

The Power of Innovation

A health care system to meet our needs
NSW Health
Symposium Oct 2012

Resi-DENTAL Care Program Improving Primary Health Care in the Community

Introduction

Access to dental care for residents of aged care facilities is often difficult and complicated. A lack of onsite dental facilities and the complexities of transporting the frail aged to external services often preclude residents from receiving dental treatment.

Providing dental care to this population requires a collaboration between the aged care services and both the public and private dental sectors.

Aim

The Resi-DENTAL Care Program aims to improve the oral health care of residents of aged care facilities by overcoming barriers to accessing dental treatment and providing oral health education and training to aged care staff.



Better oral health in residential care requires a team approach to maintain a resident's oral health care.

Method

- Four kits of suitable portable dental equipment were sourced and purchased.
- Private dental practitioners were canvassed for involvement.
- An instructional DVD for use and care of the equipment is sent to participating dentists.
- All parties responsibilities are outlined in a service level agreement.
- Equipment is transported between facilities as needed.
- Support with the implementation of the Better Oral Health in Residential Care education and training program is offered to each aged care facility.



Portable dental equipment onsite at Koombahla Aged Care Facility.

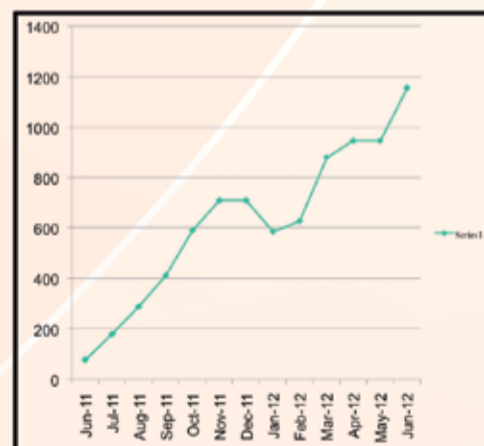


Table 1: Number of aged care residents with access to regular onsite dental services

Results

Since inception in 2011, 1155 residents from 15 aged care facilities throughout the Hunter New England Local Health District boundaries have access to regular onsite dental services (Table 1) with 263 dental examinations and almost 400 dental restorations performed (Table 2). These facilities no longer have the difficulty of locating a dentist and transporting residents for care, and the dentist has access to portable equipment to provide onsite a full course of care including prevention, early detection and intervention of oral health problems.

Over 320 aged care staff from 10 aged care facilities have participated in the Better Oral Health in Residential Care education and training program. Following this training staff have become aware of the link better oral health and general health and the impact poor oral health can have on quality of life.

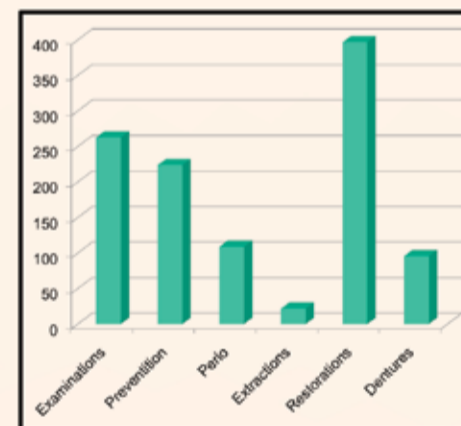


Table 2: Type and number of services provided

Conclusion

The Resi-DENTAL Care Program is the first of its kind for NSW. It seeks to improve the oral health care and access to dental services for aged care residents.

This program based on primary health care principles, encompasses provision of oral health education for carers and residents. It works collaboratively with private dental practitioners to provide dental care at the aged care facility.

Contact:

Karen.Sleishman@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au

Coordinator Community Aged Care Oral Health Programs

Acknowledgements

NSW Centre for Oral Health Strategy

SA Dental Services

Dr Peter King, Dr Rachael Elias, Dr Dilpreet Singh, Dr Jasmine Lam, Megan Brown, Rhiannan Collins, Amy Doyle, Brad Lombardi, Kathleen Ross, Vicki Quinn

Participating private dental practitioners