

Caring for the Oral Health of Vulnerable Persons

All **staff** working with **vulnerable people, patients** and **clients**.



Developing people
for health and
healthcare

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Caring for Our Most At-Risk

Individuals should be able to eat, speak, and socialise without active disease or embarrassment. Oral health supports self-esteem, dignity, social integration and nutrition, while poor oral health can lead to pain, infection, tooth loss, and can negatively affect confidence.

Vulnerable groups, such as people living in isolation, those suffering from substance misuse, or individuals with learning disabilities are amongst the most at-risk for developing severe dental issues due to poor communication, a general lack of awareness when it comes to their needs, and perceived stigma.

Bridging the Gap with Training

With this in mind, the Directorate of Multi-Disciplinary Dental Education (DMDE) working across the North East and North Cumbria is giving **free training for staff, residents, GPs, pharmacists and families** to help improve the oral health of vulnerable persons.

"The Directorate of Multi-Disciplinary Dental Education is committed to delivering an understanding of the importance of oral health, as well as its relevance to general health, to non-dental professionals including doctors, community pharmacists and care homes. These initiatives include the reduction of preventable 'blue light' incidents, the management of patients with complex medical conditions, the potential to reduce general anesthetic admissions, and the provision of information to doctors to enable them to signpost patients to dental practices when necessary."

Malcolm Smith, Postgraduate Dental Dean



We were given great ideas on how to be successful with oral hygiene and for troubleshooting for the more challenging residents,"

Training in Oral Health

Good oral health improves a person's overall health, reducing the number of preventable incidents. DMDE training focuses on the importance of good oral hygiene, looking at its impact on general health and promoting healthy lifestyle choices for hard-to-reach groups. This helps to raise the quality of life and general health of isolated or vulnerable persons.

Courses include:

- Oral Health Training for Hard-to-Reach Groups
- Learning Disabilities and Oral Health
- Substance Misuse and Oral Health



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What to Expect from the Training

Basic oral care training contains similar elements. Those being trained will learn to:

- Discuss the importance of good oral hygiene routines
- Discuss the impact of oral hygiene on general health
- Demonstrate effective tooth brushing techniques, with knowledge of fluoride toothpastes and mouthwashes
- Explain the importance of sugar-free medication
- Identify healthy, non-cariogenic food and drinks
- Define NHS treatment bands, bands, costs, exemptions, and the importance of dental visits.

Additionally, each course will cover topic areas specific to their group.

Oral Health Training for Hard-to-Reach Groups

- Learn and share an effective oral hygiene routine for natural teeth and dentures
- Explain the link between oral cancer, drugs and alcohol
- Recognise oral risk factors for dental health

Learning Disabilities and Oral Health

- Discuss the reasons behind oral health deterioration
- Recognise oral risk factors for dental disease typical to patients with learning disabilities
- Learn tooth brushing technique adaptations
- Demonstrate skills to clean a mouth and support a patient through the process

Substance Misuse and Oral Health

- Recognise the effects of stimulants, alcohol, methamphetamines and heroin on the mouth
- Discuss common oral health risks with strategies for support
- Explain the link between oral cancer, drugs and alcohol
- Destigmatise the oral care process

Case Study: Percy Hedley College

Percy Hedley School sets out to make a difference to the learning, wellbeing, and future life chances of children with additional needs.

Through DMDE training, staff and residents at Percy Hedley College were able to begin opening up conversations around oral health. They said learning about different toothbrushes and aids was helpful, with great tips on how to get students to brush their teeth and why it is important.

"We were given great ideas on how to be successful with oral hygiene and for troubleshooting for the more challenging residents," said a participant.

Staff were taught the links between dental health and physical ailments, and were given training on how to get non-compliant students to brush their teeth.

"The training was excellent! We made use of a number of suggestions in relation to teeth cleaning, including the barman toothbrushes, the white 'chew' sticks and definitely have an increased understanding of the risks of dental care and overall health."



Book your free place today at your workplace or at a local venue.

Contact **Janet Fullard**
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Training can be delivered at your place
of work or a suitable venue to meet
your needs.

Discover our courses

DMDE offer an array of oral health training
programmes for non-dental health and social
care professionals across the North East and
North Cumbria.

For more detailed information on our training
programmes, head to: [https://madeinheene.
hee.nhs.uk/dental_training/Non-dental-
professionals](https://madeinheene.hee.nhs.uk/dental_training/Non-dental-professionals), or contact our Clinical Lead,
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