

Dentists' Attitudes in Adopting Sustainable Practices in Hungarian Private and Public Clinics

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Abstract

Modern bioethics has advanced medicine by establishing ethical principles that make it more patient-centered and just. However, as medicine has become a major contributor to the environmental crisis—owing to its substantial reliance on materials, energy, and transportation—it must address responsibilities beyond individual well-being.

Given dentistry's heavy dependence on resources, we aimed to evaluate dentists' attitudes toward implementing more sustainable alternatives at private and public clinics, examine how they perceive their own practices, and explore the challenges they report in adopting sustainable changes.

Data was collected via structured observation and structured interviews among a sample of 40 Hungarian dentists, eliciting their preferences on the dimensions of material usage, digital technologies, and preventive medicine. Observation data was analyzed with summary statistics per dimension for each dentist; the qualitative content analysis of interview data was visualized with the Qualitative Network Approach.

We examined readily available alternatives that do not compromise the quality of care. Insights gained are valuable for both policymakers and the development of professional guidelines, as they highlight practices dentists are already embracing and areas where improvements can be suggested.