catalyse

Behind this cover are brilliant ways to transform the state of Victoria’s oral health
Contents

cohealth
A simple information card that speaks a thousand words ........................................................ 3

Dental Health Services Victoria
Working with homeless services to provide better dental access ......................................... 4

Inner East Community Health
Bridging the language gap with Google Translate ........................................................................ 5

Goulburn Valley Health
Bringing dental treatment from their local roving clinic ........................................................... 6

Knox Community and Social Health
Helping families access their local dental service ......................................................................... 7

Merri Community Health Services
Breaking down barriers for homeless clients increases participation and access .... 8

Monash Health
Improving the oral health of primary school children ................................................................. 9

Monash Health
Screening and educating clients on World Oral Health Day ....................................................... 10

North Richmond Community Health
Maximising the skills of dental assistants to provide better care ............................................ 11

North Richmond Community Health
A successful outreach aged care dental program ........................................................................ 12

Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative
Extending our reach to regional Aboriginal communities ............................................................ 13

The Royal Dental Hospital of Melbourne
Expanding the capacity of rural dental staff to provide better care ............................................ 14
cohealth

A simple information card that speaks a thousand words

Key messages

1. Could easily be replicated across the state.
2. Very good for clients from non-English speaking background.
3. 100% positive response from clients

Background

cohealth’s Footscray clientele is quite diverse with considerable dental need. As such, cohealth identified the need to create a post operative advice card that would be understood by their diverse range of clients. Using consumer consultation from the initial design phases and throughout, cohealth was able to develop the Tooth Out? Take Care Card.

Progress

Project Officers Hieu Tran and Fatima Samsudeen undertook research which indicated that to improve health literacy, image based instructions should be used. When designing the card, cohealth used simple language in conjunction with pictures, and closely linked pictures to text and/or captions which included people from the intended audience. 153 clients and 45 staff were involved in the process to develop the image based card in consultation with a graphic design company.

Outcomes

The final evaluation showed 100% positive response to the card. Comments from clients of the final product include:

“Good idea, my husband had an extraction earlier in the year and the instructions were all in writing. He also has dementia so I had to keep reminding him about the instructions. If there were pictures then it would be easier for clients like him to remember.”

“I’m more likely to look at something with pictures than a handout filled with writing. Great idea.”

“Good sequence of pictures in a logical order. Easy to understand.”

“Think it’s very helpful and serves its purpose as a memory jogger.”

“Very good for clients with no English speaking background.”

The card has been implemented across cohealth oral health programs.

Find out more about this project  Gemma Kennedy | gemma.kennedy@cohealth.org.au
Background

The North West Metropolitan Region (NWMR) Oral Health Leadership Group has a number of key priorities, one of which is to improve access and attendance for people experiencing, or are at risk of homelessness through the use of a Priority Access Card (PAC) at NWMR public dental services. Piloted between October 2014 and February 2015, eight homeless services in the NWMR agreed to participate, either ‘actively’, by staff members engaging with clients specifically about the project, or ‘passively’ by allowing clients to ‘help themselves’ to information brochures about the project. Twelve public dental services participated.

Progress

Two PACs were developed, Blue to support the Active method and Green to support the Passive method.

The PACs contained:
- A description of eligibility
- Details and contact information of participating public dental services
- Space to write appointment details

A Unique Identifier attached to each PAC allowed the project to track:
- Which homeless service provided the PAC
- Active or Passive referral
- The dental service where the client presented the PAC

373 clients with PACs presented to participating dental services. Data indicates PAC presentations (both Active and Passive) were increasing each month, despite a dip in November/December.

Outcomes

Overall the project aim to improve dental service access for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness, was achieved.

Clients were using the PAC to access both routine dental care and/or for significant dental issues, including pain, toothache, decaying teeth and emergency care. The overwhelming majority of participating services embraced the concept of the PAC for this client cohort, and support its ongoing use and continued distribution through both Active and Passive methods. The Project’s success indicates benefit in extending the implementation of the PAC for homeless people across Victoria. Clients reported using the PAC as a ‘good’, ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ experience, with many indicating it was a legitimate and safe way of expressing their homeless status and would use it again to access dental care. The PAC can be easily integrated into the work practices, and can add value to staff engagement with people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Key messages

1. The Priority Access Card pilot project worked well to increase access of homeless persons to oral health services.
2. Client feedback very affirmative and appreciative.
3. The process is easily implemented into all agencies.

Find out more about this project  Colin Riley | colin.riley@dhs.vic.gov.au
Background

I Speak Your Language aims to facilitate immediate, simple communication between community centre workers and clients from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds with limited or no English. By utilising the Google Translate app, clients and staff are able to navigate services and make appropriate appointments.

Progress

Highlights

- Clients were delighted and pleased to be able to communicate using their own language
- Allows quicker service to clients eliminating the wait for phone interpreters or bilingual staff
- Staff excited and willing to use the app
- Reduction in interpreter use and cost
- Better utilisation of appointments; ability to communicate with client and often resolve presenting complaint

Problems

- Some languages, with a non-English script, lack an audio component. With Google translation in written form, the app will not benefit those with lower levels of literacy
- Some languages are not translated very well
- The app requires staff and clients to speak clearly and simply
- If the sentence is too complicated the app does not cope well
- Some IT issues were encountered such as wi-fi strength to cover the entire centre, which have now been addressed

Outcomes

Results

- Clients receiving timely help and assistance in their own language
- Reduction of cost of interpreters, where not absolutely necessary
- Client feedback has been overwhelmingly positive

Efficiencies

- The feel of more direct communication with clients creates rapport
- Time saving: no long wait for a phone interpreter
- Productivity gains as appointments are effectively utilised

Key messages

1. Breaking down the language barrier.
2. Reduced interpreter costs.
3. Effective use of appointment time.
Goulburn Valley Health

Bringing dental treatment from their local roving clinic

**Key messages**

1. Use common equipment
2. Easily transportable
3. Remove barriers to access

**Background**

The aim of Goulburn Valley Health was to provide a low cost efficient model of dental care to aged care centres and so far, they have been successful in providing treatment to this vulnerable target group and raising awareness and importance of dental health within aged care centres.

**Progress**

*Highlights*

- Providing free basic dental treatment to residents
- Using general rather than specialised equipment means less training and greater rotation of staff, less breakdown of equipment
- Engaging aged care staff

*Problem*

- Restricting reach of service to within region

**Outcomes**

- Cost efficiencies made by having the use of a regular station wagon for transport and limited use of specialised outreach equipment
- No need for transport of patients, less stress to residents
- Raising the profile of the service to aged care centres, so that it becomes a centre for advice and referral in case of emergency

Find out more about this project  David Whelan | david.whelan@gvhealth.org.au
Knox Community and Social Health
Helping families access their local dental service

Background
Smiles 4 Miles is an oral health promotion initiative of Dental Health Services Victoria which works in partnership with local organisations to improve the oral health of young children, their families, educators and the broader community. Knox Social and Community Health commenced the Smiles 4 Miles program in 2009. Recognising the importance of linking families of local Smiles 4 Miles kindergartens to the dental service, they created the “I want to be a Clean well kid” referral pathway.

Progress
Working in partnership with early childhood educators, Knox display a sign-up sheet in foyers of participating Smiles 4 Miles kindergartens twice a year. Families wanting their child to have a dental check-up simply write their name on the register. Educators return the forms to Knox, who call families to arrange an appointment.

Outcomes
Families have indicated that booking an appointment can be a barrier to taking their child for a dental check-up. Having the dental service contact families removes this barrier and the number of children aged 0-5 attending the Knox dental clinic has tripled since Smiles 4 Miles first commenced. Smiles 4 Miles educators report that the sign-up sheet helps to stimulate conversations with families about the importance of regular dental visits. Knox will soon be expanding this initiative to all areas of outer east Melbourne.

Key messages
1. “I want to be a Clean well kid” improves linkages with preschools and their families to Knox Social and Community Health’s Dental services.
2. Contacting families directly removes the barrier of appointment making and builds and strengthens relationships.
3. Triple the number of preschool aged children are now attending the dental service in Knox.

Find out more about this project  Diana Brown | Diana.Brown@each.com.au
Merri Community Health Services

Breaking down barriers for homeless clients increases participation and access

Background

Over the last 16 months Merri Community Health Service (MCHS) have been working in partnership with the Royal District Nursing Service (RDNS) Homelessness Program to identify barriers to dental care, and in turn improve access to the dental service for their priority target group – homeless clients. In 2013 RDNS raised concerns with MCHS about a lack of access to dental services for this priority group.

Progress

MCHS in collaboration with RDNS developed a referral pathway for improved access and care that resulted in:

- The creation of a user-friendly priority access tool
- Training for the front line dental team members at MCHS
- Access tool was distributed to RDNS as well as other priority access services
- A strong working relationship and communication pathway was developed between the services
- Suitable clinicians who would engage well with this priority access group were identified
- RDNS supported clients by providing assistance to attend scheduled dental appointments
- Dedicated weekly appointments were blocked off in Titanium that would suit clients as well as RDNS workers to attend appointments
- Providing links to other services at MCHS

Outcomes

This re-orientation of service provision and collaborative partnership has led to a number of key outcomes including:

- Provision of a comprehensive oral health experience
- Improvements towards client-centred model of care
- Low FTA rates
- Provision of links to other services at MCHS eg, diabetes education, physiotherapy
- Increased staff satisfaction
- Positive client feedback on service access, treatment and increased self-esteem and confidence thanks to improved oral health

Key messages

1. Benefit of collaboration with other services is paramount.
2. Breaking down barriers for homeless clients staff are paramount.
3. Could easily be replicated in other services.

Find out more about this project  Kerri Collier | kerric@mchs.org.au
Background
The program aimed to improve the oral health of primary school children by engaging parents, school nurses and teachers. Of 892 grade 6 students across the schools, 473 were assessed as requiring further treatment. 396 teachers and 580 parents attended the education session.

Progress
The program was successfully delivered in partnership with the City of Greater Dandenong at 16 primary schools. The enthusiasm of the school community was one of the many highlights of the program. Schools used resource packs in classroom activities and displayed these resources on community boards and newsletters. Schools used strategies such as making students design invitations to parents, engaging with their playgroups and other existing parent groups. Engagement of clinical staff to provide outreach preventative care was another success.

The few challenges and learnings identified were getting parents on board, timing of the program itself (after hours) and arranging information in appropriate languages.

Outcomes
The program was very well received by all the participating schools and had constructive feedback from school staff, children and parents/carers.

The key impacts of the program were:
- identification of dental caries and subsequent referrals
- increased parental awareness of health and community services
- increased oral health knowledge of children, families and school staff
- improved partnership between health system, local councils, families and primary schools.

Overall 78% (473 out of 603) of grade 6 students who were screened needed further assessment and/or treatment. The key to replicating the program is to establish partnerships with the local councils and if possible, with existing funded programs.

Key messages
1. Successful program resulting from successful partnerships with local council and school community.
2. Outreach screening model to increase participation and engagement of primary school children.
3. Sustainable preventative approach by engaging and educating families of school children.
Background

Monash Health celebrated World Oral Health Day 2015 by addressing the oral health of patients on their waiting list. On the day, over 300 patients were successfully screened and educated on oral health across three sites at Monash Health.

Progress

Staff participated passionately in every part of the project including planning, implementation and evaluation.

Highlights were:
- staff engagement through consultations, workshops and discussions
- large number of patients screened in a day
- 84% attendance rate
- identifying high risk patients and providing preventative treatment and education
- opportunity for clinicians and certificate IV dental nurses to deliver education sessions
- positive feedback from the patients and the staff

At the beginning, the management team and some staff members were skeptical about the proposed project. However after a few consultations and workshops everyone was confident and excited to participate.

Outcomes

Dental assessment and education sessions were conducted for 318 patients, out of which
- 87% of the patients were dentate and 12% had 3-6 decayed teeth and 5% had more than 6 decayed teeth
- 20% of the patients were prioritised
- 27% of the patients were identified as high risk and received preventative care to reduce their risk levels

A patient survey completed by 115 patients revealed that 98% were happy to participate in a similar program and 80% stated that they would change the way they looked after their teeth. Staff evaluation revealed that 92% were happy with the way sessions were conducted. Proper planning and in-depth consultations with the staff will help other services replicate this initiative within their organisations.

Key messages

1. Increasing demand for public dental services necessitates effective preventative approach to avoid long waiting times.
2. Innovative models to engage clinical staff in health promotion initiatives.
3. Early identification and prioritisation of high risk patients on waitlists.

Find out more about this project  Parul Marwaha | Parul.Marwaha@monashhealth.org
North Richmond Community Health
Maximising the skills of dental assistants to provide better care

Background
In keeping with the North Richmond Community Health - Oral Health (NRCH) model of care, this project was developed to maximise the use of staff skill sets. It encompassed the ideology of prevention, minimal intervention, relationship building, client and family centred care, as well as cultural competency.

Progress
The support of management and key staff was a prerequisite for the success of the program. Development of policy and procedure followed. The implementation of the program was well received with a minor adjustment in attitude toward oral health program delivery.

Outcomes
The program saw the dental assistant becoming a valuable member of the team. The relationship between the clients and the dental assistants developed and strengthened. The major outcomes that NRCH observed include, the development of career pathways, improved staff job satisfaction, increased efficiency and quality of care. NRCH has received positive feedback and they believe that clients have achieved an improved knowledge of oral health, improved confidence and motivation, as well as stronger relationships between clients and the dental team.

Key messages
1. Increased knowledge in oral health among residential aged care facility staff.
2. Treatment is about comfort and function utilising a holistic approach.
3. Quality of life improvement is the focus.
North Richmond Community Health

A successful outreach aged care dental program

Background

Pearly Whites™ is an outreach aged care dental program developed by North Richmond Community Health Oral Health Program (NRCH-OH) in July 2014, providing individual oral health assessments and preventive based information to residential aged care facilities (RACF). The program aims to establish referral pathways for residents based on dental needs through:

- NRCH oral health program
- Dental Health Services Victoria domiciliary care
- Private practice

Progress

The oral health team visits each participating RACF 3-4 times dependent on number of beds per facility.

Visit 1: Information pack provided to RACF director and visit dates booked.

Visit 2: Dental hygienist(s) conduct individual oral health assessments for consenting residents.

- 3-5 minutes per resident
- A report is provided for each resident and a summary report for the RACF director
- An individual care plan is developed for each resident and included in their health folder and referrals for those requiring treatment

Visit 3: Oral health educators provide an educational session/workshop with RACF staff, where they administer pre and post-knowledge surveys.

Visit 4: Follow up assessment to assess changes in oral health and review specific oral conditions as required.

- Individual oral health scores are recorded at baseline and follow-up for comparison over time

Outcomes

By April 2015, 300 residents of 7 RACFs were examined and oral health workshops completed.

Overall, there was a 66% consent rate. Of these, 29 required treatment. Results from the oral health workshop show a notable increase in the oral health knowledge of RACF staff.

Key messages

1. Training dental assistants in Certificate IV increases job satisfaction.
2. Contributes to retention and recruitment.
3. The right person for the right job.

Find out more about this project  Martin Hall | martinh@nrch.com.au
Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative
Extending our reach to regional Aboriginal communities

Key messages

1. Providing a service to promote better access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for oral health.

2. Providing a service in a safe and culturally appropriate manner.

3. Promoting Oral Health within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Background

In 2012, a workshop was held at Dental Health Services Victoria to identify the gaps in oral health service delivery for Aboriginal people in regional Victorian communities. It was determined that there was a need in the North, East and West regions to provide better access to oral healthcare and to provide transport to patients and/or multidisciplinary teams if required. A grant was approved through a ‘Closing the Gap’ submission and Rumbalara Oral Health Clinic received its van and equipment in 2014.

Progress

The dental van provides outreach clinics to a number of Aboriginal communities and groups, 2 to 3 days per week. The response has been positive and very well received. The team also travels to other geographical areas to treat patients who live kilometres away from the clinic, which has enhanced access and improved outcomes for Aboriginal people. The Rumbalara team has attended to patients who have not been dentally examined for years, giving them the opportunity to treat, support and educate.

Outcomes

Through their data, Rumbalara has found that they are now reaching and exceeding targets on a monthly basis with a higher rate of patient attendance. It has also minimised the FTA rate considerably. By taking their service into other Aboriginal communities, it has provided a more proactive, efficient and effective approach to engaging and treating their clientele.

Find out more about this project Tracey Hearn | ohc@raclimited.com.au
Background

The Dentist with Special Skills (DSS) program created in 2014 was designed to upskill dentists and expand their capacity to provide prosthodontic care. This supports Dental Health Services Victoria’s strategic goal to improve access to specialist services for rural communities.

Progress

Phase 1: completed. | Phase 2: ongoing.

Learning objectives
- Plan and provide fixed prosthodontic treatment in appropriate cases
- Demonstrate appropriate techniques, materials and technologies
- Improve referral of appropriate cases to specialist services
- Help develop leaders with excellence in prosthodontics

Outcomes

Clinicians
- Updated and enhanced prosthodontics skills
- 30 hours CPD
- Training and leadership opportunities
- Improved job satisfaction
- Relationship establishment with RDHM and mentoring opportunities

Patients
- Improved quality outcomes
- Expanded treatment opportunities delivered locally

Agencies
- Access to high value DWAUs
- Increase in support for rural dentists by use of ‘opinion only’ referrals

RDHM and DHSV
- Reduction in waitlist numbers

- Inform the development of a model for training clinicians with special interests
- Model of care - DSS employment opportunities in specialist departments

Competency results of 8 clinicians

Core competency rating (Quality assessment)
1. Adequate training, continuing education, self monitoring and achieve highly successful treatment
2. Adequate training, continuing education and are self monitoring
3. Minimal training
4. Knowledge is outdated

Key messages

1. The DSS created a new partnership between Agencies and RDHM
2. This is a low cost model of up skilling clinicians
3. DSS are able to deliver services to rural communities which were not previously available.
Thank you to the Victorian public dental agencies who shared their stories with us.