Access to dental care for people with disabilities in Brittany

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INTRODUCTION

People with motor disabilities and associated disorders or polyhandicap constitute a group at risk of oral disease with health and social consequences

Oral health care is an important element in the management of people with disabilities. We conducted a survey among users of the French health network Breizh PC in order to observe the impact of this health network on access to dental care. Modalities of management and type of dental care were analyzed, focusing on the accessibility and the quality of care.

METHODS

A questionnaire concerning the management of oral care was sent to 800 users of Breizh PC health network. The questionnaire focuses on prevention, balance sheets performed and the type of oral care. Satisfaction was assessed on Likert scales. The answers of 153 users were analysed.

RESULTS

Results concern 76 men and 77 women with a mean age of 40 +/- 13 years, 43.4% live in institutions, 56.6% at home most often with their parents, 85.5% are single.

Cognitive disorders are present in 51% and motor disorders in 94%. 57.8% use a wheelchair. Oral hygiene care is provided alone in 44%, with the help of a care giver in 22.4%, and by the care giver in 31.6%. Teeth are brushed for 92.7% (twice a day for 42%, and just one time for 38.2%). Mouthwashes are used by 19.7% and dental floss and brushes only by 2.7%. Difficulties for the realization of hygiene cares are observed in 45.8%. Most often it consists in difficulty of mouth opening and movement disorders.

Dental care is most often done in a private practice (72.4%) and requires the intervention of an accompanying person in 50% of users. The information is mainly provided by practitioners during consultations with little written documentation.

Sedation was necessary for 9.1% of users and general anesthesia for 5.8%, in majority for behavioral disorder. The most common treatments are conservative and preventive care.

Access to prosthetic and orthodontic care is reduced.

Regarding the satisfaction of users, they are satisfied with the management of pain in 96.8%, and therapeutic management is considered appropriate in 96%.

DISCUSSION

This study found a satisfactory access to dental care of the users of the Breizh PC network. For comparison, the survey carried out by the UDAPEI on the same territory in 2015 on 185 establishments found a rate of 68.4% of dental follow-up in their population (1). This highlights the importance of health care networks in the access to care for people with disabilities. Nevertheless, the rate of basic hygiene care except for tooth brushing remains insufficient. The implementation of information actions for users and training of professionals is certainly a means of improving the prevention for dental disorders.

CONCLUSION

Health networks facilitate access to dental care by coordinating care pathways. Nevertheless, the care provided remains basic care. Access to prosthetic and orthodontic care remains extremely limited. Prevention care remains insufficient. Health networks are certainly major contributors for the development of training activities for health professionals and caregivers as well as for educating.

REFERENCES

1 Enquête UDAPEI Bretagne sur la santé bucco-dentaire des personnes en situation de handicap accompagnées par les associations adhérentes à cette union (49 établissements et services répondants).