

SPECIAL NEEDS DENTISTRY

Definitions and Parametres

- **SPECIAL NEEDS DENTISTRY:**
 - Is that part of dentistry concerned with the oral health of people adversely affected by an intellectual, medical, physical or psychiatric disability, *regardless of age*.
 - Helping anyone who has a disability that prevents them from what we call normal dental health.
 - Is dentistry for basically anyone who has a disability (who can't independently care for their own oral health).
 - Is a continuum of care—babies-> children-> adults-> geriatric patients.
 - Geriatric person=65+
 - Geriatric patient=any compromised adult with one or more chronic, debilitating medical, physical, mental or psycho-social problem.
 - Traditionally there are 3 groups of Special Needs Patients:
 - Hospital inpatients and outpatients that are medically compromised.
 - Intellectually and/or physically disabled & patients with chronic mental illness
 - Frail & functionally dependent older adults.

COMMUNITY LOCATIONS OF SPECIAL NEEDS PATIENTS

- Where do patients with disabilities live? LOCATIONS:
- **1. At home**
 - Living alone—with or without community assistance
 - Living with their parents
 - Living with their children
- **2. Residential care—retirement villages with tiered levels of med. care**
- **3. Aged care facilities (nursing homes)**
- **4. Hospitals/Mental hospitals**
- **5. Ronald McDonald Houses**
- **6. In prisons**
- **7. On the streets**
- Although at any one point in time, only a small proportion of our older population lives in residential care, the likelihood of the future need for the use of residential care is high. Older adults (65+) will require permanent housing and doubles for 80+. Higher for females. Why?

DENTAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THE SPECIAL NEEDS PATIENT

- CONSIDERATIONS:
- 1. Communication (patient and *carer*)
- 2. Time management (app't. length/pt. stamina-how long can they sit?)
(Bathroom breaks here at the Dental School!)
- 3. Access to the oral cavity / limited by your equipment
- 4. Patient's capacity to understand
- 5. Ability to get patient into chair
- 6. Ability of patient to cooperate
- 7. Consent
- 8. Current health status
- 9. Radiographs?
- 10. Shaking & other unexpected pt. movements
- 11. Financial
- 12. Denture labelling

DENTAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THE SPECIAL NEEDS PT. CON'T.

- Caries (especially root caries) and Periodontal Disease are the 2 most common dental diseases in this group of patients.
- The primary cause of these conditions is inadequate oral hygiene, either by the patient or *carer*.
- Dentures may not be cleaned properly either and mucosal lesions of fungal origin may occur.

AODL

- ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING include:
- 1. Talking
- 2. Eating (food selection) & Chewing (no. of times) & Swallowing
- 3. Brushing & Flossing
- 4. Rinsing
- 5. Walking
- 6. Seeing & Observing
- 7. Hearing
- 8. Dexterity
- 9. Source of Income
- 10. Ability to go to shops
- 11. Cooking & Cleaning
- 12. Toileting

If the patient cannot carry out these activities, the carer is the most important person in their lives. *Carer's training is imperative!