



## RECOMMENDED READING

### **Valuing People's Oral Health:**

A good practice guide for  
improving the oral health of disabled children and adults.

DH 2007

[http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_080918](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_080918)

**This document builds on the principles within Choosing Better Oral Health and uses the evidence-based approach within Delivering Better Oral Health as a guide to assist all who provide and commission dental services for people with disabilities.**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

“Disabled children and adults have the same entitlement to good oral health as the rest of the population. Oral health is an important factor in overall health and well-being. Good oral health can promote good communication, good nutrition, and positive self-esteem and can lead to a reduction or elimination of discomfort from the teeth or mouth. Poor oral health can reduce a person's ability to consume nutritious food, affect self-image and confidence, and cause significant pain which a person with an impairment or disability may not be able to communicate.” (Page 3)

“Oral health needs to become integrated into holistic health policy at all levels and should be included in every individual care plan.” (Page 4) “Oral health is everyone's business.”

#### **KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Assess need through local surveys.
2. Design and implement effective preventive actions and programmes.
3. Consistency of messages across all health and social care boundaries.
4. Build competence through training and sharing of knowledge.
5. Include oral health in every care plan.
6. Responsive, needs-led treatment services.
7. Information for people whose first language is not English.

## Equality Impact Assessment

- **Age:** the approach to oral health must vary according to patient's age;
- **Disability:** Published evidence shows disabled people are at risk from higher levels of oral health need;
- **Race:** A disproportionately high number of people from BME groups live in areas of high social need, which is directly correlated with poor oral health. Best practice guidance document to be published in spring 2008.
- **Potential for benefit:** If PCT's accept the recommendations in this report and commission preventive care, in the short term we would expect to find a much greater emphasis on health improvement in these groups, and in the longer term we would expect to see improved oral health measured against baseline data;
- **Evaluation:** Appropriate evaluation of all programmes aimed at improving the oral health of disabled people is required.

This document links with *Delivering Better Oral Health* guidelines and includes more detailed information on all the above, along with case studies and a dental care exemplar for a disabled child linked to Children's NSF standard, and published evidence.

Two useful resources are mentioned:

- Dental care and autism Flyer – preparation for visits to the dentist for autistic patients.
- Leaflet on dental care for adults and children with special needs.