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The Oral Health CoP is new for 2009. If you're interested in becoming a member or for more information about oral health of frail older adults, contact us at oral.health@shrtm.on.ca or any one of the members listed above



Oral Health for Frail Older Adults Community of Practice



PURPOSE

The Oral Health CoP operates as a trans-sectoral knowledge-based network and enables the dissemination of evidence-based and clinically relevant oral health information to care providers of frail older adults through 3 interconnected methods:

- awareness-raising strategies and
- education/learning opportunities; and
- collaboration and networking opportunities (health and oral/dental care sectors)

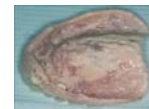
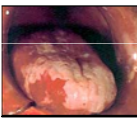
About Oral Health of Frail Older Adults

Despite increasing awareness among the health and dental care professionals regarding the oral care for frail older adults, there are continued misperceptions, non-interest and low-priority placed on the oral health of older adults and its impact on their general health. The myth remains that geriatric dental care is equated with denture care, extractions and emergency dental care.

Compared with other age groups, older adults have less access to oral care services and poorer oral health status; 30% visited a dentist in the last year, more than 75% have no dental insurance, 90% of older adults don't perceive the need for dental care, and 80% of long-term care residents have unmet oral health needs.

Maintaining oral health is essential for older adults because it affects their quality of life, ability to chew, communicate, socialize, maintain nutrition, and feel good. They are also more likely to experience major health consequences of poor oral health due to its progressive and cumulative impact. Oral diseases not typically seen in the older adults are now becoming more prevalent such as tooth decay and periodontitis (gum and bone inflammation) and older adults are retaining larger numbers of their natural teeth. Tooth decay is more than 3 times greater for older adults than for those under 45 years and exceeds tooth decay rates of adolescents. Periodontal disease is linked with heart disease, stroke, dementia, diabetes mellitus, respiratory disease, pain, malnutrition, and weight loss. Adequate oral hygiene and treatments needed to prevent medical problems, such as aspiration pneumonia; dry mouth; malnutrition and dehydration; and manage diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Most health and dental education/training programs provide limited instructive education regarding geriatric oral health, health promotion, oral hygiene and care techniques. It is important to raise awareness of the importance of oral health and care among health and dental care providers. Even for those care providers who have good geriatric oral health knowledge, there remains poor translation of this knowledge into practice. As a result, the risk that signs of serious oral diseases (such as malignancies and infections) will go unrecognized. There is a need to create opportunities for health and dental care providers to improve their geriatric oral health knowledge and skills; to attend related learning sessions; and to access practice resources on the oral care of frail older adults.



Photos courtesy of Halton Region, L McKeown, RNAO, RGPC

CoP Activities

Resource Development and Education

Panel members: RNAO

- Best Practice Guideline: Oral Health: Nursing Assessment and Interventions 2009 *Nursing Best Practice Guideline*
- Oral Care for Residents with Dementia DVD
- Oral Care for Xerostomia, Dysphagia, and Mucositis DVD

Long Term Care

- Oral Care Resource Kit for LTC
- Halton KISS LTC Education Program Manual and Slides
- Oral Care Using a Best Practices Approach Education Slides
- Oral Health Assessment Tool for LTC
- Oral Hygiene Care Plan for LTC
- Approaches for Oral Care Reference Tools
- Medications That Impact Oral Health
- Gap Analysis and more

Primary Care and Community

- Oral Health Older Adults Resource Kit for Primary Care
- 4-Part Webinar Series:
 - Halton Consumer information pamphlets
 - Quick Facts
 - Oral Health Case Study
 - Tools of the Trade Slides
 - Stroke and Oral Health Slides
 - Knowledge Test and more

Upcoming ...

Oral Care Skills Webinar 1
2-Toothbrush Technique

The Pocket Docket
Oral Hygiene SmartCards

WEBSITES

All resources are available on key websites for download:
• www.shrtm.on.ca and www.rgpc.ca

NEW Resources and Education

- Oral Care Skills Webinars 30 minutes
 - Webinar 1: Dec09/Jan-Feb10: 2-Toothbrush Technique
 - More to follow: basic mouth care, denture care, assessment
 - Archiving / DVD development
- Pocket Docket SmartCards for PSWs
 - Late fall 2009: 5 cards, 2-sided on oral care techniques
- Oral Health for Older Adults Toolkit – spring 2010

Collaboration and Networking

- Oral Health CoP continues to collaborate with other CoPs to develop linkages and promote quality oral health care for seniors.

Evaluation

- Needs Assessment, Webinar 1 and Pocket Docket (Dec 09-March 10)

