

Participant Profile in an Oral Health Care Course for People with Disabilities in Brazil's Public Health System

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Abstract

Access to oral health care for people with disabilities (PwD) in Brazil remains a challenge within the Unified Health System (SUS), due to limitations in service organization and professional training. In this context, educational initiatives aimed at strengthening professional competencies become essential for improving the quality and accessibility of oral health services offered to PwD. Therefore, this study aimed to characterize the profile of participants in the course Oral Health Care for People with Disabilities in Primary Health Care, offered by UNA-SUS/UFMA in partnership with the Ministry of Health. This analytical-descriptive study was based on data from 10,179 participants enrolled between 2021 and 2023, collected through an online questionnaire. There was a predominance of individuals with higher education (52.88%) and postgraduate degrees (31.34%), mostly linked to the SUS (60.69%). Participants were mainly students (42.04%) and higher-level professionals (36.30%), with low participation of managers (12.11%). Most participants were female (74.87%), and there was a higher concentration in the Southeast (37.81%) and Northeast (35.96%), with lower participation from the North and Midwest. The findings highlight the relevance of this initiative for workforce training within the SUS and for improving oral health care for PwD in Brazil, while pointing to the need to expand regional inclusion and the participation of managers and less-educated professionals.

Keywords

Continuing Health Education, Oral Health, People with Disabilities, Distance Education.