

EXAMPLE PROJECT ON DISINFECTION AND DECONTAMINATION IN GENERAL DENTAL PRACTICE.

5.1 Aim

To carry out a review of the cross infection control procedures used in dental practice.

5.2 Background

Effective cross infection procedures are vitally important. The GDC includes cross infection as one of the core topics for GDP and DCP recertification.

Changes are made to the requirements at regular intervals and it is important that practices have effective measures in place and keep up to date with new procedures and recommendations.

Patients need to feel confident that they are treated in an appropriate way by well trained professionals and tend to be more aware of what the requirements are.

Being able to display how good they are in following correct procedures can be a useful marketing tool for a dental practice.

5.3 Who is involved and what are their roles?

Every member of the team has a role to play in cross infection procedures.

Involve the whole group in deciding how to plan the project; collect data; research the topic and develop new protocols.

Remember to include everyone in developing protocols. Make sure everyone has a stake in the project. If they feel joint owners of the project and its outcomes, they are more likely to make it work.

5.4 Some Suggested Research Material.

BDA A12 Information Sheet.

BDA A3 Advice Sheet.

Schulke & Mayr. (run postgraduate courses and produce excellent hand outs).

Professional Indemnity Societies.

GDC

5.5 Setting a standard.

Use the above to help you set standards. Remember that some standards are legal requirements and will need total compliance.

5.6 What items of data do you need to collect?

Carry out a baseline assessment of what you already do. A starting point could be your written practice cross infection control policy.

Are there updated medical histories of patients?

What protocols do you have for cleaning, disinfecting and storage of instruments?

Use of single use items.

What about the equipment? Consider such things as use of autoclaves; quality of water in dental units etc.

What measures do you take to protect staff and patients? E.g. Immunisation of staff; personal protective equipment;

What safe working procedures do you use e.g. handling equipment, re-sheathing LA syringes, hand cleaning/use of gloves; disposal of waste?

Do you have cross infection training as part of the induction for new staff?

Are there written protocols and appropriate records?

This is clearly a very large topic and you may wish to carry out a general overview or perhaps take a more in depth look at areas that you feel are more appropriate for your practice.

5.7 Analyse the results.

Compare your results with the standards you have identified.

5.8 Conclusions.

Identify your strengths and weaknesses.

Decide how you can improve and discuss ways of introducing changes.

Develop written protocols that all team members can help to formulate and sign up to.

Review any areas of concern to see if changes have been effective.

When you write up the project include details of all areas reviewed and research material used.

Include your results, analysis, outcomes and include copies of any data collection sheets and written protocols.