

How poor oral care is killing our geriatric population, how access to mobile dentistry can change that

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Many residents in nursing homes have trouble receiving adequate dental care because of unique oral care challenges, such as cognitive skill, poor staff training about oral care, and difficult clinical situations that arise such as diabetes.

High dental cost also presents a huge obstacle, since Medicaid and Medicare pay very little for dental services. Another challenge is getting residents in wheelchairs and Jeri chairs to the dental office and into a dental chair.

Oral health has a significant impact on physical health and mental health including self-esteem and overall quality of life. In addition, there are many systemic diseases that have been directly linked to poor oral health such as aspirated pneumonia which sends many elderly people living in nursing homes to the hospital it is also probably the most common sequelae of poor oral health in the aged person. The plaque build-up on teeth has been found in the lungs of residents with pneumonia due to poor oral care.

Access to oral care is not only needed but critical for most seniors living in long-term care facilities. Mobile dentistry is now on the rise to provide this much-needed care.