



eviDent project - Understanding the relationship between GP prescribing and xerostomia

Members are asked to help an eviDent project which aims to understand the relationship between general practice prescribing and xerostomia. If you receive a study referral letter regarding dry mouth from a GP, please complete the Dentist questionnaire included in the referral, and return in the reply-paid envelope provided. It is part of the PREVENT study.

The study aims to stimulate General Medical Practitioners' awareness of the possible oral health risks of a large group of their patients and to develop a model designed to improve their patients' oral and general health outcomes.

General Medical Practitioners frequently prescribe medications that adversely affect saliva flow and quality, with consequent oral health problems.

In this study (run in collaboration with the Victorian Primary Care Practice-Based Research Network [VicReN]) GPs will be trained to identify patients at-risk of dry mouth (due to their age and medication profile), perform a simple dry mouth assessment and, for those patients identified as having dry mouth, implement a Dry Mouth Program (including referral to a dentist).

The project involves four consecutive parts:

1. Gauge current GP knowledge and practices
2. Hold education sessions for GPs
3. Trial a specifically developed dry mouth assessment and management program
4. Review the viability of the model including experiences of the participating GPs, patients and dentists.

Progress to date

1. Twenty GPs have been interviewed. GPs reported limited and sometimes incorrect knowledge regarding dry mouth and its management. They also highlighted poor communication practices between GPs and dentists.
2. Two successful education sessions have been held, and an electronic copy of the learning module has been created for ongoing use. The recently updated Therapeutic Guidelines section on dry mouth reflects the content of these sessions.
3. Twelve GPs across Melbourne are using the dry mouth assessment during patient appointments.
4. GP, patient and dentist questionnaires are being returned, reporting back their experiences with the study.

Two fact sheets, 'What is Dry Mouth?' and 'Care of a dry mouth', are included in this Newsletter AND are available online www.evident.net.au

To hear more about this and other eviDent projects, see Dr Denise Bailey present **"eviDent projects and engagement"** at the ADAVB Convention on 11 August 2012, 11:30am.

In addition to explaining the fundamentals of DPBRNs, and how your practice can help change the practice of dentistry, Dr Bailey will share findings from the following eviDent projects:

- The evaluation of eviDent
- A 5-year retrospective assay of implant complications in private practice
- Molar Incisor Hypomineralisation
- The PREVENT study: reducing the X factor – understanding the relationship between general practice prescribing and xerostomia.