"Plaque OFF Fluoride ON": Local OHP implementations in Camden and Islington oral health improvement initiatives for vulnerable adults and older people to reduce oral health inequalities

Health promotion initiatives should be empowering, participatory, holistic, equitable, sustainable and multistrategy (WHO 1998).

Way Forward for OHP programmes

The Five Key Principles for Oral Health Promotion:
1. Building Healthy Public Policy - e.g. CQC standards compliance, food policy for care homes.
2. Creating Supportive Environments - e.g. High concentration Fluoride toothpaste & OHP packs.
3. Strengthening Community Action - e.g. health events, OHP support for all staff and residents.
4. Developing Personal Skills - e.g. Staff training, formation of healthy and oral health workshops.
5. Reorienting Health Services - e.g. modified tooth brushing techniques, mouth gags, superbrush

What works and how we can make it better...

• Collaborating with agencies working with older people and vulnerable adults: to implement strategies to increase the uptake of dental services, improve oral health and reduce inequalities.
• Support older people to appropriate dental services.
• Sustaining ethical sensor awareness activities at community level.
• "Oral Health Promotion Champions" 10 to 1 coaching to share knowledge.
• Increasing awareness about NHB (c) for dental treatment and exemption criteria. Financial benefits results in reduced uptake of services. (consult dental patients)
• Tailoring of maintenance programmes to meet the requirements of those with additional needs. Distribution of appropriate dental promotional aids (e.g. FREE mouth-gags/supersized toothbrush)
• Provision of dental care to dental care centres in community settings (e.g. Mentally Health Farms)
• Evaluating the impact of existing programmes for easy adaptation.
• Integrating oral health programmes to community settings e.g. the milks scheme for those with special needs.
• Enabling workshops for carers to perform oral health care for the care home residents.
• Provision of dental care kits to maintain healthy dentures.
• Increasing knowledge and awareness about dental care and techniques to incisional dentures.
• Laboratory demands for dentures and fixed dentures, making key provision.
• Tailored OHP training sessions for night staff of care homes.
• Engaging with friends and family systems in care home.
• Ensuring healthy food policy standards for care homes to include CRC approach.
• Reduction of oral health training in staff induction.
• Development of OHP resource pack for staff training.
• Developing an online interactive staff training modules.
• Reorienting staff to annual training.
• Organising seasonal Health Promotion events to involve other health professionals to spread the words.
• Preparation of visual aids for dementia patients as a reminding tool for toothbrushing.

Conclusion:
For the prevention of this high risk group to be continuously supported by dental teams and allied health professionals, we should link in dentistry with other services for improved oral health outcomes and reduced inequality.

"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves"

NHS Whittington Health