

Oklahoma Nursing Home Oral Care Project

Multiple studies acknowledge that poor oral hygiene and lack of routine dental care can contribute to respiratory infections and other systemic diseases in high-risk patients living in nursing homes across the country.

Improved dental hygiene may be a key in preventing aspiration pneumonia, the leading cause of death in nursing homes¹, as well as preventing cardiovascular disease, stroke, diabetes and dementia. In addition, a daily dental care regimen can be a cost-saving measure for nursing homes by reducing the expense and time associated with the required care related to the diseases.²

Nursing Homes are Invited to Join a Free Community Based Approach to Improving Oral Health

TMF Health Quality Institute (TMF) has initiated an oral care project to provide free onsite, online and video education, knowledge, skills and oral care support to nursing home staff and residents. TMF, in collaboration with the Oklahoma Resident Oral Care Advisory Group, an inter-professional expert advisory workgroup, is developing a comprehensive oral care toolkit and educational curriculum. An important focus will be providing oral health care to patients with dementia. TMF's licensed dental hygienists will use this comprehensive curriculum and provide free training to selected nursing homes in Oklahoma. The oral care project kicks off with a free oral health basic screening survey (BSS) for nursing home residents, performed by TMF's licensed dental hygienists.

Benefits to Nursing Homes Participating in TMF's Two-year Oral Care Promotion Initiative

- Receive support and improve staff's knowledge and skills through free education, with a focus on residents with dementia
- Receive free education on what to look for during a daily oral assessment
- Receive free education on oral systemic relationships
- Receive free education on implementing an oral care regimen along with free tools and resources so staff feel more confident to provide oral care for residents who cannot do it themselves
- Receive referrals for residents for low or no cost community dental services

JOIN NOW: Project kicks off with basic screening survey (BSS) of selected residents

What is the BSS?

- A free oral health screening designed to evaluate the oral hygiene of selected nursing home residents
- It is non-invasive and visual only. No instruments are used and it takes about five minutes
- TMF provides the supplies



You are not healthy without good oral health.

– Former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop



Poor oral hygiene can **lead to** or **exacerbate diseases** that result in **death**

Improved dental hygiene can **reduce costs** for nursing homes



Most people reaching age 65 **do not have access to dental care**

What a BSS is NOT?

- This is NOT an inspection of the nursing home
- It does not take the place of a comprehensive dental exam by a dentist
- Personal Health Information (PHI) is not gathered nor shared

A Few Statistics

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there are an estimated 1.4 million older adults, age 65 or more, living in nursing homes at any given time in the U.S.³ Every day 10,000 adults reach the age of 65 and most of them will not have access to dental care.⁴

Approximately 1 in 10 cases of death from pneumonia in nursing home residents may be prevented by improving oral hygiene.⁵

Lack of daily oral hygiene can result in pain. About two-thirds of nursing home residents have dementia and may not be able to communicate that they are in pain, so daily oral assessments and knowing what to look for is critical.⁶

Large food debris and periodontal pathogens are aspirated into the lungs contributing to aspiration pneumonia.

Older Americans are more likely than ever to retain their natural teeth. Tooth loss in older people declined from 1988 to 2004. Therefore, daily oral hygiene is more important than ever. Dentures were easier to care for.⁷

Contact Us

oralhealth@tmf.org

or

Kristina Poarch

Administrative Assistant

kristina.poarch@tmf.org

(512) 334-1755

¹Norman DC (1991) Pneumonia in the elderly: empiric antimicrobial therapy. *Geriatrics* 46:26–32

²Terpenning, M. (2005) Geriatric Oral Health and Pneumonia Risk, *Clin Infect Dis.* 40 (12): 1807-1810

³U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Long-Term Care Providers and Services Users in the United States: Data from the National Study of Long-Term Care Providers, 2013–2014

⁴Elisa M. Ghezzi, DDS, PhD Consultant, Michigan Geriatric Dentistry Network

⁵Sjogren P, Nilsson E, Forsell M, Johansson O, Hoogstraate J. A systematic review of the preventive effect of oral hygiene on pneumonia and respiratory tract infection in elderly people in hospitals and nursing homes: effect estimates and methodological quality of randomized controlled trials. *J Am Geriatric Soc.* 2008;56:2124-2130.

⁶Catherine Saint Louis, in the *New York Times*

⁷National Center for Health Statistics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services