Dental Treatment Uncool?

By Cornelia Birr

Teens are reluctant to go to the dentist even if these visits are free because dental care is viewed as uncool, recent research from the University of Otago, New Zealand, has found. The study involved 140 pupils from 14 schools, training centres or agencies. Although kids were aware of what good oral health required (teeth brushing, etc.), they failed to make use of the free care.

The future of clinical dentists lies in fewer procedures of higher quality, together with prevention. The role of dentists will be advising patients about risks to dental health, investigating and controlling the risks, influencing the behaviour of patients, diagnosing oral and dental diseases, providing high-quality dental care, administration of a dental team of auxiliaries.

A public health approach should include three main elements. A common risk factor approach to prevention, a population rather than a high-risk preventive strategy and an intersectoral health promotion multi-level strategy. In addition, an evidence-based approach should be mandatory.

The tradition of dentistry focuses on individuals: individual differences in biological characteristics, in disease, in lifestyle and in choices about health. This is not necessarily incorrect but it is incomplete. The basis for dental practice is that all people are at risk of getting dental diseases.