

Effect of a consensus statement on initial treatment for traumatic dental injuries

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate the influence of a consensus statement on dental practitioners' choice of initial treatment for traumatic dental injuries. Dental practitioners working at government dental clinics in eight cluster sample regions of mainland Tanzania were requested to participate in the study; that is, to record the treatment they provided to children aged 1–17 years seeking dental consultation after injury for a period of 12 months. Six months after the beginning of data collection, a consensus statement was introduced. After the dental practitioners received the consensus statement, the correct treatment they provided increased from 51% to 57%. The unnecessary treatments increased from 54% to 59%, while wrong treatments decreased from 55% to 42%. Only a small improvement was observed in the percentage of correct treatments, but there was a slightly significant improvement in the percentage of wrong treatments provided before and after introduction of the consensus statement. We conclude that the consensus statement had a slight influence on the dental practitioners' choice of initial treatment for dental trauma in the desired direction.