

KING'S  
*College*  
LONDON



# Promotion of oral health by community nurses

**KING'S**  
*College*  
**LONDON**

Brendan Garry *MSc BSc RN DN*

# **Aim:**

---

**To explore the enablers and barriers perceived by community nurses in the promotion of oral health in an adult community trust directorate.**

## **Background:**

Oral health care promotion  
in community care settings  
is being neglected

## **Method:**

A qualitative methodology was employed, where eight nurses from Band 5 to 7 were interviewed using a semi-structured approach. The data was analysed thematically.

# Findings

## The professional

*We've got wound care and all those sorts of things, but what about oral care, what about it? If you haven't got teeth in your head, it doesn't mean that you haven't got something going on in your mouth. (P1)*

# Organisational environment

*So, for example, if you're looking at oral hygiene as opposed to a massive gaping wound, which one of those do you have to build your time around? And I'm going to be honest with you, we don't do it enough. (P7)*

# **Nurse—patient contact**

*People feel judged, I really feel that people feel judged. We're not dental nurses, so people feel judged, families feel judged. (P7)*



# Self-regard

*... so I actually floss my teeth about two, three times a day. I mean, I'm probably going to floss my teeth now. I use obviously inter-dental brushes, I use electric toothbrushes, I go to the dentist every four months, I go to the dental hygienist every four months. So for me oral health is very important, it really is important. (P1)*

# Discussion

# Conclusion:

Nurses need relevant education, organisational support, adequate resources and support from a multidisciplinary team to deliver optimal oral health promotion.

# References

Garry, B. and Boran, S., 2017. Promotion of oral health by community nurses. *British journal of community nursing*, 22(10), pp.496-502.

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. Oral health promotion in the community. Quality standard 139. 2016.

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs139> (accessed 16 January 2017)