

# Educating and empowering the pharmacy team to improve patient oral health: a quality improvement project

Tran C., Schofield E., Hayes E.

## Background

Hospitalisation is associated with a deterioration in patient oral health<sup>[1]</sup>. Pharmacy has been identified as one of the key organisations that help improve oral health<sup>[2]</sup>.

## Objectives

- Develop an educational programme on key oral health topics
- Improve the pharmacy team's knowledge and confidence in managing oral conditions
- Empower the pharmacy team to promote patient oral health
- Signpost to appropriate sources of guidance

## Planning

A pre-assessment questionnaire revealed most respondents felt neutral-not confident on the following issues:

- Oral hygiene advice
- Dry mouth
- Oral ulcers
- Toothache
- Gingivitis
- Broken appliances
- Lost fillings or crowns
- Pericoronitis
- Temporomandibular disorder (TMD)
- Teething

Participants also gave suggestions as to what additional topics were important to them:

"antifungal regimes"

"what resources are available to help guide antibiotic choices"

## Intervention

Two one-hour teaching sessions were delivered to the pharmacy teams at the Denmark Hill and Princess Royal University Hospitals over the course of a fortnight.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the sessions were adapted to interactive delivery via Microsoft Teams.

Ten different user accounts were present during the sessions, with each one providing access to small groups of staff.



HEE's Dental Factsheets for the Pharmacy Team<sup>[3]</sup> were distributed to all team members, with reference copies left in each department.



Dental appliances demonstrated via webcam



Case-based quizzes used to test application of knowledge

### Acting on feedback:

Questionnaire based feedback after session 1 was used to enhance session 2:

#### Session 1

100% found the session useful

"[needs] more detailed advice"

"Perhaps [use] case study style Q&A"

#### Session 2

100% found the session useful

"Good use of case studies"

"Great session"

## Impact

Post-intervention questionnaires showed an increase in percentage of participants feeling 'confident' (as opposed to 'neutral' or 'not confident') in managing all the topics covered.

100% of participants felt confident in managing oral hygiene advice, toothache and oral fungal infections, compared to 40% or less prior to the interventions.

### % Participants feeling 'confident' in managing oral conditions



## Conclusion

This project equipped the pharmacy team with the tools needed to improve patient oral health. Future steps lie in providing further sessions on areas where confidence could be improved, such as teething and pericoronitis, as well as regular review sessions to maintain the team's knowledge base.

## References

- [1] Terezakis, E., Needleman, I., Kumar, N., Moles, D. and Agudo, E. (2011) 'The impact of hospitalization on oral health: a systematic review', *J Clin Periodontol*, 38(7), pp. 628-36.
- [2] Public Health England (2018) Commissioning Better Oral Health for vulnerable older people: evidence informed toolkit.
- [3] Health Education England (2018) Dental Factsheets for the Pharmacy Team