

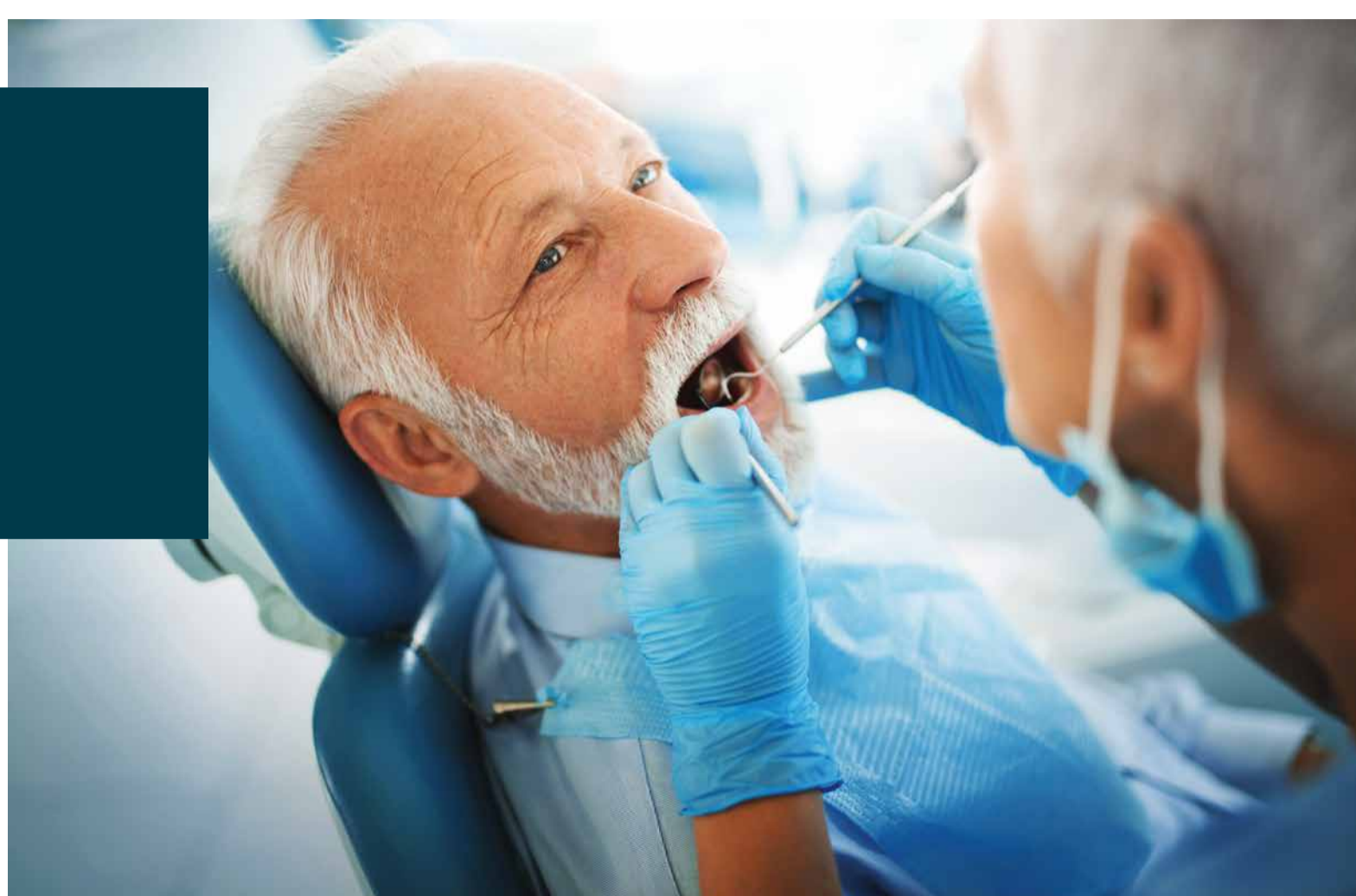
# Care Partner Views About Oral Health: A Statewide Survey

Today, more and more people serve as care partners for their loved ones. A care partner is someone outside of the medical field who provides care to a spouse, parent, family member, or friend. Results from a 2022 survey by the Lunder-Dineen Health Education Alliance of Maine, a program of Massachusetts General Hospital, show how MOTIVATE at Home can support care partners in Maine.

The survey findings represent 135 care partners in Maine who range in age from 28 to 85 years old. The majority identified as white (98%), female (85%) and provided care to a parent or spouse (87%). One in 10 identified as Latinx or Hispanic. No respondents identified as Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander. About half held a college degree.

## There are many reasons older adults need help with their oral care

- ✓ Memory loss
- ✓ Physical disability
- ✓ Alzheimer's or dementia
- ✓ Another long-term physical condition



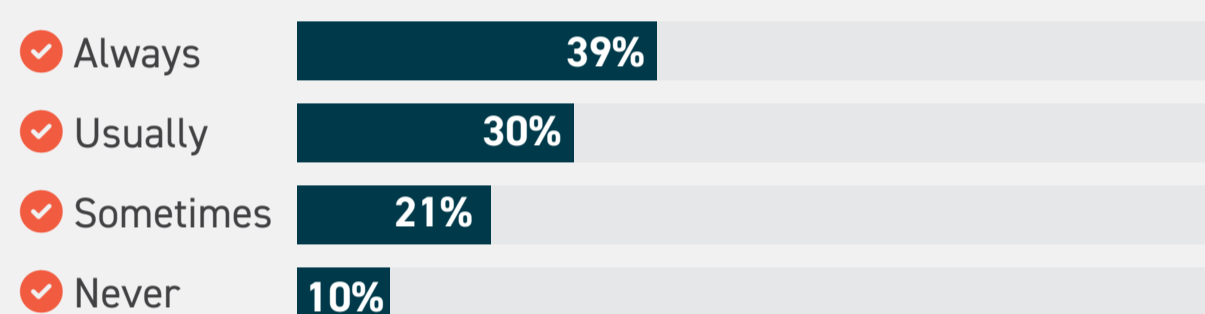
**2/3** of care recipients live in their own homes or apartments

**25%+** of care recipients don't have access to professional dental care

## Barriers to care include:

- ✓ Unable to afford dental care
- ✓ Fear, apprehension, nervousness or dislike of visiting the dentist
- ✓ Lack of insurance coverage

## How often do care recipients provide their own daily dental care?



## Access to Dental Care



45% of care partners say their loved ones have not visited a dental clinic in the past 12 months

More than **1/3** of care partners have not discussed oral health concerns with their loved one's medical provider in the last year

Almost **1/3** of care partners provide some level of oral health care to their care recipient  
**30%+ find it very challenging**

## How confident are care partners in their oral health knowledge?

- ~50% believe they can help prevent gum disease for their care recipients
- ~25% do not spend as much time as they would like brushing their loved ones' teeth
- ~20% are unsure if they brush their loved ones' teeth correctly

Almost **75%** are interested in learning more about oral health care for care recipients

## Care partners have interest in an array of training topics

- ✓ How drugs affect oral health
- ✓ Quick fixes for oral health problems
- ✓ How to uncover problems that care recipients may not share with care partners
- ✓ When to wait and when to worry about oral health problems
- ✓ How to address challenging behavior when providing oral care



Find more information on good oral health  
<https://lunderdineen.org/program/motivate-at-home/>

The University of Maine Center on Aging and Lunder-Dineen Health Education Alliance of Maine would like to acknowledge the following partners for their contributions to this work: the MOTIVATE at Home Ad Hoc Caregiver Advisory Group, Southern Maine Agency on Aging, Spectrum Generations, Aroostook Area Agency on Aging, SeniorsPlus, Eastern Area Agency on Aging, Maine Older Adult Research Registry, University of New England Legacy Scholars, Maine Community Health Worker Network, Maine Council on Aging, the MOTIVATE Advisory Team, and the Maine Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association.



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**MOTIVATE at Home is a free program that increases your knowledge of oral health care. Any person who is a caregiver or care partner of an older adult in Maine can be part of this new program.**