Training Student Dentists to Provide Services to Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

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Preservice Training for Student Dentists – A First Step in Access to Care

• Preservice Health Training Project:
  – Funded by the KY Council on Developmental Disabilities

• Designed to address lack of training in the health care professions (including training for student dentists), in caring for patients with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (ID/DD).
Dental Student Preparation and Patients with ID/DD

• In a study of U.S. dental schools, Wolff and colleagues (2004)* found:
  – Nearly 70% of third and fourth-year student dentists reported *five hours or less of classroom instruction in the care of persons* with intellectual disabilities.
  – A full 60% of students reported that they had “little to no confidence in providing care” to persons with intellectual disabilities.

Our Overall Project Goal

• To develop in collaboration with families, self-advocates, and faculty, a series of “virtual patient” interactive cases, illustrating the needs of persons with developmental disabilities and their families, that could be infused into existing dental, medical, and nursing coursework.
Development of Dental Modules

• Each On-Line Module Developed by a Team of Pediatric and/or General Dental Faculty, DD Specialists, and Family Members and Self-Advocates.
• Family Members and Self-Advocates Participated in All Aspects of Module Development.
Family Members and Self-Advocate Participation

Specific Roles Included:

• Script Development for Virtual Patient Scenario
• Development of Resource Documents
• Question and Answer Audio Files Presentation at End of Each Module
• “Acting” the Role of the Patient and/or Family Member in the Virtual Patient Case
Contents of Each Virtual Patient Module

- *Interactive Case* (“virtual patient”)
- *Decision Points* – interspersed throughout requiring student dentist to decide how best to communicate or proceed with care
- *Information Points* – presenting quick overviews of key medical/dental content
- *Additional Resources* – more in-depth information
- *Instructor’s Guide* – further activities
- Pre and Post Situational (Attitude or Perceived Difficulty) Inventory
- Pre and Post Knowledge Measure
Dental Modules

• Pediatric Case: “Hunter” - A 10 year old child with Down syndrome
• Adult Case: “Daniel” – a young adult with Deaf-Blindness
Pediatric Case: Learning Objectives

1. Characterize the physical, cognitive, emotional, and oral circumstances typically associated with a child having Down syndrome.
2. Prepare his/her practice staff for the care of the child with special needs.
3. Communicate effectively with parents about how the child’s overall health status affects the provision of dental care.
4. Prepare for initial diagnosis of a child with special needs.
5. Communicate effectively with parents on how the child’s disability impacts the course of care for the child.
Pediatric Case: Objectives Cont.

6. Employ effective management techniques to gain a child’s cooperation and provide the required care.

7. Communicate effectively with parents about how the child’s emotional and cognitive development affects the provision of dental care.

8. Appropriately prepare the child for what is coming next during the course of treatment.

9. Effectively query the parent as to what approaches to gaining cooperation from the child have been found to be effective.
Effectiveness Studies

Pediatric Case: “Hunter”


Adult Case: “Daniel”

Interacting with the Tools

• Dental Modules (both cases):
  – http://dental.phtmodules.net

• Contact:
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