

Care home residents should be helped to brush their teeth twice a day

January 6 2017, by Andrew Gould



A Plymouth University dental academic and clinician has played a key role in a new draft quality standard for oral care in care homes from NICE. Credit: University of Plymouth

A leading dental academic and clinician from Plymouth University,

Professor Elizabeth Kay MBE, has played a key role in a draft quality standard to improve oral health in care homes and hospitals published today (Friday 6 January 2017) by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE).

The draft standard calls on [care homes](#) to assess the oral health needs of their residents and record these in personal care plans. Residents should then be supported to clean their teeth twice a day or their dentures daily.

AGE UK estimates 426,000 people live in care homes, approximately 405,000 of whom are over 65.

Professor Elizabeth Kay MBE, foundation dean of Peninsula Dental School, Plymouth University, professor and consultant in dental public health and specialist committee member, said:

"Looking after someone's mouth should be as much a part of the care expected as ensuring their personal hygiene and providing adequate clean clothing. Helping care home residents with this basic daily routine maintains not only their oral health but, just as importantly, enhances their dignity and self-esteem."

A report from *Public Health England* suggested just 61 per cent of care homes in the West Midlands carry out oral health assessments on admission and 77 per cent of care homes in the North West include oral health in the overall care plan.

Professor Gillian Leng, deputy chief executive of NICE, said:

"We know that supporting good daily oral health care in care homes varies enormously across the country. This draft quality standard prioritises assessment of care home residents, recording of plans and ensuring support is in place for those who need it. We are confident that

such simple measures could substantially improve the quality of life of many people living in care homes."

NICE, with The Social Care Institute for Excellence, has produced a quick guide resource for care home managers to help them improve the oral health of adults in their care homes.

The draft quality standard also asks stakeholders to highlight any evidence-based guidance that could be used to develop a statement on daily mouth care in hospitals. Consultation on the draft quality standard for [oral health](#) in care homes and hospitals is open until 3 February 2017.

Provided by University of Plymouth

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