ABSTRACT

This cross-sectional study was conducted to evaluate dental service utilization and factors affecting utilization among people 20-59 years old with oral health problem during 2001 in Huay-Yod subdistrict, Huay-Yod district, Trang province, Thailand.

250 subjects with oral health problems were purposively selected from three catchment areas around Huay-Yod hospital. Interview questionnaires were used for collection data. Statistical analysis was performed by using percentage, mean, median, and standard deviation, Pearson Chi-square and Fisher Exact test with the significance level set at 0.05.

The results showed that dental service utilization among the respondents with oral health problems in Huay-Yod subdistrict of Trang Province was high (75.6%) with more than half of them (57.1%) utilizing service once. The major findings of this study were as follow: 1) Three-quarters (75.1%) of the respondents sought curative treatments more than preventive services. The types of treatment that the respondents always asked for were tooth extractions, dental check-ups, tooth fillings and scaling. 2) Gender had a significant association with dental service utilization with females more likely to utilize dental service than males. 3) Regarding knowledge towards oral diseases, 70.8% of the respondents had low knowledge but they were more likely to utilize dental services compared to the group with high knowledge towards oral diseases. 4) Perceived susceptibility to oral disease was significant associated with dental service utilization. Respondents with high perceived susceptibility to oral diseases tended to utilize dental services more than the respondents with medium susceptibility. 5) Health insurance was significantly associated with dental service utilization. The respondents with health insurance were less likely to utilize dental service than were the respondents without health insurance.

This study shows that Trang Provincial Public Health office and Huay-Yod Hospital needs to promote health insurance more and provide more oral health education, which will increase the utilization of dental service among people with oral health problems.