



Better Oral Health in Residential Care

Author: Jennifer Lang

Existing issue:

Oral diseases and conditions can have social impacts on quality of life, including comfort, eating, pain and appearance. Research shows that enhanced oral health care can be an effective measure against the development of aspiration pneumonia and other general health conditions in vulnerable populations such as the elderly.

Planning and implementation:

Murrumbidgee Local Health District (MLHD) Oral Health Services (OHS) developed a new Model of Care for residents of MLHD Multi-Purpose Service (MPS) Aged Care facilities.

- OHS staff deliver oral health training package
- Oral health assessment performed by Dental Hygienist with nursing care staff involved
- Oral care plan developed based on a simple protective oral health care regimen
- Nursing care staff maintain daily oral hygiene
- Free dental hygiene and restorative treatment delivered to the eligible patient's bedside with portable equipment
- Provision of high fluoride toothpaste, toothbrush and other required oral health products supplied to the patients, improving oral health

Outcomes, Sustainability in Embedding Change and Transferability

The "Better Oral Health in Residential Care" (BOHRC) Model of Care was successfully introduced to 4 MLHD MPS in 2017 in a train the trainer format to ensure sustainability and demonstrates transferability.

Patients benefited from improved oral health care.

Key Take Home Message:

The BOHRC program requires an integrated team approach to maintain a patient's oral health care.