



**NURSING & RESIDENTIAL CARE  
HOME ORAL HEALTH POLICY AND  
ACCESS TO DENTAL CARE  
SURVEY  
2006-07**

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## **NURSING & RESIDENTIAL CARE HOME ORAL HEALTH POLICY AND ACCESS TO DENTAL CARE SURVEY, 2006-07**

### **Executive Summary**

#### **Objective**

This document summarises the findings of the first survey of nursing and residential home oral health policy conducted in Wales in 2006/07. The survey is the latest in the series of BASCD co-ordinated surveys which seek to monitor the health of the population and to assess the delivery of dental services. The appended tables constitute the Common Minimum Data Set for 2006-07.

#### **Method**

A series of questions were developed covering arrangements to ensure regular dental care, access to routine and emergency dental care, facilities on site for delivering dental care, residents requiring assistance with oral hygiene and related staff training and whether food offered in the home assumed that residents have dentures or trouble chewing food. The questionnaire was posted to 90% of the home managers in Wales with the remaining 10% to be interviewed face-to-face.

#### **Findings**

The questions used in the questionnaire have identified a number of areas which will be of interest to those commissioning and inspecting services. These include, weaknesses in arrangements for ensuring all residents in nursing homes have suitable assessments on admission, difficulty in accessing both routine and emergency dental care, training issues for staff who are assisting residents with oral hygiene, and assumptions made about the ability of residents to chew food which is affecting the range of food offered.

#### **Conclusion**

This first survey of nursing and residential home policy has highlighted issues which will be of interest to those commissioning, providing and inspecting nursing and residential home care and those commissioning dental services in Wales.

## **Introduction**

This paper summarises the findings of a survey of oral health policy and access to dental care in Nursing and Residential Homes in Wales. It acts as the Common Minimum Data Set for the 2006-07 dental survey in Wales (see Appendix) and a narrative to assist interpretation of the findings.

Not all residents of nursing and residential homes are older people, however a large proportion of the most vulnerable and frail older population are living in these homes. It is known that each cohort of older people are retaining more of their natural teeth than their predecessors. Thus older people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are more likely to have oral care needs than their antecedents, and there is good evidence that they have more complex care needs than previous generations.

At the same time as this is happening there have been changes to the way access to dental care is commissioned from General Dental Practitioners. The previous remuneration system was intended to reward domiciliary care on an equal basis with other dental care with no limits on the number of cases which a dentist could treat. The new contract does not encourage dentists to take on more cases than they treated in the baseline year upon which the contract activities were established. In theory commissioners can commission extra care from either General Dental Practitioners or Community Dental Services, however to date there have been few studies examining the level of need. This paper reports on a survey of policy and access to care which was targeted at home managers. While this report starts to highlight the level of need, future surveys involving examination of residents will be required to provide a more complete picture.

**Method:** All nursing and residential homes in Wales took part in the survey. The target population was drawn from the list held on the Care Standards Inspectorate Wales website. A postal survey questionnaire was the primary vehicle for this survey; however it was supplemented with a 10% face-to-face sample in order to validate the responses obtained by the postal survey.

A series of questions were developed covering arrangements to ensure regular dental care, access to routine and emergency dental care, facilities on site for delivering dental care, residents requiring assistance with oral hygiene and related staff training and whether food offered in the home assumed that residents have dentures or trouble chewing food.

**Response rate:** Overall, there were 957 valid responses out of a target population of 1207 homes, culminating in a 79% response rate. 834 were surveyed by postal questionnaire (a 78.8% response rate: 834/1058) and 123 were interviewed (a 96.9% response rate: 123/127).

70.3% of all respondents were managers of residential homes; 9.2% were managers of nursing homes and the remaining 19.4% were managers of dual purpose nursing/residential homes (Table 1).

**Table 1 Home type**

<b>Bed type</b>	<b>number</b>	<b>%</b>
1 or more residential and no nursing beds	673	70.3
1 or more nursing beds and no residential	88	9.2
Both nursing and residential beds	186	19.4
	957	

**POLICY****ENSURING NEW RESIDENTS OBTAIN ROUTINE DENTAL CARE****Presence of Natural Teeth**

Across Wales, the majority of nursing/residential care home managers (79.3%, Table 2) said that new residents were asked on admission whether they have some natural teeth and that this was part of a written care plan. This ranged from 93.1% (27/29) for homes in Flintshire Local Health Board (LHB) to 65.2% (15/23) for homes within Monmouthshire LHB (Appendix A.1).

**Table 2 Questions relating to new residents**

	<b>Yes as part of a written care plan</b>	<b>Yes verbally</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>
Qn 1. Are new residents asked on admission whether they have some natural teeth?	79.3 (759)	12.3 (118)	7.4 (71)	0.9 (9)
Qn 2. Are new residents asked on admission whether they have dentures?	82.4 (789)	11.6 (111)	4.8 (46)	1.1 (11)
Qn 3. Are new residents asked on admission when they last had a dental check-up?	44.3 (424)	18.3 (175)	35.4% (339)	2.0 (19)
Qn 4. Are new residents asked on admission whether they have a dentist?	55.6 (532)	18.7 (179)	22.5 (215)	3.2 (31)
Qn 5. Are new residents asked on admission whether they want to have a dental appointment arranged?	43.2 (413)	19.9 (190)	34.7 (332)	2.3 (22)
Qn 6. Are new residents asked on admission whether they have any dental problems?	52.8 (505)	18.2 (174)	27.8 (266)	1.3 (12)

**Presence of Dentures**

Similarly, the majority of managers (82.4%, Table 2) said that new residents were asked on admission whether they had dentures and that this was part of a written care plan. This characteristic ranged from 95% (19/20) for homes in Bridgend to 65.4% (17/26) for homes within Blaenau Gwent (Appendix A.2).

### **Date of Last Dental Check**

Just under two thirds of nursing/residential home managers said that new residents were asked on admission when they last had a dental check-up. 44.3% indicated that this was part of a written care plan whilst 18.3% stated that this was done *verbally*, on an informal basis. There was considerable variance in responses given by LHB, in Flintshire 58.6% (17/29) of managers said that this question formed part of a written care plan compared with 19.4% of managers in the Vale of Glamorgan (6/31, Appendix A.3). It is important to note that an additional 32.3% of managers in the latter LHB (10/31) said that new residents were asked *verbally* whether they had had a check-up.

### **New Residents Existing Dentist**

55.6% of respondents said that new residents were asked on admission whether they have a dentist and that this formed part of a written care plan, a further 18.7% stated that this was done *verbally*. Once again there was considerable variance in responses given by LHB, the percentage of managers indicating that this question formed part of a written care plan ranged from 69% (20/29) in Flintshire to 34.9% (15/43) in Rhondda Cynon Taf (Appendix A.4).

### **Offer to Arrange a Dental Check for New Residents**

43.2% of respondents said that new residents were asked on admission whether they wanted to have a dental appointment arranged and that this formed part of a written care plan, a further 19.9% stated that this was done *verbally*. There was considerable variance in responses given by LHB, the percentage of managers indicating that this question formed part of a written care plan ranged from 63.2% (24/38) in Neath Port Talbot to 23.1% (6/26) in Ceredigion (Appendix A.5).

### **Asking New Residents If They Have Dental Problems**

52.8% of respondents said that new residents asked on admission whether they have any dental problems and that this formed part of a written care plan, a further 18.2% stated that this was done *verbally*. There was considerable variance in responses given by LHB, the percentage of managers indicating that this question formed part of a written care plan ranged from 75.9% (22/29) in Flintshire to 30.8% (8/26) in Ceredigion (Appendix A.6).

### **Summary Of Findings For New Residents**

On reviewing the responses by LHB it was evident that Blaenau Gwent consistently came out as *poor* in terms of arrangements for new residents, it was ranked 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> (when ranked according to *Yes as a part of a written care plan*) for the six questions presented in Table 2. Whereas Flintshire was consistently *performing well* in terms of these indicators, being ranked as 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> for the same six questions.

## **ROUTINE DENTAL CARE FOR EXISTING RESIDENTS**

Almost half of those surveyed (48%) stated that there was a mechanism to ensure planned regular dental check-ups for existing residents; 41.2% indicated that this formed part of a written care plan. An additional 33.9% stated that dental check-ups were arranged on request or when residents had symptoms (Table 3). There was considerable variation in responses by LHB for this question, for example the percentage respondents stating *Yes - as part of a written care plan*, ranged from 81.6% (31/38) in Neath Port Talbot to 17.2% (5/29) in Flintshire (Appendix A.7).

**Table 3 For existing residents is there a mechanism to ensure planned regular dental check-ups?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>% (n)</b>
Yes as part of a written care plan	41.2 (394)
Yes, verbally	6.7 (64)
On request or when resident has symptoms	33.9 (324)
No	16.4 (157)
Don't know	1.9 (18)

## **SUPPORT FOR RESIDENTS IN CLEANING TEETH AND DENTURES**

### **Awareness Of Residents Having Natural Teeth And Dentures**

77% and 73% of nursing/residential home managers stated that they knew how many of their residents have natural teeth and how many of their residents have dentures respectively (Table 4). There was considerable variation in responses by LHB for these questions. For example the percentage respondents stating that they knew how many of their residents had natural teeth ranged from 93.3% (14/15) in Merthyr Tydfil to 50% (13/26) in Blaenau Gwent (Appendix A.8). Whilst the percentage of respondents stating that they knew how many of their residents had dentures ranged from 100% (15/15) in Merthyr Tydfil to 50% (9/18) in Torfaen (Appendix A.9).

**Table 4 Manager awareness of residents' oral health**

	Yes % (n)	No % (n)	No reply % (n)	Don't know % (n)
Do you know how many residents have some natural teeth?	76.8 (735)	16.8 (161)	6.4 (61)	
Do you know how many residents have dentures?	73.2 (701)	19.4 (186)	7.3 (70)	
Do your staff receive training in OH issues?	55.8 (534)	41.8 (400)	1.4 (13)	1.0 (10)
Do any of your residents routinely receive assistance in cleaning teeth or dentures?	88.2 (844)	9.7 (93)	1.6 (15)	0.5 (5)

A cross-tabulation of the responses for these two questions highlighted that 70.6% (676) of managers answered positively to both; i.e. they knew how many of their residents had natural teeth and how many had dentures. Of greater concern 14.4% (138) answered negatively to both questions; i.e. that they did not know how many of their residents had natural teeth or how many had dentures.

**Table 5 Percentage respondents who indicated that residents routinely receive assistance in cleaning teeth or dentures but whose staff did not receive training in OH issues**

	Total n	Number	% of staff not trained
Torfaen	18	3	16.7
Carmarthenshire	73	13	17.8
Flintshire	29	6	20.7
Blaenau Gwent	26	6	23.1
Monmouthshire	23	6	26.1
Merthyr Tydfil	15	4	26.7
Conwy	89	24	27.0
Isle of Anglesey	38	11	28.9
Cardiff	57	17	29.8
Caerphilly	52	16	30.8
Swansea	80	25	31.3
Gwynedd	56	20	35.7
Wrexham	36	13	36.1
Denbighshire	72	27	37.5
Vale of Glamorgan	31	12	38.7
Newport	33	13	39.4
Pembrokeshire	55	23	41.8
Rhondda Cynon Taf	43	18	41.9
Neath Port Talbot	38	18	47.4
Powys	47	23	48.9
Ceredigion	26	13	50.0
Bridgend	20	11	55.0
<b>Wales</b>	<b>957</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>33.6</b>

### **Support for Cleaning and Staff Training**

55.8% (534) of managers stated that their staff received training in oral hygiene. Whilst 88.2% (844) indicated that their residents routinely received assistance in cleaning teeth or dentures. It is noteworthy that 33.6% (322) of managers said that their staff did not receive oral hygiene training yet their residents routinely received assistance in cleaning teeth/dentures (Table 5).

## **ACCESS TO DENTAL CARE**

### **First Port of Call for Access to Dental Care**

The Community Dental Service and the General Dental Service predominated as the two main providers of dental care, with 81.4% (779) and 76.6% (733) stating that one of these two services would be their first port of call for routine and emergency care respectively (Table 6).

Across the Principality there was considerable variation associated with the split between Community Dental Service and General Dental Service as dental care provider. For example 86.2% of respondents in Flintshire LHB sought routine dental care from the Community Dental Service compared with 13.8% from the General Dental Service. Whereas, only 13.2% of respondents in Neath Port Talbot LHB stated that their routine dental care was obtained from the Community Dental Service compared with 81.6% from the General Dental Service (Appendix A.12). This variation persisted when accessing emergency dental care (Appendix A.13).

**Table 6 Dental service used for routine and emergency care**

	<b>Routine care</b>	<b>Emergency care</b>
Community Dental Service	41.3 (395)	42.4 (406)
General Dental Service	40.1 (384)	34.2 (327)
Emergency Dental Service	0.2 (2)	1.9 (18)
Dental hospital	0.6 (6)	0.8 (8)
NHS direct	2.2 (21)	4.7 (45)
Private	1.5 (14)	1.4 (13)
Don't know	8.4 (80)	8.8 (84)
Not coded	5.7 (55)	5.9 (56)

### **Difficulties in Accessing Dental Care**

For Wales as a whole 39.9% and 30.3% of respondents indicated that they had experienced at least some difficulties in accessing routine and emergency care respectively (Table 7). 23.8% and 18% stated that they always experienced difficulties when accessing routine and emergency care. Respondents from Rhondda Cynon Taff, Cardiff and Merthyr Tydfil local health boards appeared to have few problems in accessing either routine or emergency care (Appendix, A.14, A.15). Whereas respondents from Ceredigion, Wrexham and Pembrokeshire appeared to experience difficulties when trying to access both routine and emergency dental care (Appendix, A.14, A.15). For example, 34.6% (9/26) of respondents in Ceredigion stated that they always had problems accessing emergency care compared with 0% (0/15) in Merthyr Tydfil (Appendix, A.15).

**Table 7 Difficulties accessing routine and emergency care**

	<b>Routine care</b>	<b>Emergency care</b>
Yes, always	23.8 (228)	18.0 (172)
Yes, occasionally	16.1 (154)	12.3 (118)
No	56.3 (539)	60.6 (580)
Don't know	3.8 (36)	9.1 (87)

**FACILITIES FOR PROVISION OF DENTAL CARE ON-SITE**

These questions covered whether the home has a dental chair which could allow some care to be provided using portable dental equipment, access to a room with a seat and sink which can support limited aspects of care such as impression taking for dentures, and space for a large van such as a mobile dental unit to be parked on-site.

**Table 8 Presence of facilities for providing dental services in situ**

	Yes % (n)	No % (n)	No reply % (n)
A dental chair or dental suite on site	0.9 (9)	98.6 (944)	0.4 (4)
Space for a chair located close to a sink	74.7 (715)	23.3 (223)	2.0 (19)
Parking space for large van	83.0 (794)	15.5 (148)	1.6 (15)

**Dental Chair On-site**

Across Wales there were nine nursing/residential homes that had a dental chair or dental suite on site; these were located in Bridgend, Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Swansea, Isle of Anglesey and Pembrokeshire LHBs (Tables 8 and 9; Appendix A.16).

**Table 9 LHB location of dental chair/suite**

LHB	Number (total n)	%
Bridgend	1 (20)	5.0
Blaenau Gwent	1 (26)	3.8
Caerphilly	2 (52)	3.8
Swansea	3 (80)	3.8
Isle of Anglesey	1 (38)	2.6
Pembrokeshire	1 (55)	1.8
Wales	9 (957)	0.9

### **Room With a Chair and a Sink**

A limited range of denture work can be undertaken in a room with a chair and a sink. Three-quarters of nursing/residential home managers stated that there was space for a chair located close to a sink (Table 8).

### **Parking Space for a Large Van**

More than 4 out of 5 managers reported that the home had a parking space for large van (83.0%) indicating that community dental services may be able to provide care using mobile dental surgery vehicles (Table 8).

### **Residents Who Will Need Care Provided in a Dental Survey**

Not all dental care can be provided on-site so some residents will need to access a dental surgery for some or all aspects of their care. However it is important to highlight that for three LHBs (Torfaen [16.7%], Caerphilly[17.3%] and Merthyr Tydfil [26.7%]) over 15% of nursing home managers stated that they did not have space for either a chair near a sink or parking for a van (Table 10). Thus for the residents of these homes all dental care will need to be provided by transporting the resident to a dental surgery.

**Table 10 LHBs who had no space for a chair located close to a sink or for parking a large van**

Local Health Board	total n	no space for a chair located close to a sink or for parking a large van	
		Number	%
Carmarthenshire	73	3	4.1
Rhondda Cynon Taf	43	2	4.7
Isle of Anglesey	38	2	5.3
Conwy	89	5	5.6
Denbighshire	72	4	5.6
Swansea	80	5	6.3
Powys	47	3	6.4
Vale of Glamorgan	31	2	6.5
Flintshire	29	2	6.9
Cardiff	57	5	8.8
Gwynedd	56	5	8.9
Newport	33	3	9.1
Bridgend	20	2	10.0
Pembrokeshire	55	6	10.9
Torfaen	18	3	16.7
Caerphilly	52	9	17.3
Merthyr Tydfil	15	4	26.7
<b>WALES</b>	<b>957</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>6.8</b>

## **NURSING AND RESIDENTIAL HOME DIET**

Respondents were asked two questions relating to diet and nutrition. The first “What is on the menu for lunch today?” has proven very difficult to analyse because of the wide range of responses and as answers were “open-ended”, there was little consistency in the categories reported. For the main course for example, casseroles (68 citations), stews (36 citations), cottage and shepherds pie (35 citations) featured, but pasta dishes (29 citations) and curries (22 citations) also predominated, reflecting the popularity of contemporary dishes with the older generation.

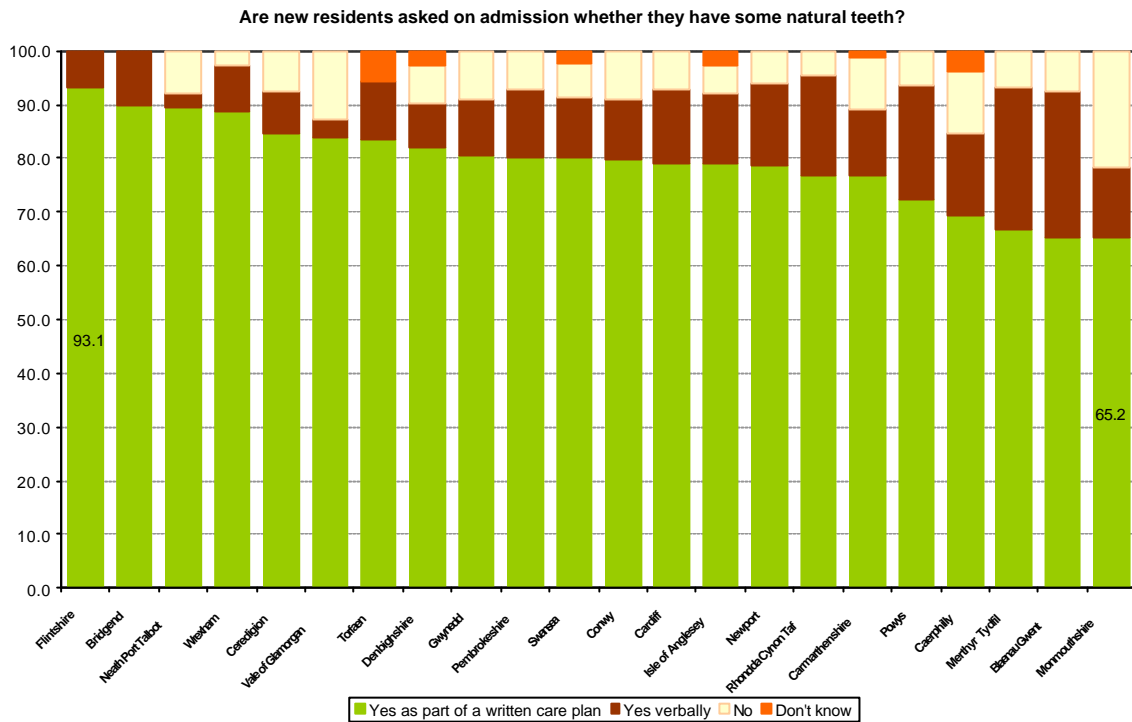
For the final question “Do your menus assume that all residents have dentures or trouble chewing?” 28.4% (272) of managers admitted that this was the case. This ranged from 15.3%% (11/72) for homes in Denbighshire to 50% (9/18) for homes within Torfaen (Appendix, A.19).

## **CONCLUSION**

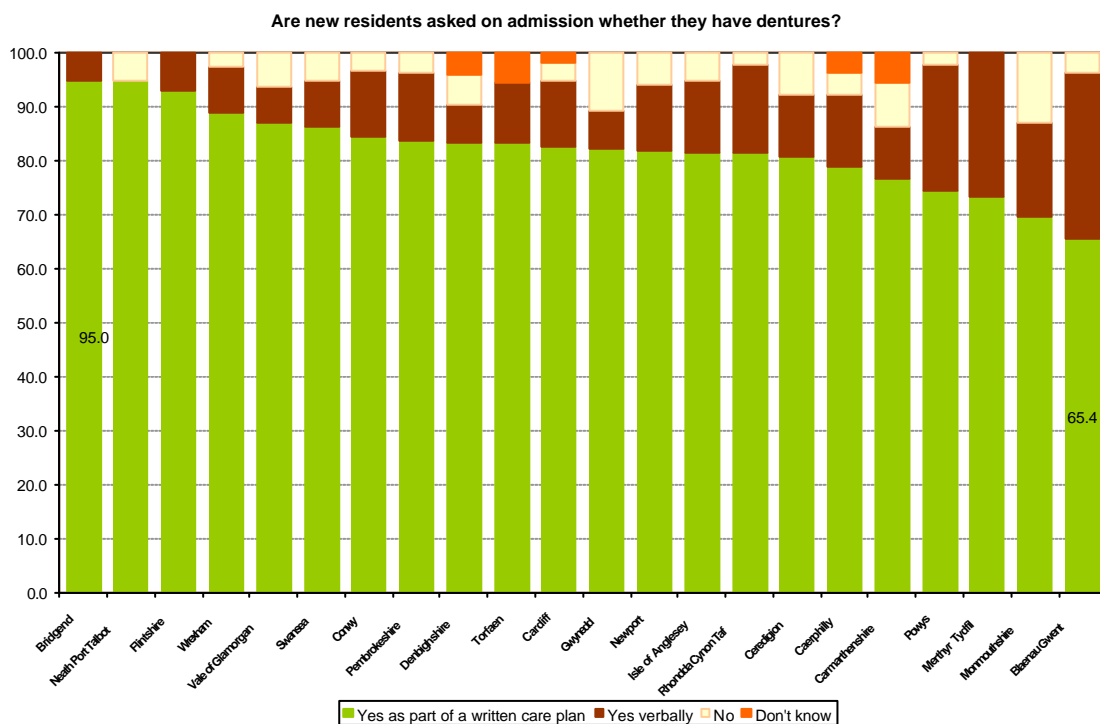
This first survey of nursing and residential home policy has highlighted issues which will be of interest to those commissioning, providing and inspecting nursing and residential home care and those commissioning dental services in Wales.

**Appendix**

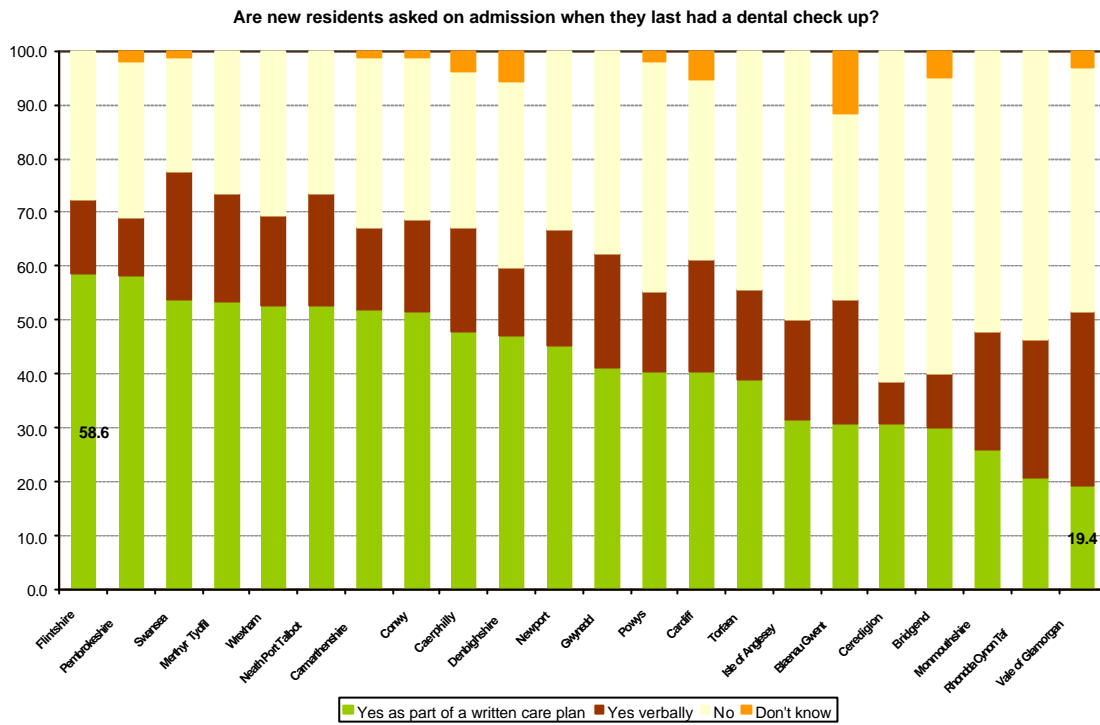
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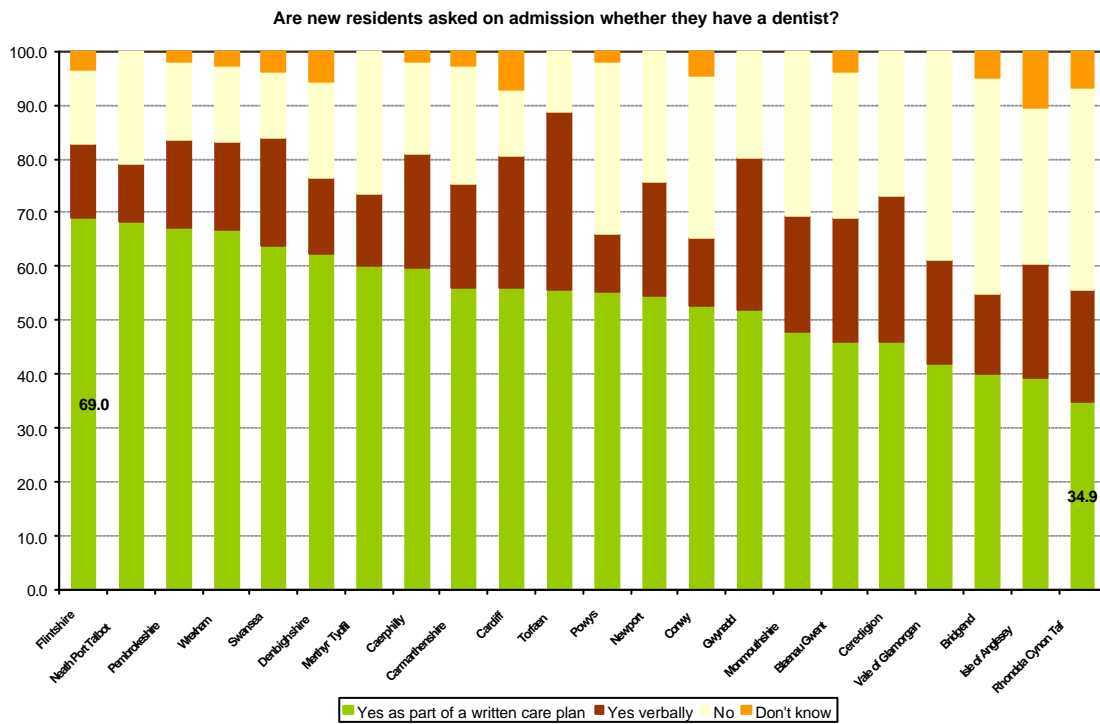
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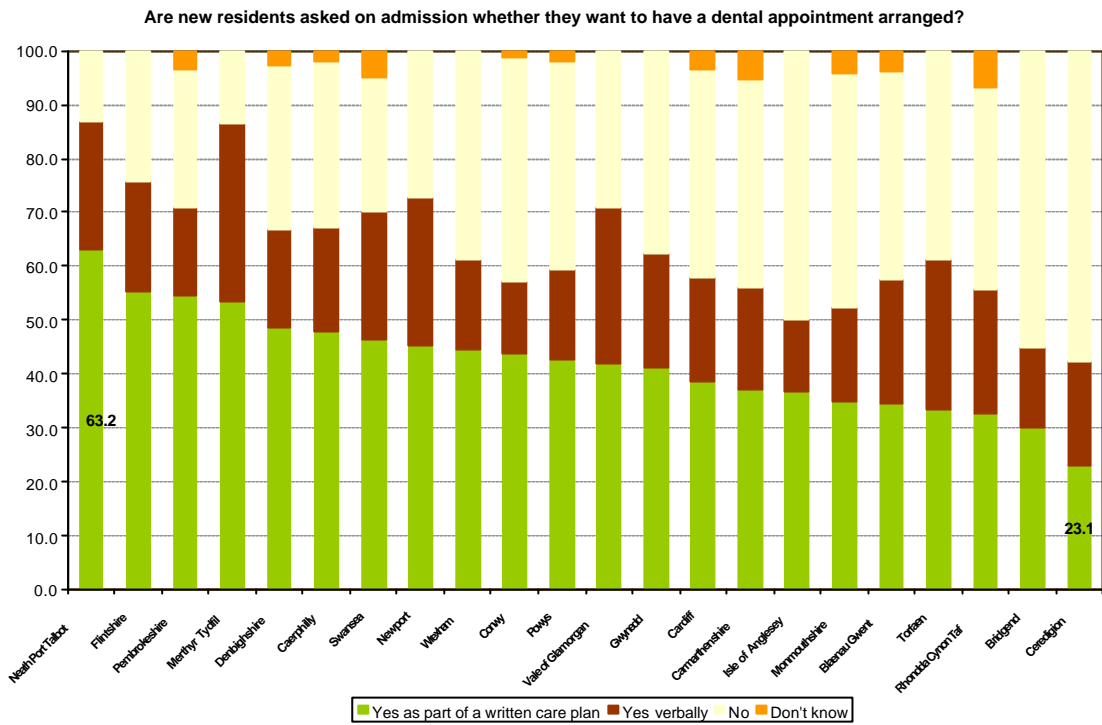
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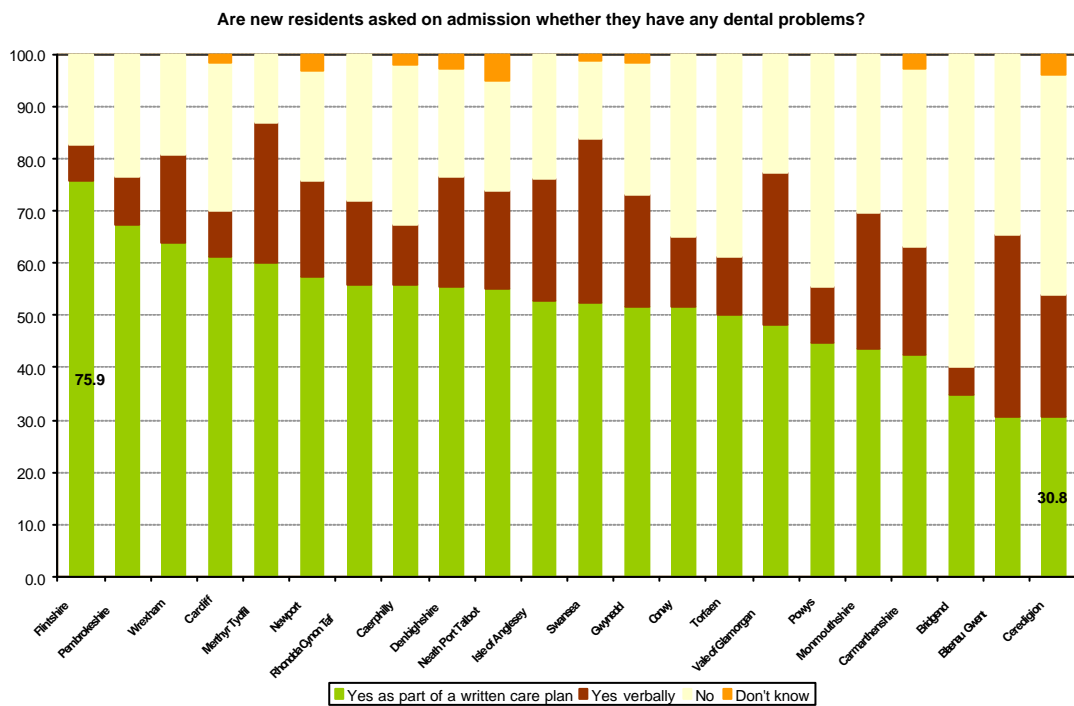
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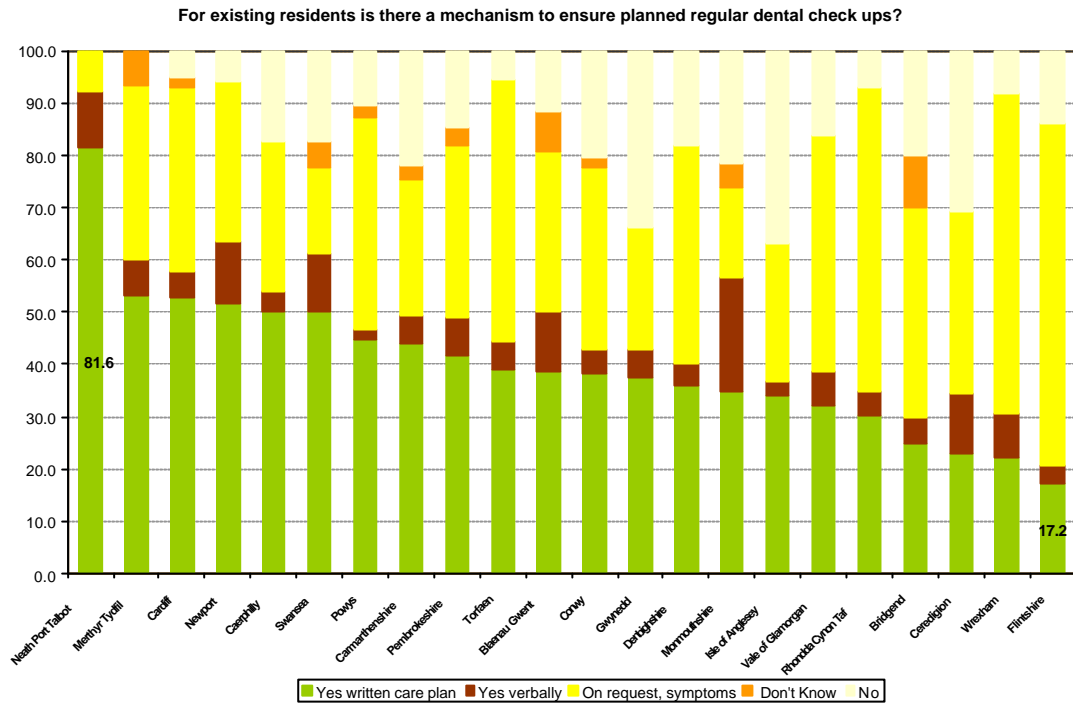
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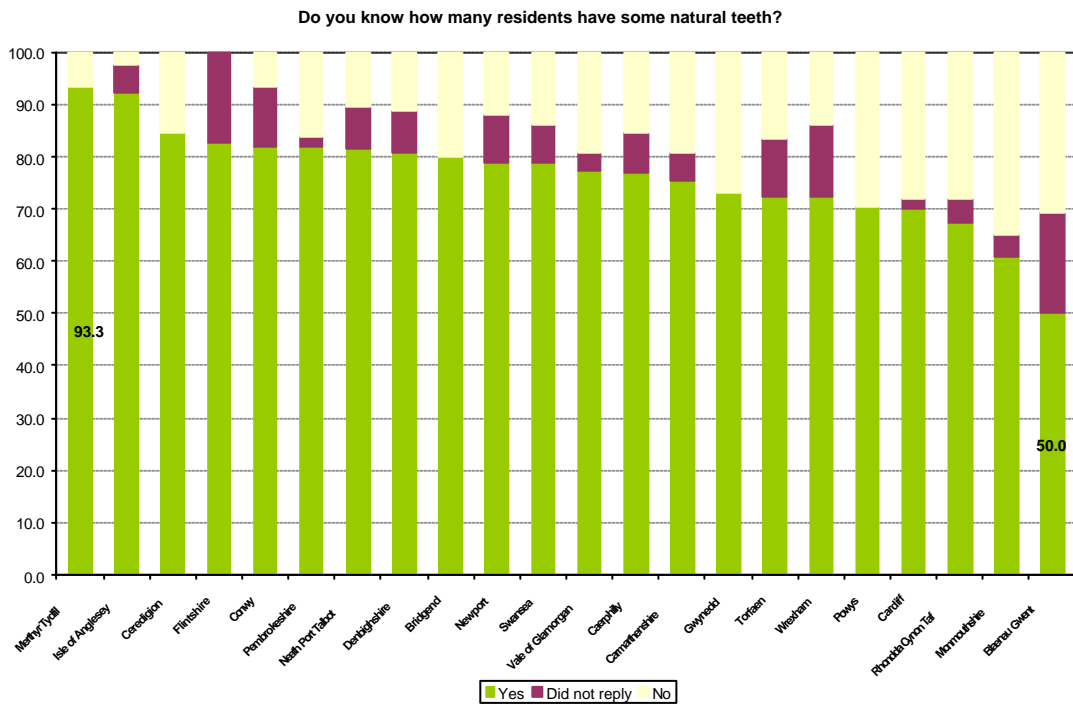
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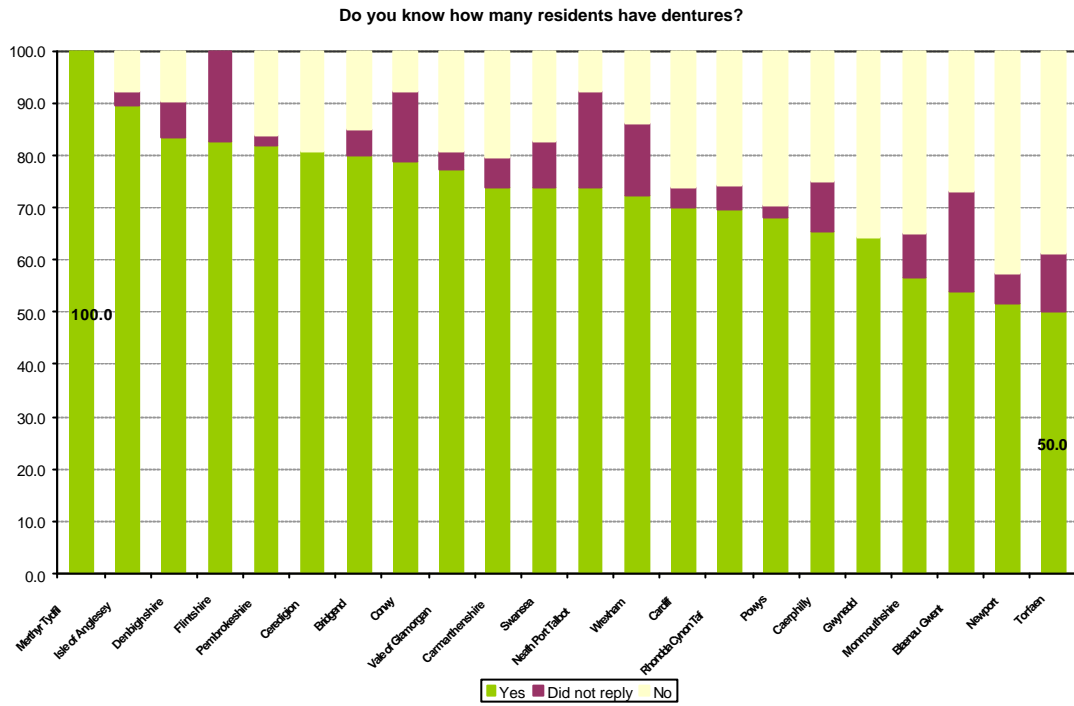
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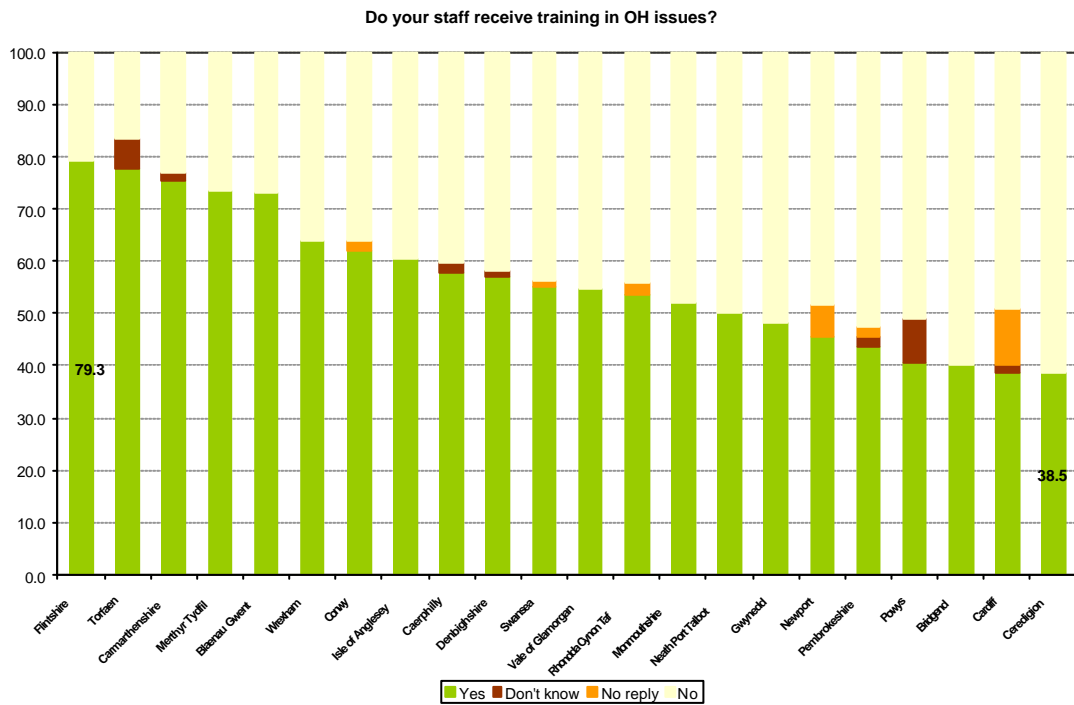
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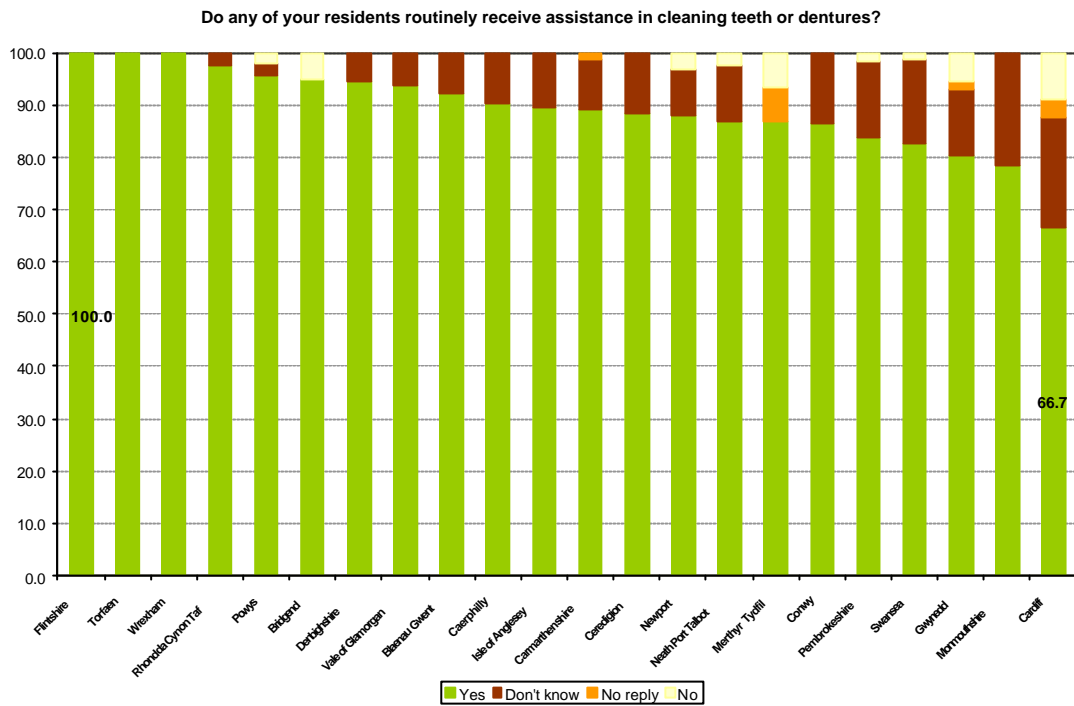
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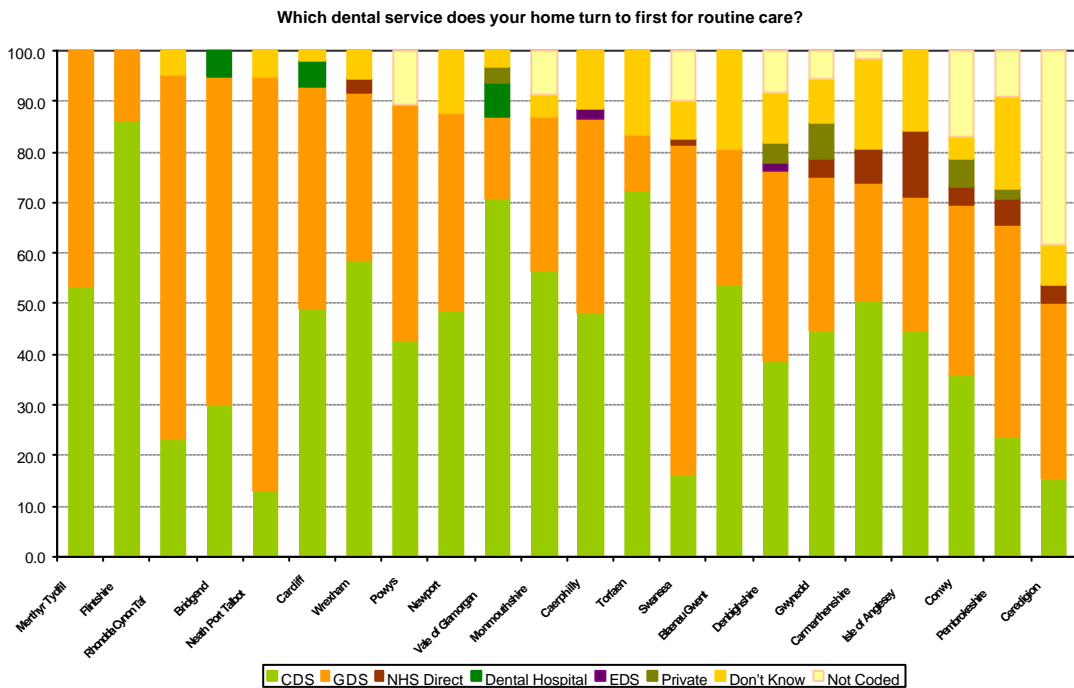
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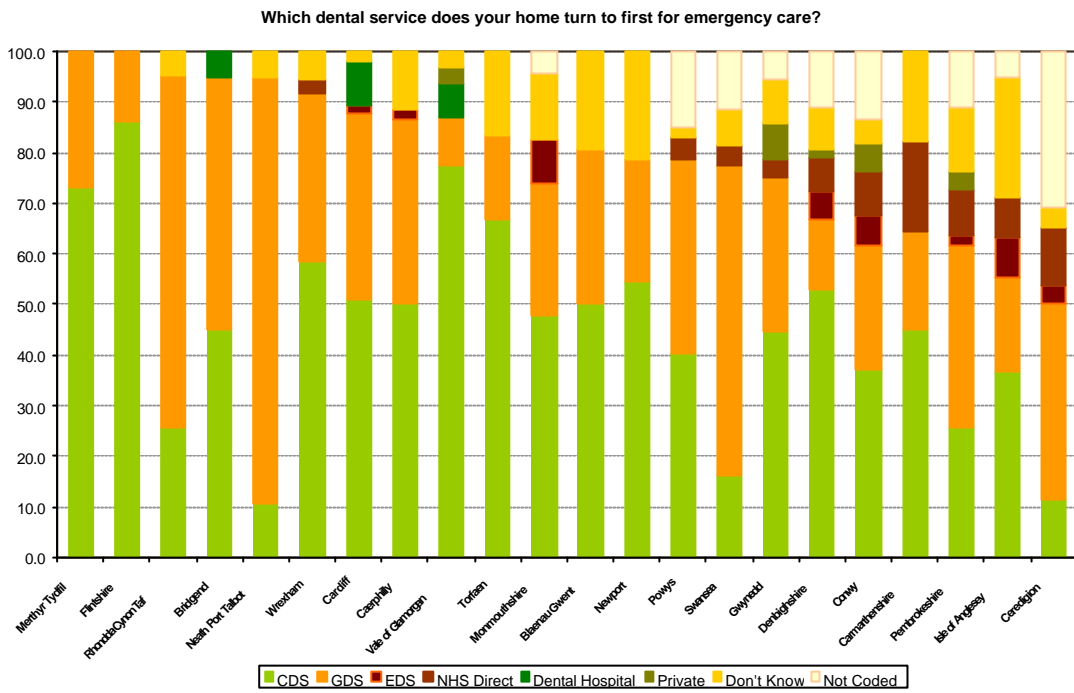
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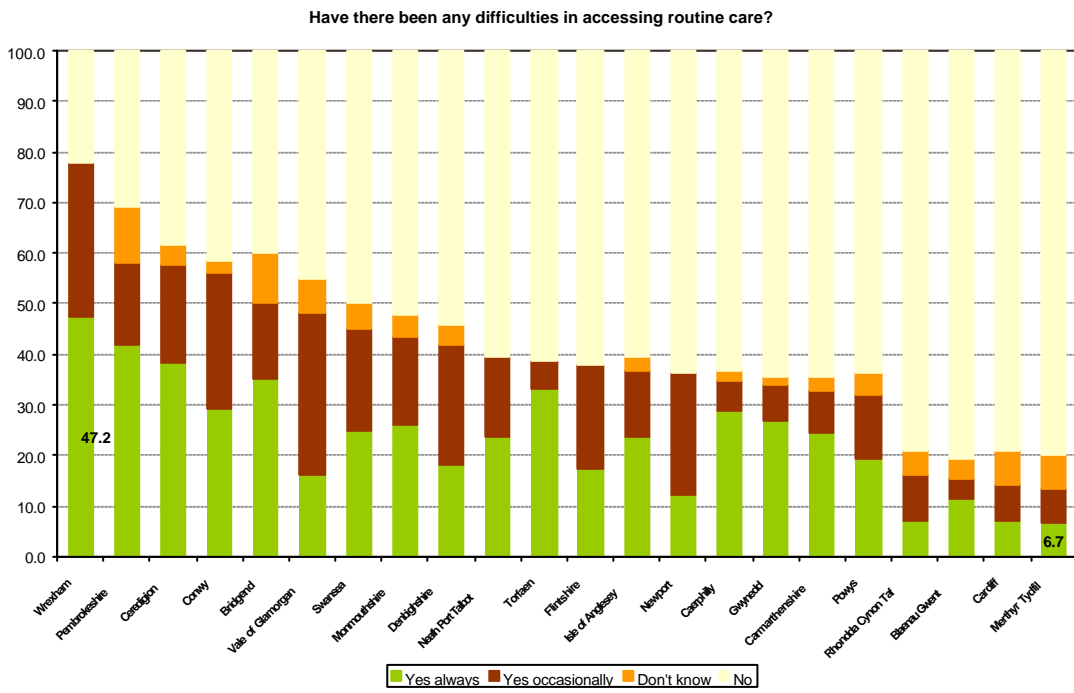
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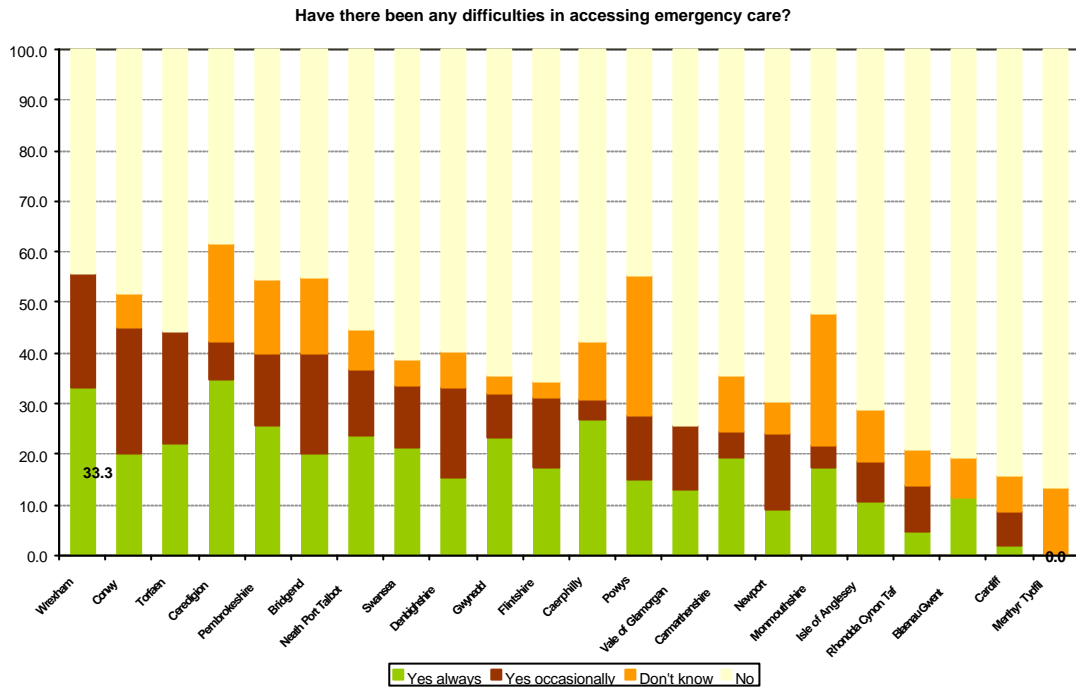
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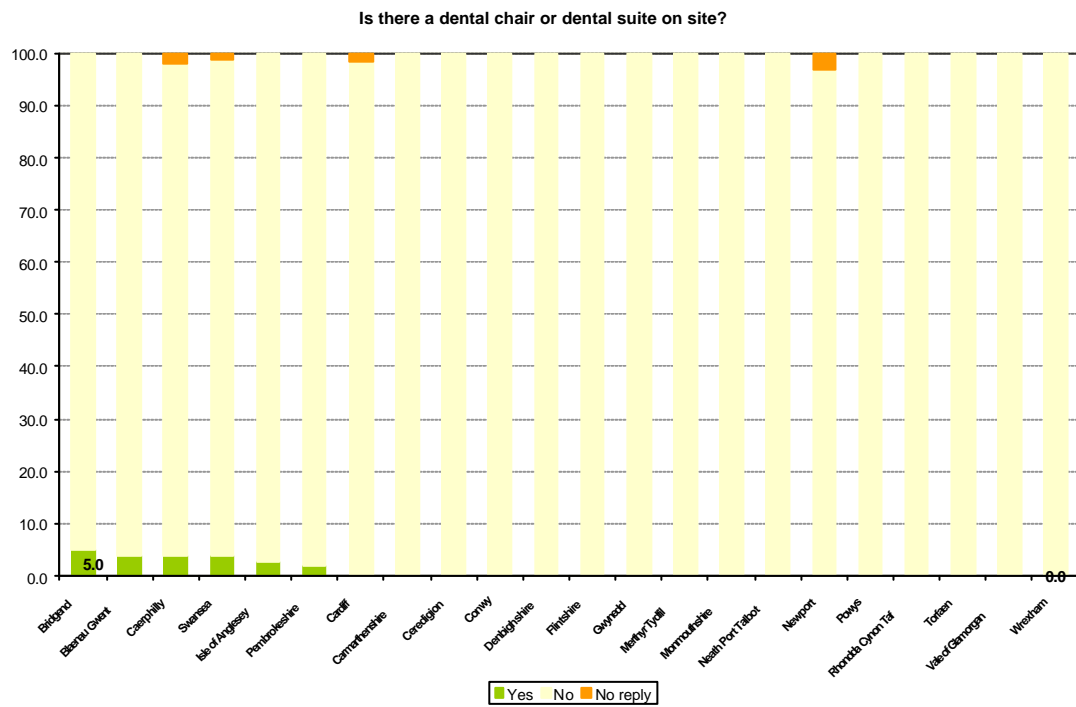
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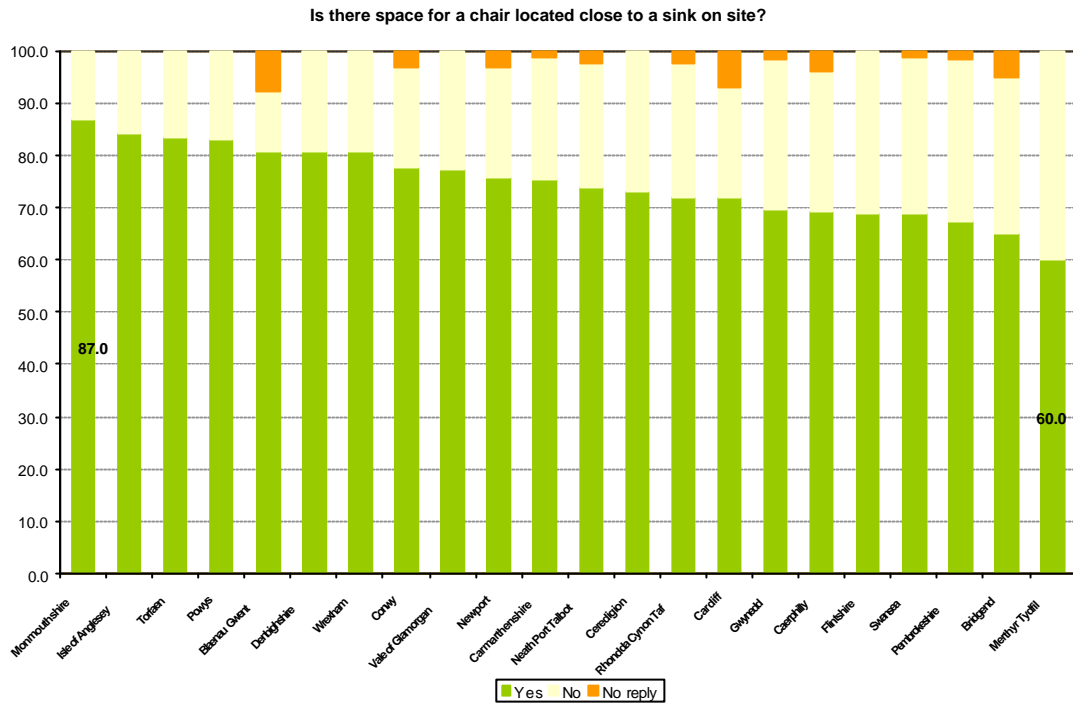
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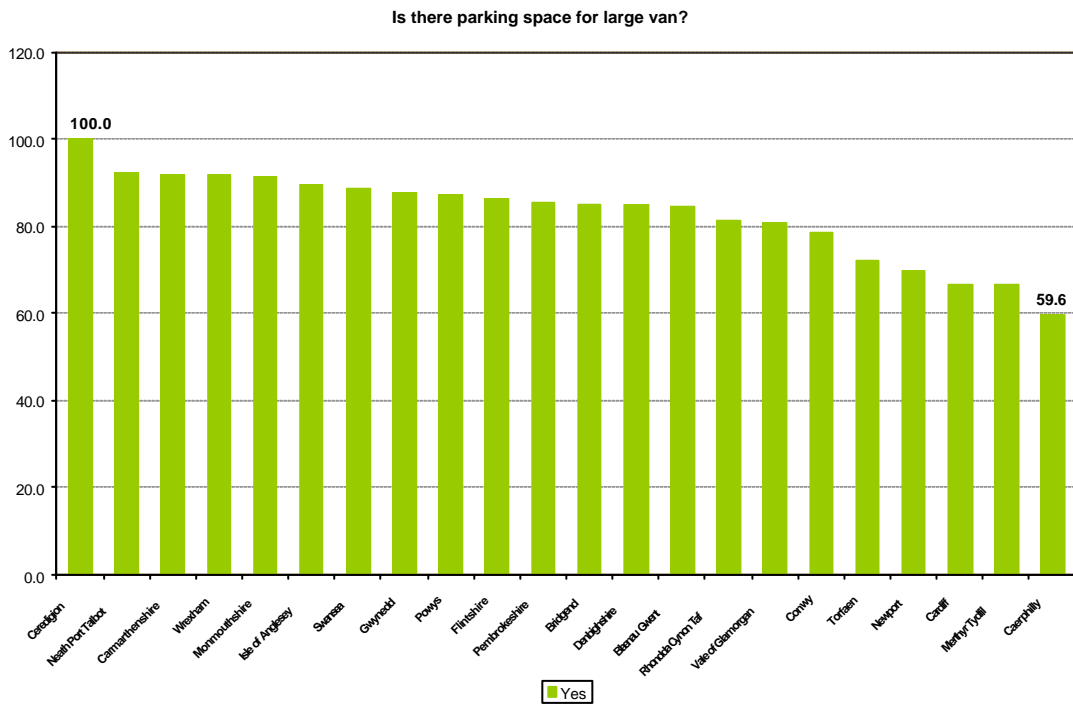
**A.16**



**A.17**



**A.18**



**A.19**

