

The Role of Nurses in Preventive Oral Health Care for Children

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Talking Points

- Research project conducted in May-June 2016
- Assessed Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs), Registered Nurses (RNs), and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) frequency in performing oral health assessments (OHAs) on children 0-3 years during well-child visits
- Also, assessed knowledge, confidence in performing OHAs and advising parents

Talking Points

- Today's discussion will consist of reported:
 - Observed problems during exams
 - Perceived barriers associated with dental referral
 - Overall qualitative input from participants

Observed Problems

- Observed problems during OHAs
 - 30% observed a few decayed teeth in a single child at least once a week
 - 48% observed pain related to untreated dental caries at least once in a 6 month period
 - 47% observed a tooth abscess among children at least once in a 6 month period

Question	Frequency	Percent
I Never refer children to the dentist	6	18.2
I RARELY Refer children to the dentist	4	12.1
I refer if we consider the child AT HIGH RISK for cavities (e.g. being on Medicaid)	2	6.1
I refer ONLY if I see a problem (e.g. tooth decay, chipped tooth, draining fistula)	5	15.2
I refer ALL children (12 months and older) I see to the dentist	16	48.5
TOTAL	33	100.0

Top 3 Barriers Associated with Referrals

- Finding a dentist willing to accept children with public insurance and/or uninsured
- Finding a dentists willing to accept children with developmental disabilities
- Oral health is a low priority for families of children seen

Qualitative (Feedback)

- Busy practice
- Dental should be the responsibility of dental providers
- Oral care should be the responsibility of parents
- Difficulty assessing Medicaid providers
- I do not believe children <3 should see a dentist regularly
- My office has begun applying fluoride varnish during well-child visits

Future Directions

- Continued support of medical/dental collaboration
- Increase education related to children's oral health for non-dental providers
- Establish seamless referral systems within local communities