

# ACCESSING DENTAL CARE FOR OLDER PEOPLE IN CARE HOMES IN WALES

CARE HOMES IN WALES

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WELSH ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT

## Information for care home managers



This leaflet provides information on the importance of oral health care for older people and how to access dentistry in Wales.

Promotion and maintenance of good oral health is a challenge for care home staff, particularly as an increasing proportion of older people still have their own teeth. Caring for the mouth improves the overall health of a resident. **Care home staff have a duty of care to help residents maintain their oral hygiene.**

Managers need to ensure their staff receive regular and appropriate oral training to ensure that they have the necessary skills.

### Five essentials towards good oral health care

1. Keep natural teeth clean using a toothpaste with fluoride (1450ppm)
2. Regular dental examinations
3. Oral health care plans for each individual
4. A healthy diet tailored to individual needs
5. Appropriate care and naming of dentures

## Importance of regular dental check-ups

A regular dental examination is a fundamental element of the care for your residents, and this applies whether they have their own teeth or not.

It allows the dentist to spot any problems and make arrangements for onward care, if necessary. A personalised oral health care plan will assist staff by identifying where extra support is needed.

Care home staff can contribute to securing good oral health for residents by completing an Oral Health Risk Assessment (as highlighted in Fundamentals of Care, see page 2). The dentist can use this assessment to help guide individual care plans for residents.

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### Special points of interest:

- \* National Minimum Standards for Care Homes for Older People relating to oral health care and dentistry are clarified
- \* Information and contact details are provided for accessing dentistry for your residents

### Dental care for care home residents



**Good oral health can have a huge effect on your residents' quality of life. As well as making a key contribution to their general health it can ensure that they can eat a wide range of foods without discomfort, speak & socialise confidently, & smile with comfort.**

Many care home residents will be able to make the same choices about their oral health as they made when living in their own homes. Others may need some extra help from those who care for them.

Oral health care for care home residents in Wales is underpinned by two key policy documents. The *National Minimum Standards for Care Homes for Older People* describes standards that care homes must reach 'to meet the needs and secure the welfare of people who live there'. Standard 15 makes specific reference to oral health. *Fundamentals of Care* presents twelve fundamental aspects of health and social care, including oral health and hygiene, which should be inherent within a quality service. Residents can expect:

- Support to maintain healthy, comfortable mouths and pain-free teeth and gums, enabling them to eat well and prevent related problems.
- Support, where possible, for individual self-care and where not possible support from care home staff to fulfil oral hygiene routines. There is increasing evidence that older people who have poor oral hygiene are at increased risk of developing pneumonia. Brushing teeth twice daily helps to avoid this.
- Access to specialist and routine dental services, according to need.

Lost dentures can be a problem for residents. Dentures are very personal to the individual and it can be difficult to make replacements particularly if the resident has a medical condition such as Parkinson's or dementia. It may take 5 or 6 visits to make a replacement, if it is possible to do so. Please take care with dentures and ensure that they are marked with the residents name for identification purposes.

Specialist denture marking kits can be sourced from dental suppliers; details can be obtained from your local Community Dental Service (for contacts see page 5).



The National Minimum Standards can be found at:

<http://wales.gov.uk/cssiwsite/newcssiw/aboutus/providingsocialcare/adultcare/nmsadult/nmsolderpeople/?lang=en>

Fundamentals of Care can be found at:

<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/documents/booklet-e.pdf> (pages 50-51)

### Arranging NHS treatment for mobile residents

To find out which local practices offer NHS treatment and are accepting new patients, you can:

- contact your Local Health Board directly or visit their website (for contact details see below) for a list of dentists practising in your area.
- call NHS Direct Wales and ask for a list of local practices and a local number to call if you have difficulty finding a dentist. Or you can visit the NHS Direct website.

<http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/>

It is important to note that your Local Health Board will have the most up-to-date information on dentists providing NHS treatment in Wales.

### Emergency dental treatment

By emergency dental treatment we mean:

1. Severe swelling, threatening the airways or tracking towards the eye
2. Prolonged bleeding following a dental extraction
3. Trauma

In cases like these either report to your resident's own dentist or, out of hours, or report to your local District General Hospital A & E department.

**NHS Direct Wales**  
**0845 46 47**  
**Galw Iechyd Cymru**



**If a resident is in discomfort or is worried about anything unusual in the mouth, NHS dental care is always available, whether they have a regular dentist or not.**



### **Urgent and out-of-hours treatment**

Urgent treatment can be offered for severe pain not eased by over the counter pain killers, an abscess or acute infection or any abnormalities that persist in the mouth for more than 10 days, e.g. an ulcer.

Your resident's regular dentist may offer urgent treatment during normal working hours. Outside normal working hours, call the surgery on the usual number and you should be told how to access urgent care.

Dental arrangements vary across Wales. As a first point of call use the dental helpline numbers outlined on page 6. Please note that there are different contact numbers for different geographical areas. You can also contact your local Community Dental Service (see page 5 for contacts).

### **Arranging Home Visits**

Since domiciliary visits are very resource intensive they should be regarded as the exception and not the rule. Many residents will be able to attend a local general dental practitioner or community dentist for their care.



Care homes have a responsibility to transport and support residents when visiting the dentist with an appropriate staff member who can act as an advocate; the dentist will need details of the resident's medical history and medication.

However if one of your residents finds it impossible to visit a dentist because of a physical, mental or sensory disability, contact your Local Health Board. There may be local dentists who offer home visits or the community dental service may be recommended. It is important to note that in some areas of Wales transport for wheel chair users, via the Ambulance service, can be arranged.

**Community Dental Services**

Each Local Health Board provides a Community Dental Service for people who may not otherwise seek or receive dental care. In addition to children the service provides care for people with learning disabilities, vulnerable older people, including the housebound and people with medical, physical or mental health problems. The Community Dental Service may provide appropriate Oral Care training for home staff and can also explain who is eligible to use the service.

**Community Dental Service Contacts****Betsi Cadwaladr, North Wales Community Dental Service**

Dental Administration Office, Marine Drive, RHYL, LL18 3AS  
Tel: 01745 443104 - Fax: 01745 344574

**Cardiff and Vale Community Dental Service**

(covers Cardiff, the Vale of Glamorgan, RCT, Merthyr and Bridgend)  
Community Dental Service Admin Office  
Room 136, University Dental Hospital, Heath Park, Cardiff, CF14 4XY  
Tel: 029 2074 4651

**Gwent Community Dental Service**

Vicki Jones/Sue Greening  
Tenby House, Llanfrechfa Grange, Llanfrechfa, Torfaen  
Tel: 01633 623728.

**Powys Community Dental Service**

Park Street Dental Clinic, Park Street, Newtown, Powys, SY16 1EG  
Tel: 01686 617363

**Hwyel Dda Community Dental Service**

(covers Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion)  
Pond Street Clinic, Carmarthen.  
Tel: 01267 227481

**Abertawe Bro Morgannwg Community Dental Service**

(covers Swansea and Neath and Port Talbot)  
Central Clinic, Trinity Buildings, 21 Orchard Street, Swansea, SA1 5AT  
Tel: 01792 517838

**NHS treatment costs**

Please note that NHS charges may apply when attending for dental treatment at a general dental practitioner or community dental clinic, unless residents have a current exemption certificate (HC2).

To apply for an exemption certificate for residents use form HC1 or provide proof of benefits received. The residents' National Insurance number may also be required by the dentist if claiming exemption.

## Private Dental Treatment

Some dentists only accept private patients. Others offer both NHS and private treatment. Fees for private dental treatment are set by each practice, so it may be worth 'shopping around' to get a general idea of fees charged by several local practices. They may have a price list for relatively simple treatments but this won't give an indication of the quality of work or the cost of more complex work.

## Dental Helpline Contacts in Wales

### Hywel Dda & Powys

(Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion and Powys) **0845 60 10 128** (24 hours)

### Aneurin Bevan Dental Helpline

(Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport, Torfaen) **01633 488 389** 9am-4pm Monday to Thursday, 9am-3pm Friday. For evenings, weekends and bank holidays telephone **0845 602 0252**.

### Abertawe Bro Morgannwg Dental Helpline

(Neath Port Talbot, Swansea) **0845 60 10 128** (24 hours).

### Betsi Cadwaladr Dental Helpline

(Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham) **0845 60 10 128** (24 hours).

### Cardiff and Vale Dental Helpline

(Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan, Bridgend) **02920 640384** 9am-4pm Monday to Friday For evenings, weekends and bank holidays **Cardiff 02920 444500, Vale of Glamorgan 08447 368362**.

### Cwm Taf Dental Helpline

(Rhondda Cynon Taff & Merthyr Tydfil)  
**01443 680166** between 9.00am and 5pm Monday to Friday.  
For evenings, weekends and bank holidays **0845 60 10 110**

### Useful Numbers & Links

**General Dental Council:** Responsible for registering all dentists and other professionals who practise in the UK. You can search the website to determine whether a professional is registered. If you do not have internet access you can call the registration department.

**Tel: 020 7344 3740 (registration department)**

**Tel: 0845 222 4141 (general enquiries)**

Website: [www.gdc-uk.org](http://www.gdc-uk.org)

**The All Wales Special Interest Group in Oral Health Care:** is an advisory group of Special Care Dentists and Dental Care Professionals working in the Community Dental and Hospital Dental Service in Wales.

Website: <http://www.sigwales.org/>

**The British Society of Gerontology:** provides a multidisciplinary forum for researchers and other individuals interested in the situations of older people, and in how knowledge about ageing and later life can be enhanced and improved.

Website: <http://www.britishgerontology.org/>

**The British Society for Disability and Oral Health:** the aim of the society is to bring together all those interested in the oral care of people with disabilities.

Website: <http://www.bsdh.org.uk/index.php>



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