Appendix F: Algorithm for Oral Care

Reflect on your oral hygiene beliefs and practices - Know how they might be influencing the care you provide.

Good Practice Statement

Complete an initial admission assessment. This includes obtaining an oral health history of oral hygiene beliefs, practices, self-care abilities and current state of oral health to identify the person’s oral care needs and potential risk factors.

Recommendation 1.0

Follow a multi-component oral care protocol to guide care.

Recommendation 4.0

Is the person behaviourally complex?

Yes

Document specific successful strategies and techniques in the individualized oral care plan that can be used when providing oral care.

No

Is the person behaviourally complex?

Yes

No

Recommendation 3.0

Use of approaches such as environmental adaptations, appropriate selection and modification of oral care tools and supplies, and the use of verbal and/or non-verbal communication strategies.

Recommendation 2.0

Provide education to persons and caregivers on oral health and oral care. Education should be based on a learning needs assessment.

Refer to appropriate oral health professional.

Routinely reassess as the condition changes and as per organizational policy.

Document care provided.

Complete an oral health assessment using a standardized approach and/or validated tool.

Develop an individualized oral care plan. The oral care plan is informed by the initial assessment and oral health assessment.

Some considerations:

- Does the person require oral care to be provided, supervised, reminded or cued?
- Is the person at risk of aspiration?
- Does the person have an advanced airway?
- Does the person have teeth?
- Does the person use dentures?

Is the person behaviourally complex?

Yes

No

Follow step-by-step instructions for oral care, including tooth and denture brushing. Oral care should be provided, supervised, reminded or cued ideally at least twice daily using the appropriate techniques, supplies and tools.

Use identified oral care tools and supplies. The oral care protocol should clearly specify the oral care supplies and tool(s) required to provide oral care. Tools and supplies should be easily accessible.

Staff Education and Training - Recommendations 5.0, 6.0, 7.0

Interprofessional Approach to Oral Care - Recommendation 8.0

Foundational: Person- and Family-Centred Care (PFCC) and Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC)

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