

# Bridging the Gap Between Oral Health and Overall Health

Bianca Ascenzi, Alexa Arrington, Marleigh Korell, Carly Miller

Mentor: Mrs. Lisa Bress

## Introduction

- Oral health is integral for overall health and quality of life.
- The 2016 Global Burden of disease report indicated that untreated dental caries in adults & children, severe periodontal disease, and complete tooth loss are 4 of the 30 most prevalent diseases worldwide.
- Caries, periodontal disease, and oral cancer remain prevalent amongst Marylanders, yet only 57.9% sought dental services in 2018.

## Objectives

- Evaluate whether non-dental healthcare professional students have oral health included in their educational curriculum or current care protocol.
- Demonstrate the need for more interprofessional team care among all healthcare professions.
- To evaluate non-dental health care provider students' knowledge about oral health care.

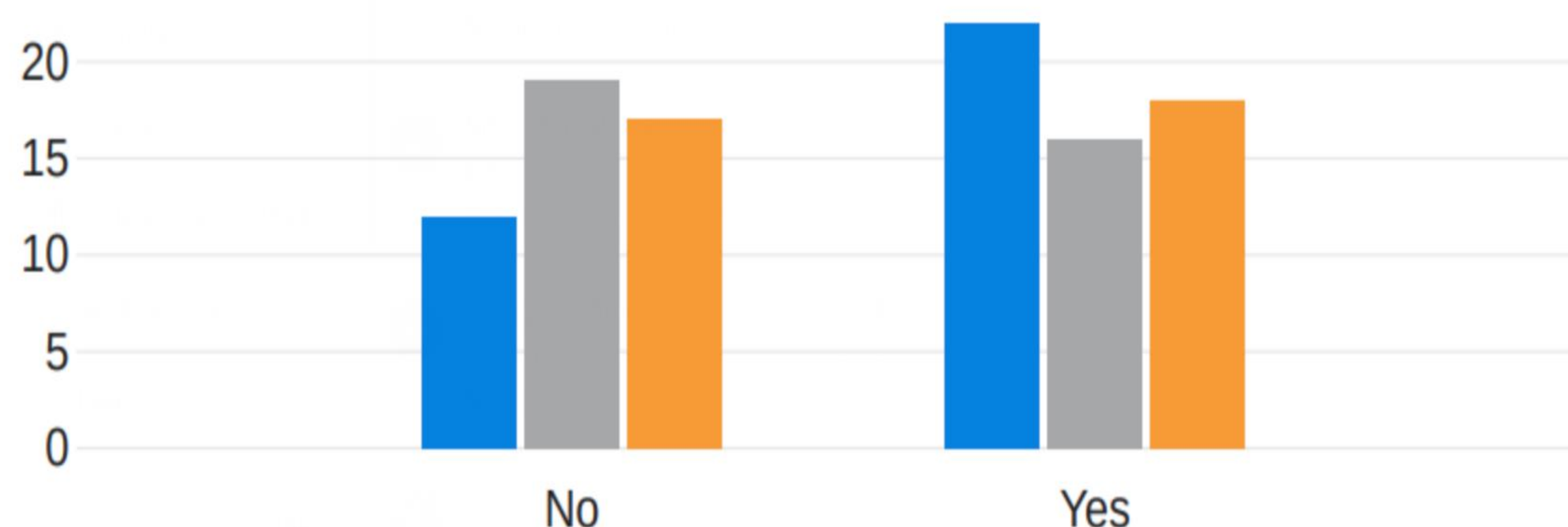


## Methodology

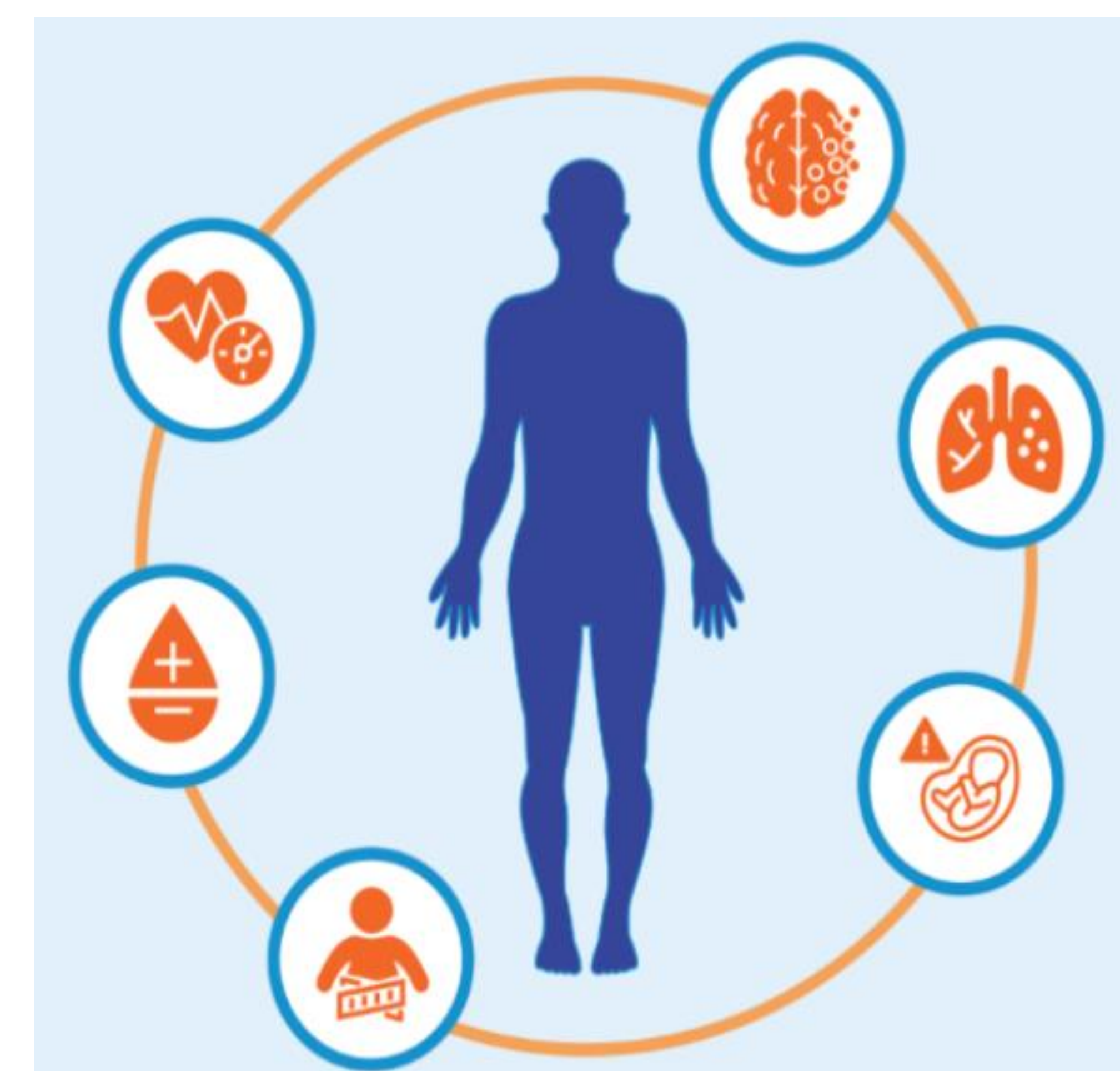
- University of Maryland, Baltimore IRB determined project to be NHR on 11/12/2021.
- A survey was developed via Qualtrics.
- The survey was emailed to UMB's schools of Nursing, school of Medicine, and school of Pharmacy students through students IPE course groups.

## Results

- 34 UMB students completed the survey, most being CNL or BSN nursing students
- $\geq 35\%$  said they do NOT include oral health questions in their risk assessments.
- Almost 55% said they do not include a head and neck cancer screening during an intraoral exam.
- Almost 49% said oral health is NOT apart of their curriculum.
- Almost 48% said they do not include oral health in their health care protocol because they do not know enough information about oral health.



- If you said yes to #4, do you include oral health questions?
- Do you provide a head and neck cancer screening including an intraoral exam?
- Is oral health a part of your curriculum in your program?



## Conclusion

- The results of this study show a lack of interprofessional care and a need for interprofessional collaboration among all healthcare professionals.
- This study demonstrated that oral health is rarely included in health professions curriculum outside dentistry and prevents integrating oral health into overall health care.
- If health care professions outside dentistry included oral health, we could help increase the rate of Marylanders visiting the dentist and help decrease the burden of disease.

## References

- Haber J, Hartnett E, Allen K, et al. Putting the Mouth Back in the Head: HEENT to HEENOT. *American Journal of Public Health*. 2015;105(3):437-441. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2014.302495
- 2019 Annual Oral Health Legislative Report, Health-General Article, Section 13- 2504(b) and HB 70 (Chapter 656 of the Acts of 2009)
- <https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/2021-12/Oral-Health-in-America-Executive-Summary.pdf>