

# ***Breaking through oral health barriers in Palliative care***

## **Abstract**

There is a special needs area of oral health that is untouched in Ireland today - Palliative Care. Breaking down the barriers of oral health for special needs groups is so important and in this article we look at the oral health challenges faced at end of life care. We look at how these are overcome, how a lot of these can be prevented and how to manage their symptoms through hygiene intervention and education.

From a personal experience, having lost a loved one and seeing the oral health side effects from end of life care, I decided to volunteer my services at the local hospice.

At Our Ladies Hospices Blackrock and Harold's Cross I met with the staff and nursing training development team. At the hospice we discussed what would be the best way to approach oral care training. It was decided to do a six month trial of oral care training sessions with the staff, nurses, and carers of the hospice.

The plan/ program was designed which focussed on giving the carers and nurses the necessary skills and tools to provide proper oral health advice and care to patients and their families. Each person was given a certificate at the end the oral care training session for attendance at the program and an evaluation sheet to fill in after each session (Appendix1).