

## SUMMARY

A cross-sectional descriptive postal survey was carried out to assess the satisfaction of patients seeking restorative care at Dental Institute Colombo in August 2001. A self-administered questionnaire consisting of 24 questions was given to 450 patients. Sixty one percent of patients responded.

Overall, 91% of respondents were satisfied with the care they had received. The patients were not satisfied with the waiting time and the duration between the first visit and the subsequent appointment visit. Waiting time was more than 60 minutes for nearly 75% of patients who sought root canal treatment. Sixty five percent of patients had to wait for more than three months to obtain an appointment for root canal treatment.

Patients who had been treated with permanent restorations other than root canal treatment were not satisfied with the courtesy of the supportive staff.

Majority of patients thought that the welfare facilities available for patients at the Dental Institute were not sufficient. Preventive instructions were received by 61% of the patients.

This was the first study to evaluate the satisfaction of dental patients in the 74year history of the Dental Institute Colombo. It has revealed several shortcomings.

The results of this study will help the health authorities to improve the existing health care services provided to patients.