

# Looking after teeth for adults with additional needs

## Additional information for parents / carers

It is very important that everyone is supported to achieve a clean, healthy mouth. Some people with additional needs will require help to brush their own teeth effectively. Others may require a caregiver to brush their teeth for them.

### When brushing is a struggle – some tips

Choose a small, medium textured toothbrush.

Try to brush every day so that he / she is used to the routine of having their teeth brushed.

Use a pea-sized blob of fluoride toothpaste containing no less than 1350 ppm of fluoride (this is printed on the back of the tube). Alternatively, your dentist may discuss the use of high-fluoride, prescription-only toothpaste.

Do not wet the toothbrush before brushing to minimise the foaming of toothpaste and to avoid dilution of the fluoride.

### Some simple aids for brushing

A bicycle handlebar grip or foam tubing placed on a toothbrush handle can make it easier for the person to hold.

The handle of a manual toothbrush, or two brushes stuck together, make a good prop to keep the mouth open. Another toothbrush can then be used to clean the other side

Adapted toothbrushes, such as 'Dr Barman's Superbrush' or 'Collis Curve', may help to clean several tooth surfaces at once.

Pump-operated toothpaste dispensers and tube squeezers may help him / her put toothpaste on the brush.

## **If brushing causes distress**





## **PALS**

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email [ndht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ndht.pals@nhs.net). You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

## **Have your say**

Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk).

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