

Oral Care

Course introduction

This course has been created to give you the knowledge on how to promote and maintain good oral health within a health and social care setting.

Learning Aims for this training.

- Understanding oral health care and why it is so important.
- Learn key legislation.
- How to promote good oral health care
- How to achieve and maintain good oral hygiene to become part of an individual's routine

This training has been divided into 4 Modules

1. What is Oral Health
2. CQC and Key legislation
3. How to promote good oral hygiene
4. Staff roles and responsibilities

Module 1

What is Oral Care?

oral health care refers to the entire mouth and teeth and how they're looked after. People who need care and support have a higher risk of having oral health problems. This can be due to several reasons.

Such as:

- Long-term medical conditions that make attending dental appointments harder.
- Medical conditions that make holding and using a toothbrush more difficult.
- Medication causes a dry mouth and reduces saliva production.
- Older people who have their natural teeth have a greater need for complex care (when compared to those with dentures).

A person's quality of life can be significantly impacted by their oral health. Maintaining oral health is a significant part of a person's wellbeing.

When a person has poor oral health, they can be in pain. This can prevent them from eating or even drinking, which can lead to dehydration and malnutrition.

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Poor oral health put some people at a higher risk of developing mouth conditions and diseases. Risks include cavities, gingivitis, receding gums, dry mouth, and even oral cancer.

Facts

- Oral diseases, while largely preventable, pose a major health burden for many countries and affect people throughout their lifetime
- It is estimated that oral diseases affect nearly 3.5 billion people.

Module 2 – CQC and Key Legislation

Did you know?

CQC published a report on 24th June 2019 called Smiling matters

The report covers the concerns in care homes about how individuals are supported with their oral care.

The report found that oral care in care homes is not good enough and providers need to ensure that good practice is implemented.

What they found.....

Among the homes visited:

- most had no policy to promote and protect people's oral health (52%)
- nearly half were not training staff to support daily oral healthcare (47%)
- 73% of care plans reviewed only partly covered or did not cover oral health
- it could be difficult for residents to access dental care
- 10% of homes had no way to access emergency dental treatment for residents

The CQC want care homes to embrace oral health and ensure it receives the same priority as physical and mental health.

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Key Legislation

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) publish guidelines that providers are expected to follow in their services.

In 2016 they published the NICE Guideline for Adults Oral Care in Care Homes, which was reviewed in 2018.

Your organisation should be following the NICE guidelines and provide specific training on how to implement them within your job role

End of module 2

Module 3- How to promote good oral hygiene

Health and care workers should help individuals to maintain their oral hygiene by:

- Ensuring all surfaces of the teeth as well as the gum line, are brushed thoroughly for two minutes twice each day.
- Ensuring the toothpaste contains an adequate amount of fluoride.
- Ensuring that flossing happens daily.
- Ensuring that mouthwash is used to remove any particles of food after the teeth have been brushed and flossed.
- Promote a healthy diet avoiding too much sugar in food and drinks.
- Ensuring service users have regular dental appointments for check-ups and visits to the hygienist.

Important!

An individual will need to see a dentist if:

- They have been in pain for more than 2 days
- They have pain when they eat
- They have red gums, or
- Their cheek or jaw is swollen

Regular visits to the Dental Hygienist

These are specially trained people that work alongside dentists to care for oral health and help with treatment plans.

Their job is mainly 'preventative' dental health, and their role includes:

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- Removing plaque
- Professionally cleaning teeth
- Showing individuals, the correct care at home for teeth and gums

Hygienists will also give advice about diet and how to prevent tooth decay e.g. reducing sugar intake.

End of module 3

Module 4 – Staff roles and responsibilities

It's essential that all service users have the oral health care they deserve. Support workers should be person-centred, which means that all individuals need encouragement and support in practising good oral hygiene.

Make sure staff know who to ask for advice, how and when to report any concerns about an individual's oral health.

Care staff need to know how to support them with their daily mouth care to:

Brush their natural teeth at least twice a day with fluoride toothpaste.

Use their choice of cleaning products for dentures.

Clean their dentures (brushing, removing food debris, removing dentures overnight).

Use their choice of toothbrush, either manual or electric/battery powered, and mouth care

Always make sure you are wearing PPE before assisting anyone with teeth cleaning

Individual care plans

Support and assessments in oral health can prevent service users from problems like disturbed sleep, pain and other health issues that are caused by poor oral health. Simple adjustments and changes to a individual's routine each day can change things massively for the better.

It's also important for staff to know how to assess oral health. This is made easier by the regular completion of oral health assessments as this helps monitor for changes. It's also useful when service users move between settings.

With a baseline assessment done on arrival and an oral health care plan drawn up, there should be regular dates for review implemented.

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The NICE guidelines stress the importance of reviewing and updating an individual's support with oral care in their personal care plans to meet their changing needs.

The Care Plan should include:

- The support that the individual needs
- Their dental check-ups and any changes to oral care resulting from these
- The individual's preferred times for oral care and the products they like to use

To summarise, oral health care is an integral part of maintaining the health and dignity of all service users in every support setting. Oral health should be considered in an individual's care plan and there should be an oral health care plan for each person and followed by everyone.

By promoting oral health care, service users will lead happier and healthier lives.