

Piloting the Modified Oral Status Survey Tool in a nursing home setting

Précis: This pilot study trialed the Modified Oral Status Survey Tool in nursing home residents. While the tool was easy to use, consent was a barrier to participation.

Abstract

Introduction

Little is known about the oral health of older adults in nursing homes in Ireland. This study explored the use of the Modified Oral Status Survey Tool (MOSST) in examining the oral health of this population.

Objectives

1. Trial the use of the MOSST by a dentist in the nursing home population in Ireland.
2. Provide initial data on the oral health status of participants.
3. Provide initial data on dental service use and oral health-related quality of life (OHRQOL).

Methods

Training and calibration in the MOSST and its accompanying questionnaire were completed and ethical approval gained. Convenience sampling from private nursing homes in Leinster was undertaken. Patients aged 65+ who were able to provide informed consent were eligible for inclusion.

Results

Five nursing homes were visited, which housed 366 residents. Of these, 78 people were willing to be examined and able to consent to examination. No participants were identified as having urgent dental needs. Despite the variety in numbers of functional units, natural teeth and visibly cavitated teeth, the majority of participants did not report pain or difficulty chewing, and were happy with their smile.

Conclusion

The low number of participants illustrates the difficulty of research in the nursing home population. Large numbers of people were not able to provide informed consent, largely due to barriers such as dementia. However, the MOSST was easy to use in the population able to consent, and beneficial in that it can be used by both dentists and non-dentists following training.

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