National Network for Health Access Webinar

Facing the Challenges of Oral Health Care for Seniors

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### Objectives

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<th>Review the Dental Demographics of the Senior Population in the United States</th>
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<td>Describe Functional Status and Oral Health in Aging</td>
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<td>List Ten Common Oral Health Concerns of the Elder Population</td>
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“Oral disease is just a part of growing older”.

Dry mouth is a natural part of the aging process. “You just have to learn to live with it”.

“Oral health education is integrated into other Health Disciplines”.

“The oral health care for seniors has steadily improved, similar to children”.

“One of the problems facing residents in care facilities is that staff do not wish to provide oral care for seniors. Only dentists will look into someone’s mouth”!
Dental Demographics of the Senior Population

- **The Wave**: Population
- **State of Oral Health** in this wave of older Americans
- **Gap** in Dental Utilization between Medicare-enrolled Adults and Adults with private insurance is increasing
Total number of persons age 65 or older, by age group, 1900 to 2050, in millions

The Wave

65 or older
85 or older
Column2

Community
Barbara
Rose
Joe
Walter

1900 1930 1950 2000 2030 2050
3 8 11 30 72 88
0.2 0.4 6 10 20 88
2013 Demographics of Cognition

Estimated population of the United States----------------------------- 318,000,000
Estimated populations over age 65--------------------------------------41,000,000
Estimated population over 65 with a cognitive impairment----------------16,000,000
Sensory Impairment by Age, USA. 1999-2006
<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>65-69</th>
<th>70-74</th>
<th>75-79</th>
<th>80+</th>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>51,000</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>39,000</td>
<td>53,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2028</td>
<td>102,000</td>
<td>90,000</td>
<td>68,000</td>
<td>77,000</td>
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Case Scenario: Francis

- Francis is an 81 year old senior from Augusta, Maine. She wishes to have her remaining teeth extracted. She has medicine for arthritis and hypertension that causes very dry mouth and a bad taste. “Might as well get them out while I am still healthy and can afford a denture”. Her husband, Walter, is 30 miles away in Long Term Care.

- “You tell me my teeth are healthy, but I just had a $250.00 filling completed! I could not even afford the cleaning.”

- “I am embarrassed asking my grandchildren to take me there again…to fix my very unattractive teeth!” It’s a monthly struggle to pay bills.
Frances Access problems

- **Finances**
- **Perception of need**
- Transportation
- **Dental IQ**
- Cultural Attitudes
- Workforce
- Fear
- Health
Medium per Capita Real Income for the Elderly (65+)

Source: Employee Benefit Research Institute 2006

Median per capita income

Line chart showing the median per capita income from 1974 to 2005.
Most seniors do not have dental insurance
70% of seniors have no insurance
Cost of dentistry if usually out of pocket
Frances and her husband, Walter

Choices
Costs of Basic Dental Treatment

Survey of ADA 2016

- **Cleaning** $125.00
- **X-Ray** $75.00
- **Exams** $35.00--$125.00
- **Filling** $300.00
- **Crown** $1000.00
- **Extraction** $75.00
- **Denture** $1000.00
Trends in Dentistry

Recognition of the Importance of Oral Health

Recognition of the Importance of Oral Health

Chronic Diseases Living longer Polypharmacy - Oral Side Effects

“Our System is Stuck” Dr. Marko Vujicic

New models of Care
“We will not see major expansion in dental care use in oral health in the coming years, especially among those with the highest needs”

“Affordability is the greatest reason that senior avoid care”

“The idea that dental care can be stimulate by convincing seniors that is worth it, is in his opinion, a complete fantasy”

“Seniors tend not to perceive the need for care. A team, inter professional approach, is required”
The Long Journey of Integrating Oral Care with Overall Health Care
1988 Surgeon General 1988, Dr. Koop

1. **Oral Health is integral** to total health
2. Need a **qualified dental work force** and support for the education of this work force must continue to come from both public and private sources
3. Need to **design and implement curriculum**, 
4. **Need to reduce the wide disparities** in oral health status and access to care
Progress and Failure

**Significant progress** in individual and community oral disease prevention and oral health promotion.

Dentistry has also **improved its knowledge** of the best ways to prevent and treat oral health problems.

**Reduction of disparities has been minimal** for the adult population.

**Minimal progress in educating non-dental practitioners about the importance of oral health** and their role in assuring it improves.
Trend: Seniors seeking dental care

- 1970: 25% seeking dental care
- 1985: 40% seeking dental care
- 2000: 50% seeking dental care
- 2010: 55% seeking dental care
Trend in Oral Health for Older Adults

- **Edentulism**: Rates have steadily reduced since 1999 50%-32
- **Caries** have increased...More teeth exposed
- **Incidence of Decay** in 2x incidence not institutionalized
- **Periodontal Disease**: 47.2 percent, or 64.7 million American adults, have mild, moderate or severe periodontitis, the more advanced form of periodontal disease, seek treatment
Case Scenario: Pam

- Providers’ knowledge and attitudes about aging can affect how accurately distinguish normal changes associated with aging from acute illness and chronic disease.

- Ageism can take the form of a provider dismissing Pam’s treatable pathology as a feature of old age, or treating expected changes of aging as though they were diseases...including oral health issue

- (Kane, Ouslander, and Abrass, 2004)
Medical School Education

- How many hours of material regarding oral health/periodontal health were covered in the curriculum?

  - ≤3 hours: 62%
  - >3 hours to ≤5 hours: 23%
  - >5 hours: 15%
Periodontal disease 40-75%

Assessed teeth

Candidacies 20-44%

Decay 75%

Cancer 2%-4%

Denture sores 17%

Chewing Problems 75%
Tooth aches 7-10%

Infection Xerostomia 23%
Oral Impacts: more common also
(NHANES 2005-2008; Griffin et al., under review)

Greater in LTC
The Importance

Dr. Hugh Silk

Treating Gum Disease Means Lower Annual Medical Costs

- Diabetes: $2,840 (40.2%)
- Stroke: $5,681 (40.9%)
- Heart Disease: $1,090 (10.7%)
- Pregnancy: $2,433 (73.7%)

Significant annual cost savings are possible when individuals with certain chronic diseases (diabetes, cerebral vascular disease, or coronary heart disease), or who were pregnant, received dental treatment for their gum disease, after accounting for the effect of diabetes.

Treating Gum Disease Reduces Hospital Admissions

- Diabetes: 39.4%
- Stroke: 21.2%
- Heart Disease: 28.6%

Significant decreases in annual hospitalizations are possible when individuals with certain chronic diseases received dental treatment for their gum disease, after accounting for the effect of diabetes.

Trend in Chronic Diseases for Seniors over 65

80% have at least one chronic disease

75% have at least 3-4 Chronic Disease

Most Chronic diseases require medication

“Let’s talk about these medications”
Chronic Conditions in the USA
NHIS, 2008-2010  Percent with condition

- diabetes
- arthritis
- cancer
- stroke
- MI
- CHD
- Heart Disease
Moist Chronic Diseases are associated with medication

Polypharmacy

- Two thirds of seniors take at least one medication
- At hospital discharge, they receive 6 or more drugs
- In nursing homes, patients often receive 12 to 15 drugs
- Side Effects ---- Dry mouth and Taste Disturbance
Questions on Saliva

1. Salivary output does not diminish with increasing age.  
   1. TRUE

2. Saliva production is the highest in the afternoon and decreases at night.  
   2. TRUE

3. There is diminished taste without saliva.  
   3. TRUE
Love the magic of saliva

400 of the most frequently prescribed cause dry mouth
Top 200 cause taste disturbances

- Taste
- Swallowing
- Neutralizes acid
Magic of saliva

- Full normal saliva
- 1/3 full
- Medication

.5 liter

1.5 liter
Case Scenario: Mildred

- Mrs. Mildred, age 77, has severe arthritis and lives alone. She was always very particular with her oral health routine before bedtime. She cannot afford to visit her dentist.
- Her antidepressant medication causes her mouth to be “dried out”.
- Her food taste bad and her breath smell very bad. She over heard her grand children saying “Grandma “ugly witch teeth”.

.
Dry mouth and angular cheilitis
Cervical Caries
Focus on the Future

- Innovative Models of Care
- Integrated models of Care
- Redefining Roles
- Use of New Technology
- Interdisciplinary Geriatric Care in Action
- Advancing a policy agenda to improve the oral health of vulnerable elders
Medical/Dental Integration To Improve Oral Health

Healthy People 2020, The Challenge ; DentaQuest

- “Integration of oral health into medical care expands the potential for high-risk individuals to have access to care that halts and even reverses dental disease, avoiding or reducing the need for expensive treatment.”
Collaboration vs. Integration
from DentaQuest Dori Bingham

- **Collaboration** = primary care and oral health working *with* one another
- **Integration** = oral health working *within* and as part of primary care or vice versa.....Provision of dental services *within* primary care
- **Minimize Access to Care Issues**
Why should dental address medical issues?
Maximize Places

Dr. Hugh Silk, Rural Health
University of Massachusetts Medical School
Health centers are community-based and patient-directed organizations that serve populations with limited access to health care.

In 2009, there were 1,131 health centers and about 75% of those centers provided on site dental services.
Teledentistry

- Dr. Paul Glassman has implemented teledentistry in his home state of California.

- It’s similar to visiting a brick and mortar dental office, only the dentist may be on a computer screen instead of in person.

- Teledentistry in and of itself is not a service. It’s really a method by which services are delivered.
PACE

- Pace is a Medicare and Medicaid Program that helps people meet their needs in the community instead of going to a nursing home or other care facility. Stands for Programs of All Inclusive Care for the Elderly.
Functional Status and Oral Disease

Disabilities and oral health and disease
Over 50% of seniors have at least one Physical Disability

*That’s over 20 million

Increases with age
An ADL of most concern to the dental team is the ability to eat. If a person can eat, it usually means that the person has sufficient upper arm mobility to perform oral hygiene procedures on a daily basis.
Rose, age 74, has suffered from arthritis for many years and recently had breast cancer. It has been very difficult for her to move her right arm and perform some of her basic living skills. Oral hygiene has been extremely difficult.

- Rose has a very dry mouth from her medications. She uses hard lemon candy to help with her dry mouth.
- With her poor appearance, discolored, broken teeth, and her “and smelly breath” becoming worse every day, she has stopped all social interaction including seeing family, going to church and all social events. She feels shunned.
Clinical Scenario: Rose, Communication

- Rose’s poor appearance and bad breath contribute to her decreased verbal communication through embarrassment and result in non-verbal communication.
- Rose and her friends rate a good smile and the ability to chew and eat as one of the most important indicators of their quality of life.
- *Rose just nods.*
Ten Common Oral Concerns for Seniors:

- Dental Disease is Not a Normal part of Aging
- Oral Health promotes good Body Image and Social Interaction
- The Dentist is Not the only healthcare professional willing to help in oral care.
Ten Common Oral Concerns for Seniors:

- Is sugar free candy really better than regular candy?
- Any harm in eating before bedtime?
- Will chemotherapy and radiation impact my oral health?
- My medications make me so dry that I cannot swallow. What can I do?
- Is it OK to suck on a lemon drop when my mouth is dry? It seem to stimulate saliva.
- Do saliva substitutes work?
- My doctor prescribed medicine to treat a yeast infection in my mouth caused from antibiotics. Any recommendations?
- I am a smoker and drink 3 glasses of wine every day. Am I at risk of oral cancer? What does it look like?
- Is fluoride still effective in seniors?
- Should I buy an electric tooth brush? Are they better than a manual brush?
- Are there adaptive dental equipment for people that at have disabilities?
for Seniors:

Additional Concerns for Seniors:

- Is too much denture adhesive toxic?"
- What is the best way to clean my denture?
- Is it true that I need to clean my denture if I have a yeast infection in my mouth?
- Thoughts on Waterpiks and electric toothbrushes