

Our Health Counts Kenora

An inclusive, community-driven health survey for Indigenous peoples in Kenora and related homelands

Adult Oral Health

Indigenous adults and children have unequal access to preventative care and dental services compared to the general Canadian population.^{1,2} Anti-Indigenous racism in oral healthcare, socio-economic disparities, inequitable access to nutrient-rich food and Non-Insured Health Benefits, and lack of private insurance contribute to an increase in adverse oral health such as tooth pain, cavities, and baby bottle tooth decay as well as increased likelihood of emergency visits to a dentist.^{2,3,4} The oral health of parents is highly linked to the oral health of their children.⁵

50% of Indigenous

adults in Kenora and related homelands rate their oral health as good, very good, or excellent.

Vs.

85% of Canadian

adults rate their oral health as good, very good, or excellent.¹

38% of

Indigenous adults had seen a dentist less than 1 year ago.



Meanwhile, **3/4** of

Canadian adults had seen a dentist less than 1 year ago.¹

56% of Indigenous adults in Kenora and related homelands go to the **dentist less than once a year or only for emergency care.**

Almost 2/5 of Indigenous adults in Kenora and related homelands indicate having experienced gum or teeth pain/discomfort sometimes or often in the past month.



Reasons for not seeing a dentist regularly:

Have not gotten around to it

Fear (e.g., painful, embarrassing, finding something wrong)

Personal or family responsibilities

Policy Implications

We call on the City of Kenora, provincial, and federal governments to work in partnership with Indigenous peoples living in urban and related homelands and urban-based Indigenous organizations to:

- Mandate anti-Indigenous racism policies at a systems level and Indigenous Cultural Safety training in oral healthcare settings. Education and oral health promotional materials should be culturally safe and relevant.^{2,3}
- Address barriers to accessing oral healthcare, thereby reducing the need for emergency oral care.⁴
- Address barriers in accessing programs and services, including culturally relevant public health and health promotion programs to address oral health.
- Continue to advocate for and support accessible, free dental services and increase availability of expanded dental health insurance coverage or oral health clinics for Indigenous people, including but not limited to Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) coverage.³
- Support the development and implementation of Indigenous-led ways to educate and deliver dental programs, including using existing programs and providers through links with municipal programs, primary care providers and school programs.

MMIWG Report Calls For Justice 3.2⁶: We call upon all governments to provide adequate, stable, equitable, and ongoing funding for Indigenous-centred and community-based health and wellness services that are accessible and culturally appropriate, and meet the health and wellness needs of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA people.

Definitions Indigenous adults: persons 15 years or older self-identifying as Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit), living or using services in the City of Kenora

Sources 1. Canadian Dental Association (2017); 2. Native Women's Association of Canada (2023); 3. Hussain (2022); 4. Mehra et al. (2020) ; 5. Hiratsuka et al. (2019); 6. MMIWG Calls for Justice Report (2019).

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Citation Iannace, J., Snyder, M., McConkey, S., Brar, R., & Smylie, J. (2024). Our Health Counts Kenora: Oral Health [Fact sheet].

Population based estimates were created using respondent driven sampling

Our Health Counts Kenora: Community Health Assessment by the People, for the People



Our Health Counts Kenora

Adult Oral Health Reference

Our Health Counts Kenora is a comprehensive and inclusive health survey developed by community, for community, and is part of the largest Indigenous population health study in Canada.

Participants were selected using respondent-driven sampling, a statistical method which builds on the existing strengths of social networks and kin systems to recruit Indigenous people living in the city.

Survey Question	RDS Prevalence Estimate (95% Confidence Interval)
In general, would you say the health of your teeth and mouth is...	
Excellent, very good, or good	49.7% (39.9, 59.5)
Fair or poor	50.3% (40.5, 60.1)
In the past month how often have you had any pain or discomfort in your teeth or gums?	
Often or sometimes	39.4% (30.6, 48.2)
Rarely/ Never	60.6% (51.8, 69.4)
When was the last time that you went to the dentist?	
Less than one year ago	38.2% (29.0, 47.3)
1 year ago or more, or never	60.3% (51.0, 69.5)
Don't know	1.5% (0.2, 2.9)
Do you usually visit the dentist...	
About once a year or more than once a year for check-ups	43.9% (32.6, 55.1)
Less than once a year for check-ups or only for emergency care	55.9% (44.6, 67.2)

