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The numbers of patients with different types of dementia will grow each year as the elderly population increases worldwide. Impairment of cognitive abilities and concomitant limitations on daily living activities contribute to a worsening of oral health in demented patients. Results of published studies have indicated poor oral health in patients with dementia [1-3]. Poor oral health can adversely affect speech, chewing ability and nutritional status, which in turn could potentially compromise the cognitive functioning, quality of life and general health of demented patients [4]. Moreover, a growing body of evidence suggests that periodontal disease is related to the occurrence of systemic diseases [5], aspiration pneumonia [6], cardiovascular disease [7] and ischemic stroke [8], which can lead to morbidity and earlier mortality in frail older people with dementia. Despite its importance, there is a tendency among demented patients to not adhere to good oral hygiene practices without assistance. Oral health and oral hygiene can decline as dementia progresses [9,10]. As such, regular dental check-ups play a vital role in oral health maintenance in this disadvantaged group of patients.

There is evidence indicating that neglecting dental care visits might contribute to poor oral health among patients with dementia [11]. However, compared to the attention given to the higher utilization of medical care among this population [12], their dental care utilization has not been well explored. Our previous study found that patients with severe mental illness received less dental care than the general population [13]. Using the same database, we analyzed a national representative sample derived from Taiwan's National Health Insurance Research Database to determine if demented patients visited dental care.

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