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Utilization of dental services by Finnish seamen.

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Abstract: Utilization of dental services by Finnish seamen was surveyed late in 1990. Three hundred and sixty-five respondents on different vessels at sea for more than 5 days returned a pretested questionnaire. A randomly drawn control group of 230 workers at a ventilation-equipment-producing plant was also surveyed. Fifty-five per cent of the seamen studied and 73% of the control group stated they had visited a dentist within the year before the survey. One-third of the seamen stated that an acute dental condition had been the reason for their last dental visit. Almost one-third of the seamen and 5% of the control group reported having last visited a dentist at a health center. When questioned separately, 14% of the seamen stated that they had not received dental treatment fast enough when needed. One-third of the seamen surveyed offered ideas for improving their dental services, half of them suggesting an increase in facilities and personnel at health centers for seamen. Periodic oral examinations for and full use of oral health self-care procedures by seamen are recommended.

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