

# Healthcare & Hospital Management

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## Use of audit to drive quality improvement in oral care on a neurological rehabilitation unit

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**Introduction:** Oral hygiene is an essential aspect of patient care and helps prevent aspiration pneumonia and other systemic infections which subsequently lead to longer hospital stays and increased mortality rates.

**Material and Methods:** A preliminary audit of the compliance in providing oral care on 4 hourly basis revealed 54% compliance on a neurological rehabilitation unit. Further audits of staff knowledge and documentation, confirmed the need to train nursing staff and develop documentation to improve compliance with oral care. As recommended in

the literature, this hospital uses a 24 hour oral cleansing and suctioning system (SAGE Products Inc., Q4).

**Results and Conclusion:** On average, nurses achieved > 90% compliance in providing patients with oral care on a Q4 basis and improvement in oral hygiene status was noted with scores moving from minimal mouth care to good / moderate mouth care. Driving Compliance in Oral Care project is currently being implemented across all rehabilitation wards at The Wellington Hospital.

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