



SENIOR SMILES



Oral health in residential aged care facilities – a new model of care

# Translational research/res earch to practice



# **BACKGROUND RESEARCH**

- The University of Newcastle research began in 2009 by implementing a dental hygiene student placement program in 17 Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACF) on the NSW, Central Coast
- Identified the need for a dental hygienist/oral health therapist to be integrated into RACFs to support core oral health practices for residents
- Students identified; poor oral health, residents in pain, ad hoc oral health practices, no referral pathways for dental treatment, difficulties in accessing dental care and a general lack of understanding of the significance of good oral health for good general health





# A NEW MODEL OF CARE 'SENIOR SMILES'

- \$100,000 grant from NSW Medicare Local, Erina
- 12 month research project January December 2014
- Employment of a qualified dental hygienist to provide oral health risk assessments, oral health care plans, education and referral pathways for dental treatment for residents living in 5 RACF on the NSW, Central Coast
- Grants obtained to purchase a portable dental unit and portable chair
- Colgate and Oral 7 product support
- Partnerships with the LHD and private dentists
- Mobile prosthetist



# PARTICIPATING RACF

**Toukley Aged Care (Riviera Health)** 

Wyong Aged Care (Riviera Health)

**Starrett Lodge (Uniting Care)** 

**Our Lady of Loreto Gardens (Catholic Care)** 

Matthew Johns Nursing Homes (now Aurrum, Erina)



# **THE AIM**

 Senior Smiles oral health program was an exploratory pilot study to examine the effectiveness of employing a dental hygienist in residential aged care facilities to provide oral health assessments and care plans, and develop dental referral pathways for residents



## RESEARCH PROTOCOL

- 'Seniors Smiles' oral health initiative placed a dental hygienist in 5 residential aged care facilities on the NSW, Central Coast
- Residents received oral health risk assessments, oral health care plans, referral pathways for dental treatment and oral hygiene education session
- RACF staff were trained in oral hygiene care
- 12 month working program
- 24 week intervention
- Data collection involved pre and post intervention (controlled tooth brushing and denture cleaning) plaque scores
- The number of assessments, care plans, referrals and treatment completed



# **RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANTS**

- All residents across the 5 RACFs were invited to participate
- Cognitively impaired residents were supported by next of kin or power of attorney, guardianship board
- Information and consent documents were mailed out
- Verbal consent by phone



# PROGRAM PUBLICITY

- Presentations at resident and relatives meetings
- Presentations at staff meetings
- Discussions with staff, residents and family members

# **BARRIERS**

- Consent
- Resident/family members interest
- Transport
- Payment for dental treatment
- Staff interest in oral health education sessions

# **'SENIOR SMILES' DOCUMENTATION**

- Consent
- Oral health risk assessment
- Oral health care plan
- Referral
- Medical history
- Dental history

	Professional Oral Health Asses	sment and Care Plan
	Troressional Grain Tealth Asses	
Date:		
Patient:		DOB:
Category:	Healthy	Unhealthy
Lips:	Moist	Chapped
Tongue:	Pink	Red
	Moist	Dry
Gums:	Pink	Red
	Firm	Inflamed
		Ulcerated
Breath:	Ok	Bad
Saliva:	Plentiful	Dry
	Watery	Sticky/Frothy
Natural Teeth:	No Decay	Decayed
	No Broken Teeth	Broken Teeth
	No Mobility	Some Mobile
Oral Cleanliness:	No Food Particles	Food debris
	No Tarter	Tarter
	Minimal Plaque	Thick Plaque
	No Candidiasis	Candidiasis present
Dental Pain:	No Behavioural Signs	Behavioural Signs
	No Verbal Signs	Verbal Signs
	No Physical Signs	Ulcerations/Swelling/Decay
Dentition:	Natural Teeth Only	
	Natural Teeth & Partial Denture	
	No Natural Teeth & No Denture	
	Full Dentures	
	Oral Health Care	Plan
Natural Teeth:	Fluoride Toothpaste	Chlorhexidine paste/mouth rinse
Dentures:	Soap and Water	Vinegar and Water
Saliva:	No Substitute	Substitute
Candidiasis:	No treatment required	Treatment
Referral:	Yes	No
Other:		



# ALL CONSENTING RESIDENTS WERE TRIAGED BY THE DENTAL HYGIENIST

337 Residents consented to participate

210 (62%) Residents were referred to the 'Senior Smiles' dental hygienist

**60 (29%)** Residents were referred for dental treatment to a private dentist and prosthetists

**84 (40%)** Residents were referred for dental treatment to Central Coast, Local Health District, Oral Health Clinic

66 (31%) Residents were reviewed by the dental hygienist as not requiring further treatment



# **PUBLIC DENTAL CLINIC REFERRAL RESULTS**

40 (48%) completed treatment
10 (12%) remain on the waiting list
16 (19%) resisted treatment
6 (7%) experienced transport issues
1 (1%) was not permitted to leave the facility
4 (5%) were not given permission by NoK
4 (5%) were awaiting NoK approval
2 (2%) left the facility
1 (1%) deceased

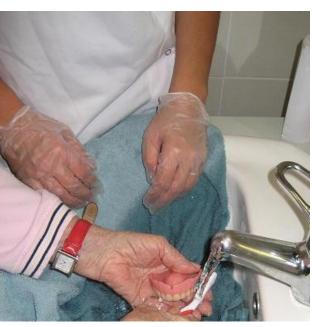
# PRIVATE DENTIST/PROSTHETIST REFERRAL RESULTS

45 (75%) completed treatment
4 (7%) resisted treatment
1 (2%) experienced transport issues
2 (3%) left the facility
5 (8%) were not given permission by NoK to seek treatment
2 (3%) were awaiting NoK permission
1 (2%) deceased

# 239 RACF ORAL HEALTH TRAINING







# RESEARCH INTERVENTION RESULTS

- The statistical program SSP was used to conduct a paired t-test to compare pre and post plaque scores on residents from the 5 RACFs
- A statistically significant result of p<0.05 showed the intervention of the dental hygienist was effective in reducing plaque scores

# **'SENIOR SMILES' - THE IMPACT**

- Provides residents with a model of care that includes:
- Preventive oral hygiene care

Referral pathways for complex dental treatment needs

 Established a formal management protocol for oral health care within the RACFs



# **ACHIEVEMENTS**

- Implemented in Riverina ACFs and UnitingCare, Koombahla
- Australian Dental Association (ADA) Bulletin acknowledgement of the 'Senior Smiles" program
- ASSCID conference award second prize 'Senior Smiles' model of care
- The University of Newcastle Senior Smiles award for achievement 2014

# **SENIOR SMILES**

The 'Senior Smiles' model of oral health care is transportable:

- Implement change
- Improve oral health
- Improve general health
- Improve resident quality of life
- Reduce emergency oral health/general health resident episodes
- Improve staff oral health knowledge

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