

Work-In-Progress Presentation

Abhi Thakkar

Madera County

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Dr. Abhi Thakkar

Dental Clinical Director – Camarena Health

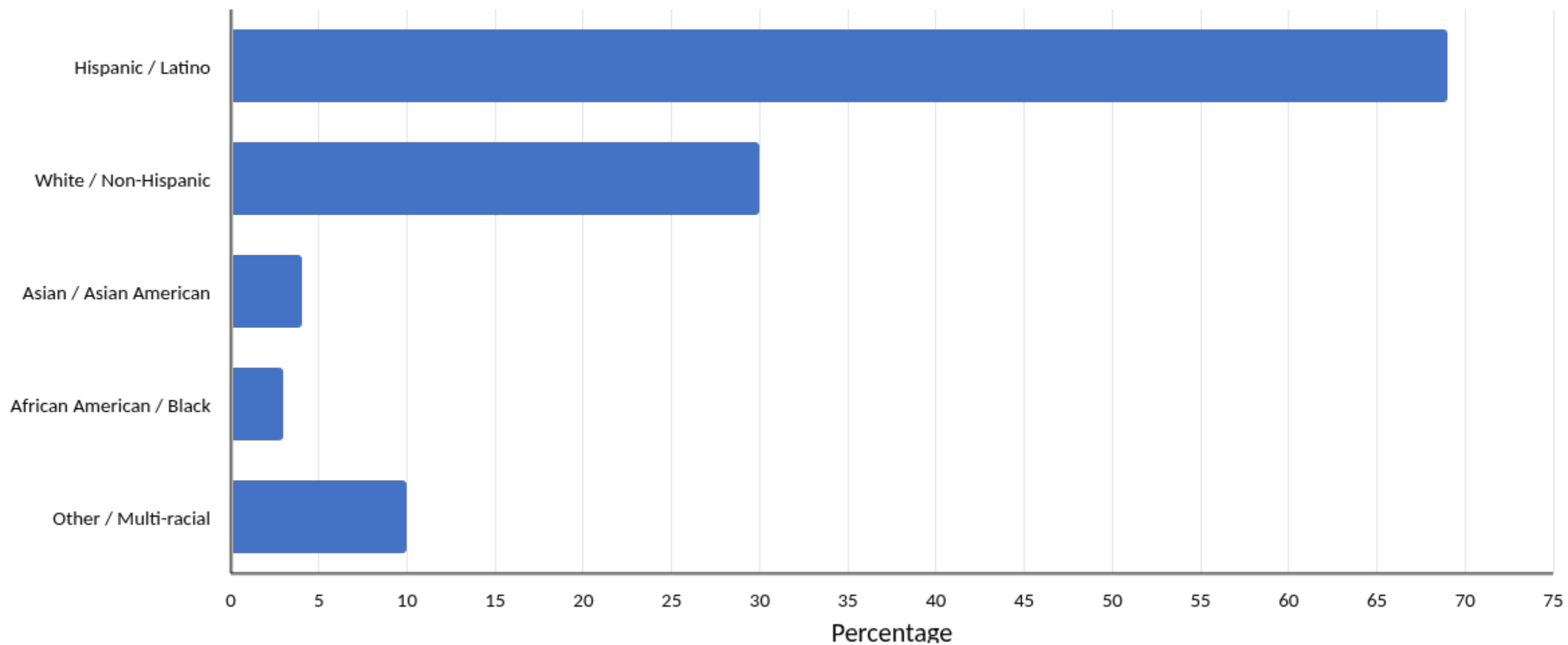
- Madera County, California
- Serving rural and underserved communities in the Central Valley.
- Primarily rural and underserved patient populations.

Role & Focus:

- Dental Clinical Director at Camarena Health. Health.
- UCSF Champion Provider Fellow focused on prevention, oral health literacy, and public health collaboration.

Patient Demographics & Barriers:

- Patients often face barriers related to transportation, access to care, oral health literacy, and preventive healthcare services. services.



Background: Why This Matters

High consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages continues to impact oral and overall health. Prevention, hydration awareness, and healthier daily habits are important in school-aged and underserved populations. Nutrition education is often underrepresented in discussions of oral health prevention.

Current Focus

- Sugar-sweetened beverage reduction and hydration awareness.
- School and community-based wellness policy discussions.
- Oral health, nutrition, and prevention-focused education.

Need for Intervention

- Need for stronger prevention-focused education and healthier beverage awareness.
- Opportunity to strengthen oral health literacy and healthier daily habits through schools and community partnerships.

Key Stakeholders

- Madera County Public Health Department
- Schools, school districts, and community organizations
- Dairy Council of California, Fresno Madera Dental Society, and UCSF Champion Provider Fellowship

PSE Intervention Overview

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Big Picture

Fostering collaborations between oral health, public health, schools, and community organizations to promote healthier beverage environments and enhance prevention-focused community education, recognizing the link between oral health and education, nutrition, environment, and daily health behaviors.

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Goal of PSE Intervention

To support healthier beverage environments and strengthen prevention-focused community education.

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Population Served

Includes rural and underserved communities, school-aged children, Hispanic/Latino and Spanish-speaking populations, and agricultural worker and low-income families.

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Initial Steps Taken

Initiated collaborations with the Local Health Department and community partners, conducted school presentations, student surveys, participated in the Oral Health Advisory Committee, and engaged in various outreach efforts including radio talks, podcasts, and educational articles/videos.

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Key Findings: School Survey

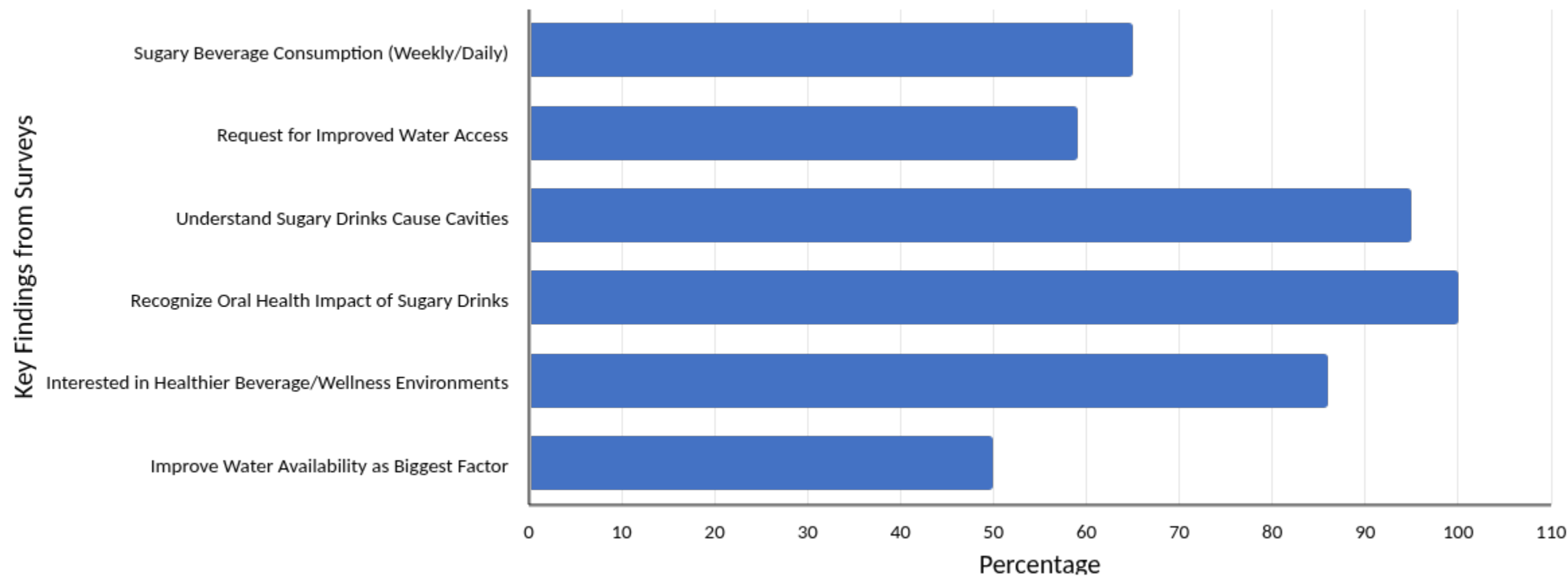
65% reported weekly/daily sugary beverage consumption, 59% requested improved water access, and 95% understood sugary drinks can cause cavities.

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Key Findings: Latino Madera Club Survey

100% recognized the oral health impact of sugary drinks, 86% were interested in healthier beverage environments, and 50% identified improved water availability as key for healthier choices.

Survey Results



Challenges

- Existing wellness initiatives limited immediate school intervention opportunities
- School policy discussions required long-term relationship-building
- Staff/coordinator transitions impacted continuity
- Sustainability and funding alignment discussions became important
- Multi-stakeholder collaboration required ongoing communication and flexibility

Successes/Lessons Learned

- Expanded outreach through schools, media, and community organizations
 - Latinos Madera Club outreach evolved into wellness policy discussions
 - Chawanakee School District expressed interest in future collaboration
 - Survey findings supported hydration-focused prevention discussions
 - Learned awareness alone may not change behaviors without supportive environments
 - Fellowship communication, storytelling training opened additional outreach opportunities
 - Trends Advisory Panel participation and collaboration with Dairy Council of California
 - Ongoing collaboration with Dairy Council of California

Next Steps

- Continue hydration and wellness policy discussions
- Continue school and community partnerships
- Develop oral health and nutrition educational toolkits for providers, health educators, and outreach efforts
- Expand culturally relevant prevention and hydration education
- Strengthen long-term prevention-focused community collaborations



Keep the Conversation Conversation Going

Abhi Thakkar, DDS, FICD, FACD, FPFA

Dental Clinical Director – Camarena Health
Madera County, California

Contact

Email: drthakkarabhi@gmail.com

LinkedIn / Professional Handle: Abhi Thakkar

Instagram Handle: [_drabhi_thakkar](#)

Facebook: Abhi Thakkar



When we make the healthy choice the easy choice, We are not just preventing cavities : We are shaping lifelong health.

Thank you



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