

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

KEYSTONE COMMUNITY RESOURCES, INC.

KEYSTONE INDEPENDENT LIVING, INC.



Policy Title:
Oral Hygiene

Chapter:

Effective Date:
7/1/1992

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Policy Number:

Executive Director

SCOPE:

- Chapter 6400 – Community Homes For Individuals With Mental Retardation

INTRODUCTION:

1. Medication often causes bad breath and adversely affects the teeth, making oral hygiene especially important to the person with developmental disabilities. A clean mouth and good oral hygiene make a person feel and look better as well as preventing the loss of teeth due to tooth decay and infection of the gums.
2. The adequate care of the mouth and teeth consists of the following procedures:
 - Brushing the teeth and tongue with fluoride toothpaste 3 times daily; upon awakening, mid day or during bathing and before bedtime.
 - Using dental floss daily between the teeth to remove plaque and bacteria.
 - Avoiding excessive sticky, sweet snacks
 - Having regular dental check-ups.
3. There are many types of toothbrushes available on the market. For brushing teeth most dentist recommend a toothbrush small enough to reach all areas of the mouth with soft bristles, which are less likely to injure gum tissue. For best brushing results, the brush should be held at a 45-degree angle against the gums. The teeth should be brushed with a gentle scrubbing motion and short strokes which brush all surfaces of the teeth. The mouth should be rinsed with plenty of water to loosen food particles. Toothbrushes should be replaced when they become worn.
4. Flossing is an excellent way to remove the daily buildup of plaque between the teeth, where the brush does not reach and where most cavities occur. Bleeding of the gums is common when flossing is first begun, especially when the gums are in poor condition. The bleeding usually stops when flossing becomes a regular habit.

5. Dentures should be brushed with a special denture brush and warm water. Avoid washing dentures in hot water, which can warp plastic.
6. Regular check-ups are important. To calm the resident's anxieties, familiarize them with some of the dentist's procedures and tools. The dentist may have other suggestions for making the visit easier.

DISCUSSION: