Universal Provision of Oral Health Care

Universal optimal oral health must be paired with right resources for safe care

Mike Covey
Oral health matters: example of periodontitis

- Periodontitis: infection in tissues and bones that support teeth
- 15-20 % of middle aged adults (35-44 years) have severe periodontal disease worldwide
- Oral-systemic health link example: Diabetes - Periodontitis
Oral health matters: example of periodontitis

Average annual reduction in medical visits for patients receiving periodontal treatment:

- Hospital Admissions = 67%
- Emergency Room Visits = 54%

The medical costs was 28% lower among patients receiving continuous periodontal treatment when compared to that of the control group.
($2,688 per patient per year vs. $3,708 per patient per year)

Source: “Appropriate Periodontal Therapy Associated with Lower Medical Utilization and Costs”, Cigna, Marano
Do no harm, Do good

To achieve optimal oral health, oral health care provision must be assured for its quality and safety.

Six Aims of Quality Health Care

(U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2001)
Safe Dentistry:
Infection prevention and control in dental settings

Breakdown of infection prevention and control: Rare, but real

- Failure to appropriate sterilization of dental handpieces
- Failure to monitor autoclaves
- Unsafe injection practices

Or deeper cause - lack of infrastructure to support safe dentistry
CDC Recommendations

Evidence-based recommendations for infection control in dental settings
(Centers for Disease Control & Prevention)

Bloodborne Pathogens & Aerosols
Bone Allografts
Cleaning & Disinfecting Environmental Surfaces
Contact Dermatitis & Latex Allergy
Dental Handpieces
Dental Unit Water Quality
Education and Training
Extracted Teeth
Hand Hygiene
Occupational Exposure to Blood

Oral Surgical Procedures
Personal Protective Equipment
Respiratory Hygiene/Cough Etiquette
Safe Injection Practices
Saliva Ejector & Backflow
Service Animals in Dental Health Care Settings
Single-Use (Disposable) Devices
Sterilization
Use & Handling of Toothbrushes
Current status: Infection control in various global dental settings.

Knowledge resource - available (CDC and other guideline)

Practical resource?

  - Lack of training opportunities in practical perspective

  - Unavailability, unaffordability or resources and shortage of equipment/supplies.
Question: how do we implement safe dentistry?

For professionals/staff in the field:

- Know where to find resources - Standard Precautions (CDC guideline)
- Provide training for both clinical and administrative staff based on guideline
- Designate a key person to be accountable for safe practice based on guideline + Monitoring/Evaluation
- Set infection prevention as the top priority
Real question: how do we implement safe dentistry?

For public health professionals and policymakers:

Create a system and platform that enable people in the field to

- Know where to find resources - Standard Precautions (CDC guideline)
- Provide training for both clinical and administrative staff based on guideline
- Designate a key person to be accountable for safe practice based on guideline
  + Monitoring/Evaluation
- Set infection prevention as the top priority
Cost for safe dentistry example: Extraction

Need: Disposable clean needle ($0.13), Lidocaine ($0.77/carpule), Clean gauze (for 5, $0.10), Disinfectant wipes, Syringe, Forceps, Safe needle recapping device, Clean water, Autoclave machine and sleeves + Labor for healthcare professionals.

Just for needle, lidocaine, and clean gauze = $1
Let say everything else including professional fee = $1  TOTAL $2

10.7% of the world’s population lived on less than US$ 1.90 a day
In Tanzania, extractions = 4 x daily resources for consumption (DRC) for adult restorations = 9 x DRC
Global Call for Safe Dentistry

Safe dentistry should be *available* and *affordable*.

Technical assistance: “Practical” training for clinical and non-clinical staff

Monitoring & Evaluation: Public health policy and regulation

Call for every public health association

→ Organize efforts to advocate for

no tax or subsidies for dental supplies and equipment

for infection control and prevention
Aligning with Global Charter

+ Universal Provision of Safe Dental Care