

Creating a Heightened Awareness for Consistent Oral Hygiene Practice

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Creating a Heightened Awareness for Consistent Oral Hygiene Practice

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Background and PICO Question

- An opportunity was observed to improve oral care in patients with cognitive deficits, dependence for ADLs, and/or patients with dysphagia requiring feeding tubes.
- Lack of oral hygiene supply available at bedside for independent patients AEB requesting supplies (toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.)
- Currently, there is no policy related to oral care at Lehigh Valley Health Network.

PICO Question:

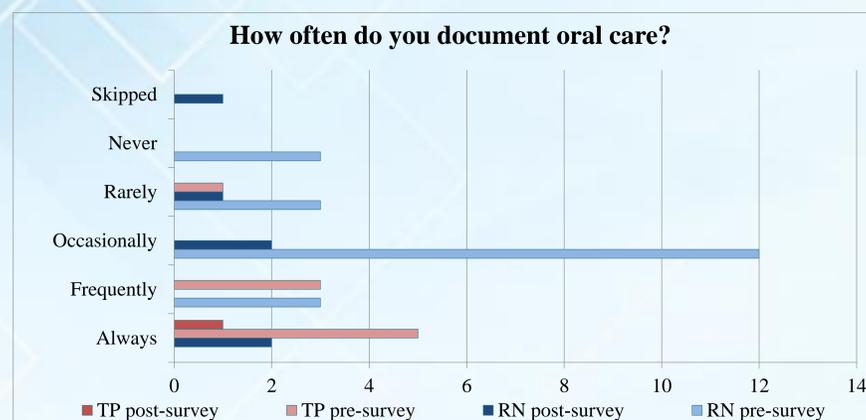
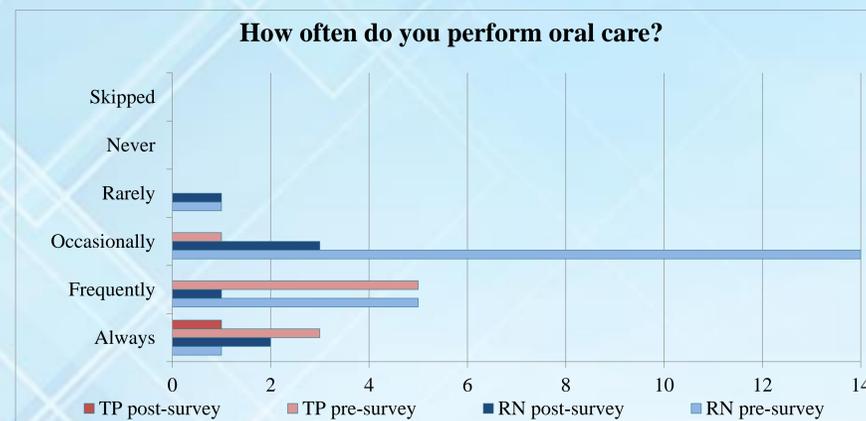
- P: Does providing medical surgical nurses and technical partners
- I: a TLC module on evidence based oral hygiene
- C: compared to no education
- O: increase knowledge of the importance of consistent oral hygiene practice and increase the frequency in oral hygiene care?

Evidence

- Daily assessments of the oral cavities, use of available dental products as treatment, and daily oral hygiene is necessary to prevent further health complications in hospitalized dependent patients (Coker et al., 2013).
- Patients with comorbidities are at higher risk for dental issues along with decrease in functional abilities (Coker et al., 2013).
- Lack of proper oral hygiene can lead to respiratory complications, affect heart health, and cause loss of teeth (Ignatavicius et al., 2015).
- Older adult patients produce less saliva, and may receive antibiotics or medications that further cause dry mouth. This, in combination with lack of oral hygiene, increases risk of further complications (as listed above) (Coker et al., 2013).
- Brushing teeth and dentures, using fluoride-containing products, and moistening oral mucosa help prevent infection and maintain oral immunity (Coker et al., 2013).
- To improve patient oral care outcomes, nurses are to educate themselves and the healthcare team on proper oral hygiene and collaborate with the healthcare team (technical partners) (Coker et al., 2013).

Implementation and Data

- Implementation
 - Registered nurses (RNs) and technical partners (TPs) were surveyed on how often oral care is completed prior to being assigned the electronic education module (TLC) regarding oral hygiene.
 - RNs and TPs completed an electronic education module on oral hygiene provided in the workplace.
 - A second survey was conducted on how frequently RNs and TPs perform oral hygiene, after being educated on its importance.
 - Pre- and post-surveys were evaluated to determine evidence of an increase in knowledge regarding proper oral hygiene and its importance.
- Data



Outcomes

- 21 RNs responded to the pre-survey. 7 RNs responded to the post-survey. 9 TPs responded to the pre-survey. 1 TP responded to the post-survey.
- An open ended response question was added to the post-TLC “Has your daily care of patients changed after reading the oral hygiene TLC? What did you find most informative in the TLC?” One response was “Yes, I am more aware of the patient’s need for oral hygiene and I try to make sure that patients have the resources to perform oral hygiene.”
- Project Barriers:
 - There was a low response rate from both RNs and TPs.
 - There was limited time to complete the pre- and post-surveys.

Next Steps

- According to the pre-TLC and post-TLC surveys, there seems to be a heightened awareness of the importance of providing consistent oral care for patients.
- Currently, there are no policy guidelines on patient oral care. Implementing a hospital wide policy for personal care provision would help to standardize practice.

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