PUTTING THE MOUTH BACK IN THE BODY

The Role of Oral Health in Addiction, Treatment & Recovery

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ORAL HEALTH IN ADDICTION

• The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) notes that, in 2014, 10.2 percent of Americans, ages 12 and older, reported some type of illicit substance abuse in the past month.

• Many people think drug abuse only damages the lungs, stomach, heart, or brain.

• Many types of drugs damage the teeth and gums.

• People who struggle with addiction often neglect oral hygiene because they cannot afford a dentist or they simply stop caring about brushing their teeth.
DRUGS THAT AFFECT ORAL HEALTH

• Alcohol
• Cocaine
• Amphetamines
• Opioids and Opiates
• Marijuana
• Tobacco
• Over the counter medications:
  • Antihistamines & Aspirin
WHAT DRUGS DO TO YOUR TEETH
THERE ARE SEVERAL WAYS THAT EACH DRUG CAN, INDIVIDUALLY, DAMAGE ORAL HEALTH.

- Dry mouth, which increases acid in the mouth and leads to rotting enamel
- Acid reflux, which also rots enamel and hurts soft tissue
- Grinding teeth
- Loss of blood flow to roots and gums
- Ulcers or sores in the mouth that can become infected
- A focus on attaining more drugs instead of caring for oral hygiene
- Nutritional deficiencies that can damage teeth and gums
- Greater intake of high-sugar food or beverages, which rots teeth
DRY MOUTH, WHICH INCREASES ACID IN THE MOUTH AND LEADS TO ROTTING ENAMEL
DRUG USE NEW HAMPSHIRE

• Opioid/opiate, methamphetamine, & cocaine/crack treatment admissions increased by 28% from 2016 to 2017.

• In 2017, NH was number 3 in the U.S. in per capita Opioid Deaths w/ 483.
ORAL HEALTH IN NORTHERN NH

• In 2014, Coös County had the highest rate of tooth decay among third graders, with over half (56 percent) showing evidence of either treated or untreated tooth decay.

• Rates of untreated decay were below 10 percent in all of the remaining counties except Grafton (11.7 percent).
BARRIERS

- Barriers
  - Numbers of Providers
  - Insurance Coverage
    - Medicaid
    - Affording Dental
  - Transportation

NH Dental Health Professional Shortage Area
ORAL HEALTH AND RECOVERY

Functions:
- Mastication
- Speech

Psychologic:
- Appearance
- Self-esteem

Social:
- Intimacy
- Communication

Pain / Discomfort:
- Acute
- Chronic
THE GOAL!
WHAT CAN WE DO?

• Educate Patients
  • How substance abuse affects oral health
  • How oral health affects overall health
  • How to prevent poor oral health
  • How to access care
    • Medicaid
    • SFS

• Provide Treatment
  • SUD
  • Dental
WHAT ACHS DOES FOR PERSONS WITH SUDs

• Provide SUD services
  • Education
  • Behavioral Health Counseling (Bothe SUD and Mental Health)
  • Case Management
  • Medication Assisted Treatment
• Primary Care

• Dental
• Vision
• Referrals to external agencies for:
  • Sober Living
  • Employment
  • Recovery Support Services
QUESTIONS?