





Oral health research priorities: results of priority setting partnership



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Background

- Despite considerable improvements, oral health remains a major public health problem. There are many uncertainties about the effectiveness of prevention & treatment.
- Not enough evidence about what works:
 - In and outside the surgery
 - To manage NHS dentistry
- We aimed to bring lay people & dental care professionals together in a priority setting partnership to identify the most important research questions about interventions to improve oral health &/or reduce inequalities.

Oral & Dental Health James Lind Alliance Priority Setting Partnership

- Identify & prioritise unanswered questions 'uncertainties'
- About effects of most important treatments
- Ensure research funders know what matters to patients & clinicians
- Co-production Lay people [patients, public & carers] & clinicians working together
- Patient public Involvement achieved Reach, Equality and Diversity

Method

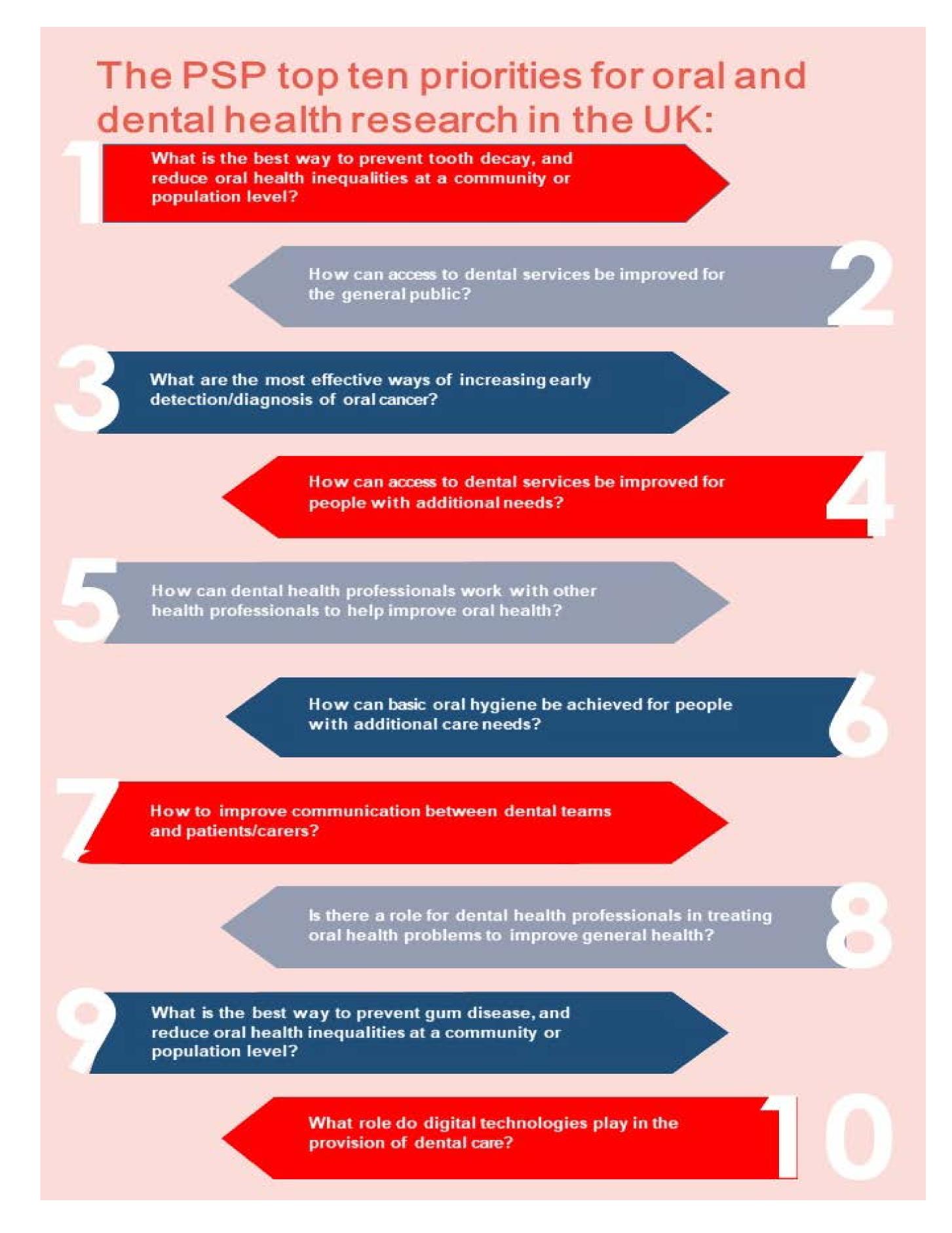
- 1. National online survey with open questions to identify possible uncertainties relating to oral health
- 2. Data screened and those out of scope were removed
- 3. Remainder mapped onto existing literature by Cochrane Oral Health Group to identify unanswered uncertainties
- 4. Quantitative survey with closed questions to create shortlist. Responses from lay people and professionals ranked separately to give equal weight to both groups
- 5. Nominal group technique workshop with patients, carers and dental professionals to select final Top Ten priorities
- 6. Priorities developed into research questions
- 7. Top Ten disseminated



8. Link with funders and track resulting research

Results

- 1. 607 people suggested over 1,100 possible uncertainties in the initial survey.
- 2 & 3. Screening and literature mapping reduced this to a long list of 38 unanswered questions.
- **4.** 1,402 lay people and professionals voted to shortlist the 25 most important questions. Some overlap between lay and professional priorities
- 5. 28 lay people & dental professionals agreed the Top Ten most important questions to address
- 6. Priorities developed into research questions
- 7. Top Ten disseminated to research funders in the UK



Discussion

- For the first time, patients, public, carers, other lay people & dental professionals have worked together to identify the most pressing research questions to improve oral & dental health for individual patients, for special groups & the whole population
- Primary care & public health emphasis of questions reflects priorities of lay people & supports inclusive approach
- Top Ten has been disseminated to funders & already used as a criterion in a recent NIHR Efficacy & Mechanism Evaluation call