

# Examining Barriers to Dental Care for Underserved Populations in Pierce and King County



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## Introduction

Many communities in Washington State, specifically Pierce and King county live without access to basic dental care. Oral health has been viewed as the window to one's overall health. Poor oral health has been shown to have been associated with an illness like cardiovascular disease, birth complications, specific types of cancer, dementia, and many more. This research is to portray the types of populations that are currently underserved, which include those who are uninsured, underinsured, unhoused, undocumented, refugees, immigrants, and those with mental health and substance dependency disorders. The purpose of this research is to be able to get a better understanding of the needs of the various population who are experiencing dental barriers or are in dental deserts.

Inside Dental Van



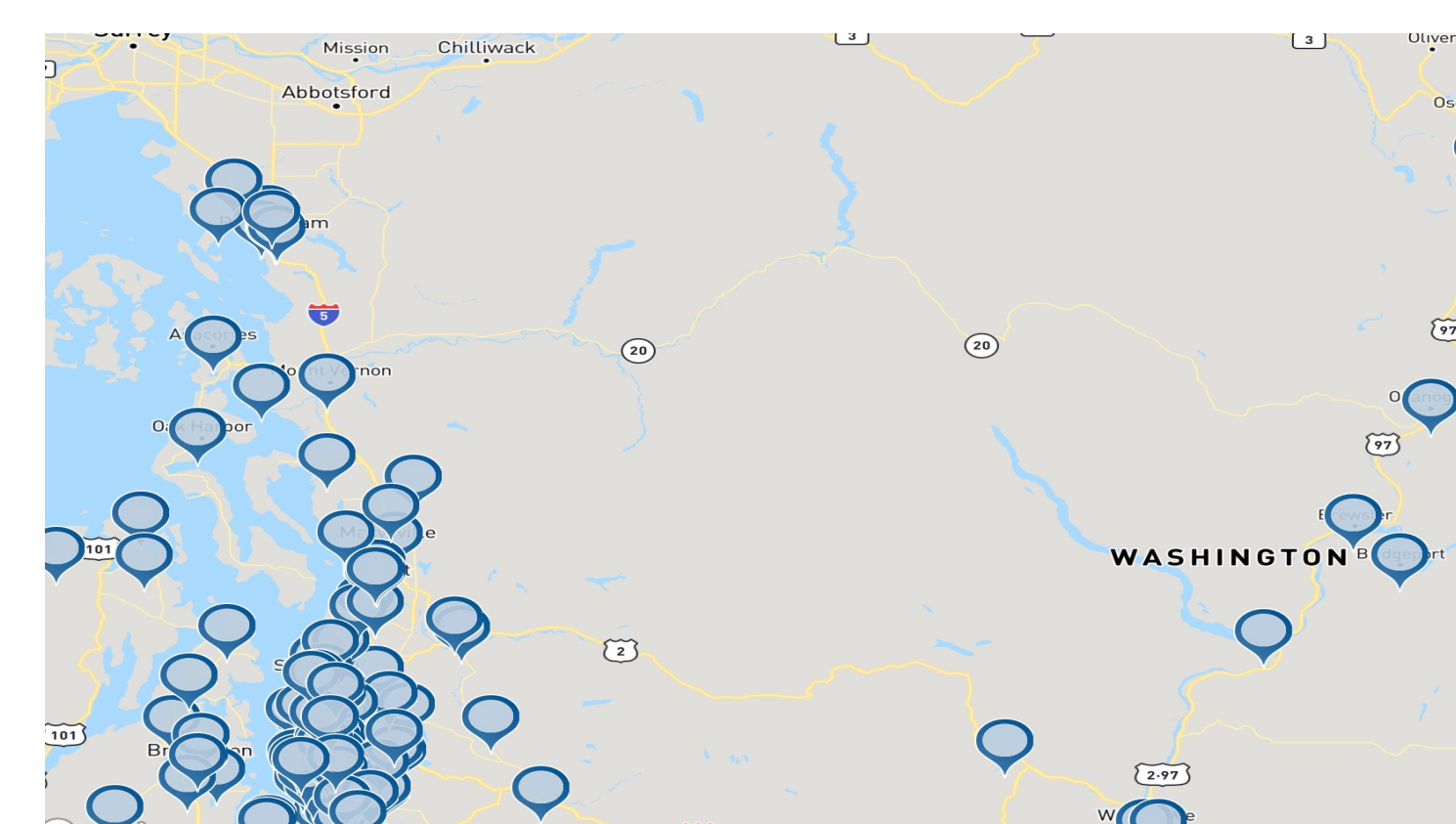
## Methods

- Surveyed underserved populations
  - Experiencing dental deserts.
  - Types of barriers
- Interviewed key leaders of the companies.
  - Decide how to distribute healthcare to underserved communities.

## Results

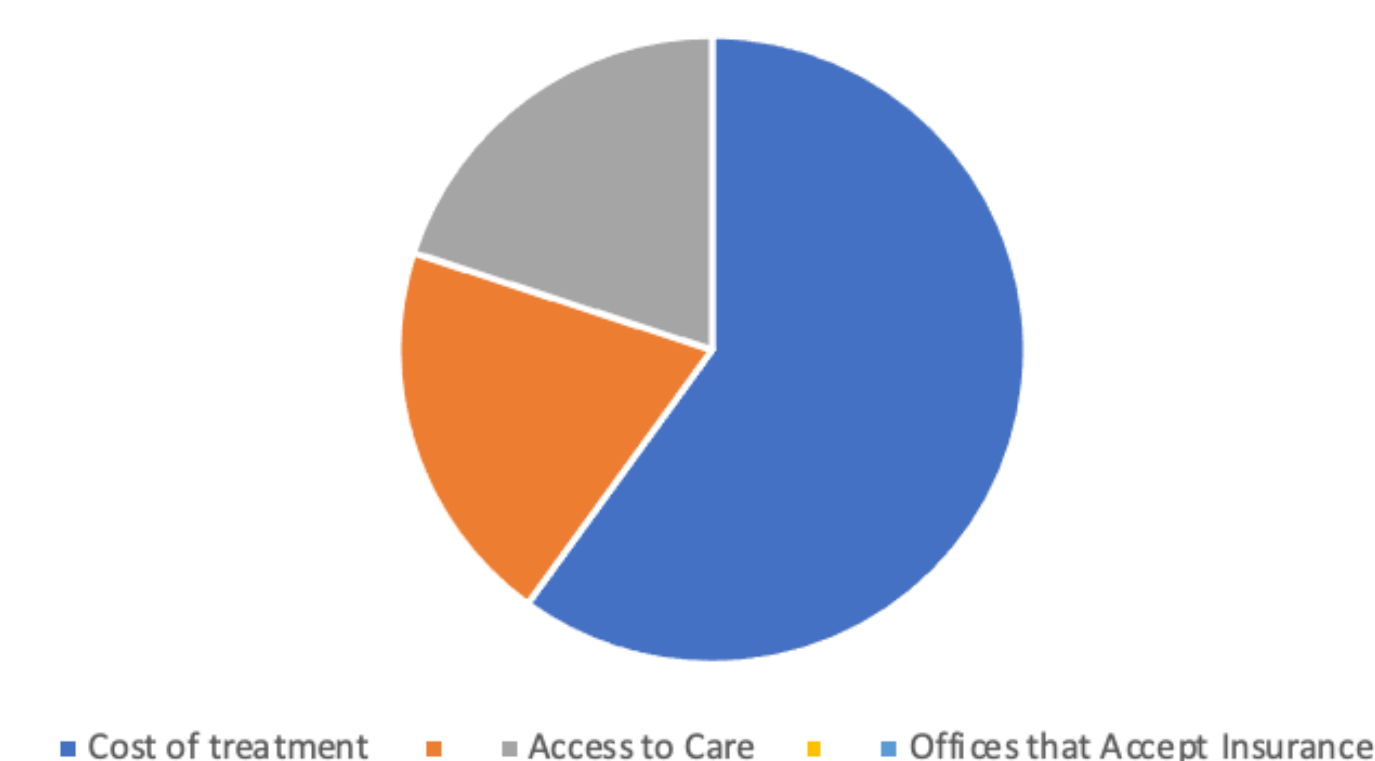
While our research is ongoing, we hypothesize that those experiencing a lack of access to dental care will include those who are uninsured, underinsured, unhoused, undocumented, refugees, immigrants, and those with mental health and substance dependency disorders in north-central Washington. With cost as the main barrier.

Dental Deserts in Peirce and King County



Offices Who are Accepting Medicaid/Medicare

Most Common Barriers



## Discussion

We expect to have a better understanding of the dental deserts in Washington State and how Medical Teams can better provide access to patients needs. This will allow MTIS to not only decrease the amounts of dental deserts around pierce and king county. It will also allow for MTIS to cater to the populations who are suffering most from the lack of dental care provided.

Outside Dental Van



## References

- Dr. Jeffery Reynolds
- Cassie Harter
- Miranda Hummel
- Alex Narvaez
- Dawn Jacobs
- Marcela Suarez Diaz



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