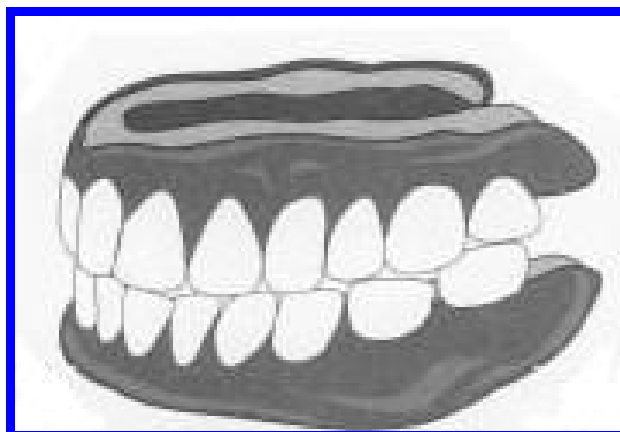


# ORAL HEALTH CARE ADVICE FOR CARERS



## **LEAFLET 3: INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE FEW TEETH OR WHO WEAR DENTURES**

This leaflet has been designed for family carers, residential and nursing staff who support individuals with learning disabilities and/or mental health issues who have lost most or all of their teeth or who wear dentures.

**January 2014**

## **The Importance of Good Oral Health**

Good oral health is not just about having an attractive smile. A clean, comfortable mouth is essential for good physical health and general quality of life.

Some individuals may have had many of their teeth removed. This may be due to a history of poor oral care or may be related to health or medication issues.

A number of these individuals may have been fitted with full or partial dentures. Dentures can be very beneficial in terms of appearance, biting, chewing, speech and self-esteem.

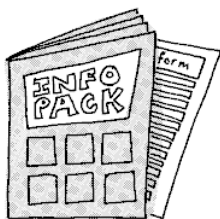
## **The Carer's Role**

Carers play a vital role in supporting individuals to maintain good oral health. Individuals without teeth should be given the same oral care as those with teeth. Additional support needs to be provided to those individuals with dentures to ensure the dentures are kept clean and safe. Dentures often go missing when individuals are admitted to hospital.

## **Oral Health Care Plans**

Individuals should have an Oral Health Care Plan, which details the necessary daily care and regular check ups they need.

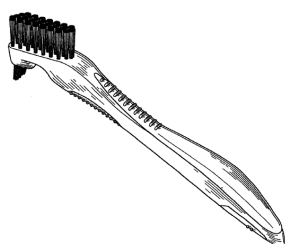
## Top Tips for Good Oral Health Care



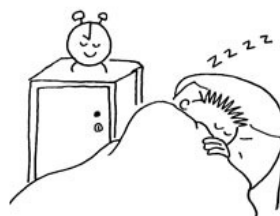
Follow all the general advice given in Leaflet 1 of this series and ensure the individual's remaining teeth and gums are brushed at least three times a day.



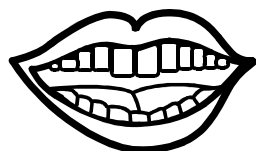
Dentures are made to measure and are therefore very expensive. They should be marked with the wearers name and kept safe when not being worn.



Handle dentures carefully as they can break. Brush the dentures with a soft denture brush and denture paste or liquid soap to remove debris and plaque. Hold them over a soft towel or a sink filled with water when you clean them in case you drop them.



Dentures should not be worn at night. Store them in a suitable container marked with the wearer's name. Dentures should be kept moist in plain water to prevent them drying out and cracking. Ask the dentist for specific advice about night-time storage as this may vary with the denture type.



Make sure the individual's mouth is clear of food debris once dentures are removed and especially before they are put in.



Ensure the individual sees the dentist regularly as dentures can become loose over time. Poorly fitting dentures can cause discomfort and sores as well as making eating and speaking difficult.

**If you notice any changes in the individual's mouth ie an ulcer or discoloured patch that has not healed after 2 weeks or they appear to be in pain always seek professional advice from the dentist.**

**Other Sources of Advice:**

Sussex Community NHS Trust Special Care Dentistry:  
01273 692549 (Morley Street Clinic)

Sussex Community NHS Trust Oral Health Promotion:  
01273 267345

Sussex Community NHS Trust Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS): 01273 242292 or [sctr.serviceexperience@nhs.net](mailto:sctr.serviceexperience@nhs.net)

Find a local NHS Dentist – Dental Helpline: 0300 1000 899

Dental help outside normal working hours: call 111

NHS Choices [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

British Society for Disability and Oral Health [www.bsdh.org.uk](http://www.bsdh.org.uk)

Brighton & Hove Community Learning Disability Team – for specialist SALT, & other specialist health teams: 01273 295550

- Leaflet 1 – General Advice
- Leaflet 2 – Individuals with swallowing problems

Leaflets originally developed by Greenwich Teaching NHS Primary Care Trust & Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust – adapted for use in Brighton & Hove by Sussex Community NHS Trust Oral Health Promotion, and Brighton & Hove Community Learning Disability Team.

You were given this leaflet by -

Name:

Tel. Number:

Job Title/Team:

Organisation: