

Therapy Services Project on a Page

Mouth Care Matters



Methods Staff and patients on ward 31 RVI questioned about mouthcare to establish training requirements. Mouthcare assessments completed and patient experiences recorded.

Following the safety alert on pink sponges and need for need withdrawal. Equipment was reviewed. Soft toothbrushes and Moutheze were supplied to the ward as an alternative to pink sponges. Information on how to reorder on Oracle provided..

Face to face training to some nurses and HCAs and posters were displayed on the Ward.

We looked at where mouthcare was currently recorded. Trial of using assessment used on critical care on Wards and provided training and introduced this to Ward 31.

Mouthcare guidelines including onward referral pathway created.

Results

Mouthcare was not recorded in patients notes prior to this project. On reaudit it was recorded in 28 out of 29 patients.

Pink sponges are no longer used on the Ward and toothbrushes, toothpaste, denture pots and MouthEze are available.

There is an increased awareness of Mouthcare from Ward staff – however due to staffing issues with Covid, not all staff were trained, as sessions had to be cancelled at short notice.

Some improvement in patient experiences were noted – but there is further room for improvement

Aims and objectives There is evidence that hospitalisation is associated with deterioration in the oral health of patients. This is linked to increase in hospital acquired infections, poor nutritional intake, longer hospital stays and increased care costs, in addition to deterioration in quality of life, dental health and experience and dignity related issues for patients.

Previous projects have identified a need to improve mouthcare throughout NUTH. 'Mouthcare Matters' has also been a national HEE initiative. The aim of this IHI project is to improve mouthcare by creating guidelines, pathways, providing training, identifying equipment and recording mouth care in care plans.

Our short term aim is to increase awareness and provision of mouthcare on Ward 31, RVI to ensure all patients have comfortable mouths. Ensure regular recording of mouthcare. Provide training and resources. Ensure appropriate mouthcare equipment is on the Ward and to remove pink sponges which had a safety alert in 2012.

Measures

Audit of recording of mouthcare in notes.

Questionnaires for patients and staff

Patient experiences

Mouthcare assessments

Audit of whether pink sponges are still on Ward



Conclusion

Mouthcare is a fundamental part of essential care and is often overlooked. All health care professionals need access to training and all Wards need supplies of appropriate tools. Mouthcare needs to be recorded in patient notes to prove it has been done.

Unfortunately, time is always the biggest challenge, but the Trust are aware of the importance of this project and a Mouthcare lead is to be employed to move forwards with this important work. Funding has been provided from HEE. This work will be implemented throughout the rest of NUTH and training and support will be adapted as we move forwards.

Everybody deserves the right to a clean and comfortable mouth.

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[Mouthcarmatters.hee.nhs.uk/links-resources/mouth-care-matters-resources-2](https://mouthcarmatters.hee.nhs.uk/links-resources/mouth-care-matters-resources-2)