
Laser dentistry, regenerative approaches.
- 4** AI in Dentistry  
Smart diagnostics, automated planning.

# Conclusion

Dentists are educators, advocates, and researchers.

Restoration

Restoring function and aesthetics.

Prevention

Preventing oral diseases.

Advancement

Advancing dental technology.