

2016

MOTIVATE: Oral Health Leads to Total Health

Jennifer Crittenden

The University of Maine, jennifer.crittenden@maine.edu

Lenard W. Kaye

University of Maine, len.kaye@maine.edu

Labrini Nelligan

University of Maine

Denise O'connell

University of Maine

Carole Mackenzie

University of Maine

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/moca_research



Part of the [Gerontology Commons](#), and the [Medicine and Health Commons](#)

Repository Citation

Crittenden, Jennifer; Kaye, Lenard W.; Nelligan, Labrini; O'connell, Denise; and Mackenzie, Carole, "MOTIVATE: Oral Health Leads to Total Health" (2016). *Maine Center on Aging Research and Evaluation*. 2.

https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/moca_research/2

This Other is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in Maine Center on Aging Research and Evaluation by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact um.library.technical.services@maine.edu.

MOTIVATE: Oral Health Leads to Total Health: Oral Health Education Needs of Long-Term Care Direct Care Staff

Jennifer A. Crittenden, MSW; Lenard W. Kaye, DSW/PhD; Labrini Nelligan, MS; Denise O'Connell, MSW, Carole Mackenzie, M.Ed

University of Maine Center on Aging & Lunder-Dineen Health Education Alliance of Maine

Research Project Description

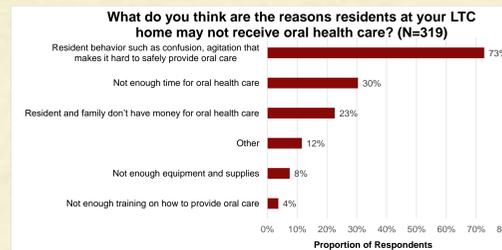
- MOTIVATE: **M**aine's **O**ral **T**eam-Based **I**nitiative: **V**ital **A**ccess **T**o **E**ducation was established to raise awareness about the connection between oral health and systemic health among older adults
- Objective 1: Identify knowledge gaps in staff oral health education in long-term care settings
- Objective 2: Identify preferred education strategies and topics for enhancing staff's knowledge and skills to improve resident oral health care in long-term care settings

Survey Methodology

- Survey instruments were developed for direct care staff and administered at six long-term care (LTC) homes in New England
- Survey domains:
 - Respondent profiles/demographics
 - Oral health care provision
 - Interprofessional care
 - Staff oral health training, knowledge, and attitudes
 - Staff knowledge and attitudes about oral health care
 - Preferred training formats
- Long-term care home administrators at each of the six facilities facilitated the distribution of surveys to staff based on their roles and functions within each long-term care home
- Online and paper based surveys were made available to each participating site
- All sites received an in-person project briefing and orientation to the survey materials prior to administration

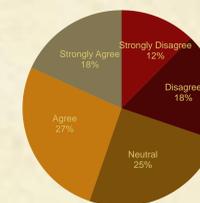
Results: Needs and Barriers to Interprofessional Oral Health Care

- Of the 654 direct care staff that were offered the survey at the 6 LTC homes, 397 staff returned the survey, for an overall response rate of 61%
- A slight majority of respondents indicated they were certified nursing assistants (38%) and registered nurses (18%). The second most common response was "other" (20%). Many of the titles provided were related to the general categories of activity staff, housekeeping and laundry, maintenance, medical technicians, recreational staff, rehabilitation and physical therapy, and administrative and office staff.
- 86% of respondents rated oral health care as important or very important to resident satisfaction
- The majority (81%) agreed that oral health care is very important in preventing disease



"Other" category above included staffing issues, failure to understand the importance of oral health, and poor quality toothbrushes.

Agree/Disagree: Every member of our health care team has a clear role in providing oral health care to residents (N=324)



Sample quotes from survey open responses:

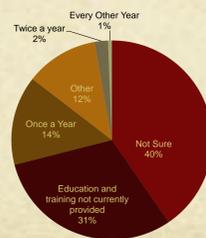
- "If we were staffed better, we would have more time to give proper oral hygiene."
- "Hire more CNA's [certified nursing assistants] so they have more time to do better care."
- "Provide a smaller toothbrush for the residents. The ones we have now are very big for their mouths and maybe a softer bristle...."
- "I feel strongly that the entire burden of oral care cannot be solely borne by the CNA's."

Identified Needs by Direct Care Staff

- Staff appreciate the importance of oral health care to overall health and resident satisfaction. Staff buy-in to the concept that oral health care is important does not appear to be a barrier to the provision of good oral health care.
- A theme noted in survey write-ins was the need for better equipment including toothbrushes with softer bristles, battery powered brushes and smaller size brushes, toothpaste without fluoride for residents who might tend to swallow it, mouth moistener, better tasting products, and hand flossers were all suggested oral health care tool improvements.
- Another prominent theme was the need for more staffing, primarily so that staff would have more time to perform oral health care. Having oral care be more of a regular routine, having it specifically scheduled, at regular times, and charted, was another often-mentioned solution.

Results: Educational Needs

Since beginning your work at your current employer how often have you had oral health education and training? (N=205)



Limited time, often identified as a function of staffing patterns, was a concern and should be taken into account when providing training. Preferred staff training formats were identified as (N=321):

- In person classes (46%)
- Online webinars (42%)
- Hands-on demonstrations (35%)

Future Training Topics of Interest (N= 290)	% of Respondents
How to uncover problems residents don't tell us	54.8%
Working with challenging residents	51.7%
Quick fixes for oral health problems	44.8%
When to wait and when to worry	43.8%
How drugs affect oral health	43.1%

Write-in comments from survey:

"I think handouts, in-services, and maybe videos which show what may happen if someone doesn't receive oral care, may help ensure regular oral care"

"Have education throughout our learning system and demonstrations for everyone"

"With more training, we could teach residents how and why it is important"



Recommendations

- Establishing a basic level of oral health care knowledge, skills and attitudes among staff and provide consistent access to high quality oral health care tools
- Providing training and education for direct care staff. Staff training and education should utilize mixed learning methods, such as in-person class, online computer webinars, hands on demonstration, printed materials, DVD or audio materials and online recordings
- In addition to oral health care, training and education in denture care would be beneficial for the direct care staff
- Identify specific roles for staff in supporting oral health care at each implementation site
- Upgrading oral health care equipment or provide some basic tools for everyday oral health care

Conclusion

- While the provision of good oral health care is important in LTC settings, there are key barriers to care and educational needs present among LTC staff including the need for increased understanding of interprofessional oral health care roles, the need for a basic level of oral health education across direct care staff lines, and the need for training and tools that take into account the frontline realities of LTC direct care (challenging resident behaviors, busy staff schedules, etc.).
- Findings from this research will be used to inform the MOTIVATE pilot project curriculum. The MOTIVATE project aims to improve, promote, and protect the oral and systemic health of Maine LTC residents. The pilot project will center on using an innovative, interprofessional, evidence-based, and sustainable educational model.



Project research carried out by: University of Maine Center on Aging

Camden Hall, 25 Texas Avenue, Bangor ME 04401-4324
Phone: (207) 262-7920 | Fax: (207) 262-7921 | Web: www.mainecenteronaging.org

Funding for this project provided by:
Lunder-Dineen Health Education Alliance of Maine

Training Received on Oral Health Topics Prior to Work with Current Employer (N= 205)	% of Respondents
Why is oral health care important?	91.7%
How to clean teeth/dentures	85.3%
What is gum disease?	77.0%
What does bad breath mean?	68.1%
What is a cavity?	67.6%