Sustainable service piloted for the homeless

The recent Steele review acknowledged that although NHS dental services were generally available, communication and publicity about these services could be much improved. Last month Chief Dental Officer for England, Dr Barry Cockcroft, launched an initiative at East London homeless charity the Whitechapel Mission to enable London’s homeless to better access dental services.

A mobile dental unit serving the homeless has been set up as a pilot project in Tower Hamlets, which runs until May 2010. Homeless people can access it at the Whitechapel Mission, as well as nearby residential homeless unit, Booth House and Dellow House day centre.

Leaflet

As part of the pilot, Dr Cockcroft launched a newly-published leaflet - Free NHS Dental Services for homeless people in London - which gives information on dental services for homeless people, as well as details about emergency dental services and tips on oral health.

The leaflets are being distributed at homeless organisations and through the Department of Health-funded existing mobile tuberculosis screening service, which reaches thousands of homeless people annually. The TB mobile service saw 1,905 homeless people last year. The next chapter is the dental service, from which we are hoping for big things.

The Mission has set up an innovative programme of its own, by donating 500,000 fluoride-preloaded toothbrushes annually to homeless people, at a cost to the mission of only £5.65 a year.

“Oral health is generally good among London’s homeless. It is not enough just to communicate the fact that there are den-
sity had previously accessed them successfully. “That’s why we are working with existing services for home-
less people to give them information on where they can get treatment.

“Tackling inequality means encouraging people to access services which are already there, which is a more pro-active way for them to get dental care.”

Whitechapel Mission's director, Tony Miller said: “We work with chaotic people who are hard to pin down and are excluded. The TB mobile service saw 1,905 homeless people last year. The next chapter is the dental service, from which we are hoping for big things.

The pilot’s impact will be evaluated by analysing the data of people receiving dental treatment at the community dental centre, which could be followed up to the promise not to preach, but to demonstrate through action.”

The pilot mobile oral health programme is a step towards the Mission's goal to empower excluded people.

The pilot’s impact will be evaluated by analysing the data of people receiving dental treatment at the community dental centre, which is anticipated will provide information on the scale of oral health problems among London’s homeless.

Leaflet – Free NHS Dental Services for homeless people in London

Dental Tribune: United Kingdom Edition - December 7-13, 2009

CDO Dr Barry Cockcroft holding a fluoride pre-loaded brush with Whitechapel Mission director, Tony Miller

Lord Alliance approval

Building Regulations

Bespoke designed products

Conversion

Changing the buildings use - e.g. Victorian Property to Dental Practice

Extending building to meet new demand - 1-2 or 3 floor extensions - Loft conversions

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