

Project Title: Brushing Up on Mouth Care: Supporting Caregiving and Oral Health from Research to Policy to Everyday Practice

Principle Investigator: Dr. Mary McNally

Plain Language Summary – Why Was This Effective?

- The project builds on an established body of work and addresses an important knowledge gap.
- Health research priorities include: changing demographics, prevention, vulnerable populations, access to freely available resources, and continuity of care for individuals who may transition to long term care and require greater health services.
- Knowledge sharing activities are clear and relevant to target populations.

Objectives – Why Was This Effective?

- Objectives are appropriate and clearly articulated.

Project Description – Why Was This Effective?

- Good alignment with NSHRF goals: REAL Knowledge Program alignment to address needs of decision makers is represented by plans to engage government and relevant non-governmental stakeholders as part of the process.
- Proposal aligns with NSHRF and the mandate of the Knowledge Sharing Support Award.

Work Plan and Timeline – Why Was This Effective?

- Methods and evaluation strategy to address objectives are clearly outlined.
- Realistic timelines.
- Identified relevant research and practice experience, as well as an appropriate network of knowledge users and decision makers to deliver on proposed activities.
- Activities are scheduled to occur over 40 weeks so there appears to be some buffer.
- The workshops are supplemented by on-going communication, follow-up, evaluation and dissemination.
- Project leads are well positioned to be successful with the proposed project, which will enhance and refine existing web-based resources with knowledge user input.
- There was a good mix of health professionals, stakeholders, and decision makers.

Impact – Why Was This Effective?

- There is a significant benefit to oral health in older people.
- Dr. McNally's earlier work in this area has already had an important impact on the care provided in long term facilities and education programs.
- This project has the potential to not only influence the health of older persons living in Nova Scotia, but resources could be incorporated into the existing curriculum of community education programs.
- Evaluation of resources and approach will ensure that care partners voices are factored into ongoing development of education tools and policy related to oral care.
- Great opportunity for practical skill building for new graduates.

- Targeting a range of important groups of knowledge users (caregivers of older adults, educational institutions) can significantly benefit the oral health of home and long-term care dwelling older persons who are unable to provide oral care for themselves.
- Involvement of the School of Dental Hygiene furthers capacity building for students and institutionalizes these approaches, as dental hygiene students provide education and support to care providers in over 15 long-term care facilities in Halifax Regional Municipality.