

Oral Health Care at University Family Medicine Residency Program

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Background

As family physicians, we are charged to meet the health care needs of our patients. This encompasses a wide range of information and knowledge of both pediatric and adult patients, including normal mouth development, screening recommendations, and recognizing and treating acute care issues. The purpose of this project is to assess if we, as a family medicine residency, are truly meeting the oral health needs of our patients by a systematic review of electronic medical records for three patient groups, pediatrics, those at risk for oral cancers, and those with a chronic disease, such as diabetes.

Methods

A sampling of chart reviews from well-child visits, and yearly medical visits of tobacco users and diabetics were examined for oral health practices. Following this, instruction was provided from oral health care experts through a lecture series and hands-on training sessions. In addition new visual templates were to be installed of teeth diagrams that could simply be 'clicked' for teeth that are present, damaged, or with cavity. Combined with yes/no questions regarding the high risk factors outlined above would greatly enhance the oral health care of our pediatric patients.

Results

Implementation of the visual templates in the Electronic Medical Record (EMR) has not yet occurred.

Conclusion

Instruction alone has been shown not to change physician practice habits, though changes in the EMR do. The integration of visual templates into the EMR is anticipated to improve the patient's oral health care.