

## **Food and Oral Care at end of life**

At hospice, many factors affect the quality of patient's meal experiences, including proper eating position, swallowing problems, food's consistency as well as oral and dental status. For patients with dysfunctions in the head, mouth and throat it is important to ease participation in what is possible and meaningful.

There is reason to believe that an increased focus on the importance of food and introduction of helpful ways to aid eating can improve patients' general condition and joy of the meals.

Adequate knowledge, competence and attention of nurses are needed to provide an appropriate compensatory support. Patients themselves are not necessarily aware of the extent to which a loss of function may be corrected.

In 2011 the Project Meal Support was completed and implemented at a Danish hospice.

The purpose of this project was to describe the professional skills required to eliminate or reduce the barriers, thereby preventing that the patients give up eating.

The project provides recommendations for specific ways to remedy dysfunctions, dysphagia and problems in the mouth. Such approaches improves quality of life for these seriously ill people through the enjoying of a meal and the socializing this may be associated with.

We present a poster that will draw attention to patients' oral status and present a special screening tool called ROAG-pal. It is used upon admission to hospice to identify patients' oral care problems, so that the patients incipient and manifest problems in the mouth can be adressed immediately. Through appropriate nursing, the patient will achieve well-being in the mouth and can look forward to enjoying a meal.

Our poster will show what ROAG-pal is and how it is used as a screening tool.

### **Literature:**

Venborg A og Mühlbach B (2011). *Projekt Måltidsstøtte*. Hospice Djursland

Link here: <http://www.hospicedjursland.dk/upl/12640/PROJEKTMILTIDSSTTTE2.udg.sept.2012.pdf>

Venborg A (2014). Måltidsstøtte ved livets afslutning. *Sygeplejersken. 2: 62-73*.

Link here: <http://www.hospicedjursland.dk/upl/13537/Sygeplejersken2014mltidssttte.pdf>