

Interview guide

Introduction question

Please take a moment to introduce yourselves—tell us what your role is in the care center and how long you’ve been in that role.

Key questions

How do you go about developing a (health) policy in your nursing home in general?

- Are certain important themes listed that must be addressed?
- What place does oral care take within that policy?

How important do you consider your own oral health, and why?

- Do you believe that poor oral health can affect general health? If so, what consequences?

To what extent do you consider the oral health of others important?

- And specifically, of your nursing home residents?
 - To what extent do you see it as your responsibility to pay attention to this?
 - Why? Why not?

Older adults in nursing homes often have poorer general health and suffer from multiple conditions. Does this change the importance you attach to the oral health of residents?

Literature shows that the oral health of older adults is generally poor.

- How do you perceive the oral health of residents?
- What do you think is needed to improve the oral health of older adults?
 - What is your opinion of the current oral care in your nursing home?
- Are there ways in which you can contribute?
 - What makes this difficult? Why?
 - What would help? Why?

Looking more specifically at policy in your nursing home regarding (the purchase of) materials and products for oral care. Can you describe to what extent this applies in your nursing home? How are oral care materials and products made available?

- On what basis did you decide whether or not to offer certain materials and products to residents?
 - Which materials and products are we talking about?
- If you advise residents to purchase materials and products elsewhere, on what basis do you recommend or not recommend certain items?
 - Which materials and products are we talking about?

In some nursing homes, certain “special” spaces are provided for residents, such as a hair salon. To what extent is this applicable in your nursing home? Are there such spaces (for care) in your nursing home?

- If there is no space for oral care: What would you think of having a dedicated space for oral care?
 - How would you envision such a space?

What guidelines on oral care are currently in place in your nursing home?

- If yes: How were these guidelines developed?
 - How are the oral care guidelines communicated in your nursing home (to caregivers and residents)?
 - How do they stay informed about these guidelines?
 - To what extent can these guidelines be followed? Is there some form of evaluation?

- Are the established oral care guidelines reviewed periodically?
 - When do you decide to do so?
- If none: What makes it difficult?
 - What would help to realize these guidelines?
- To what extent is oral health taken into account in the guidelines on nutrition (e.g., sugar)?

Literature shows that caregivers and residents are often not aware of the consequences of poor oral health, or lack sufficient knowledge about the importance of good oral hygiene and oral care. How do you perceive this in your nursing home?

- What steps do you think are needed to improve knowledge and awareness?
 - Among caregivers?
 - Among residents?
 - To what extent are these steps applicable in your center?
- What is your opinion about the organization of training on oral care?
 - For caregivers?
 - To what extent are residents/families made aware?

What usually happens in terms of general health assessment when a person is admitted to the nursing home?

- To what extent is attention paid to the oral health of that person at the time of admission?

How is the follow-up of residents' oral hygiene and oral health organized?

- On what basis is it decided that certain residents need help with daily oral hygiene?
 - Is special attention given to certain groups (e.g., persons with dementia)?
- To what extent is the oral health status included in an individual care plan?

To what extent is the topic of oral health discussed during multidisciplinary meetings?

- What is usually discussed? Further action or a follow-up?

Which caregivers mainly deliver oral care to residents?

- What makes these caregivers take on this role?
 - Have they received specific training? Do they have a particular interest?

To what extent do you collaborate with a dentist?

- How do you experience working—or not working—with a dentist?

To what extent is a preventive dental check-up provided for residents?

- At what moments does this take place? (Including at admission?)

What is your approach when a resident needs to visit the dentist for treatment?

- How is it decided that someone requires a dental visit?
- How smooth is the referral process? What barriers do you encounter?

To what extent do you collaborate with a dental hygienist?

- If yes: How do you experience this collaboration?
- If no: What are your thoughts on collaborating with a dental hygienist?

When someone needs to see a dentist/dental hygienist, what role do you play in this?

- Is this organized by you, or by the resident/their family? (More openly formulated: Who organizes this—your team, the resident, or family?)
- What makes this difficult? What would help?
- To what extent is this communicated to residents?

To what extent is the CRA involved in the oral health/oral care of residents?

Your nursing home is working with BelRAI. To what extent is the oral health of residents assessed using its oral health section?

- If so, what is the experience with this section?
- Do you notice its use in your nursing home?
 - To what extent do you notice that it has an impact on care?
- If not, is there a reason why this is not used? If so, why?

What influence does the use of the oral health section have on measures/policy regarding oral care?

- On what exactly? Which changes or additions to measures have resulted from the oral health section?
 - In terms of materials and products? Collaborations? Oral care guidelines? Training? Protocols?

What do you see as the advantages of using this section?

- Are there also disadvantages?
- How would you prefer to see it improved?

To what extent is the oral health section useful for mapping care needs? (Quality monitoring)

To what extent do you think regular oral assessments should be a standard procedure in your nursing home?

Are there initiatives regarding oral care you would still like to undertake, but that are not possible for certain reasons?

- What obstacles do you encounter?

During our study, we noticed that some caregivers find it difficult to provide oral care to residents.

- How, in your opinion, can caregivers be encouraged to provide oral care?
- What do you think is needed to facilitate this?

Since people are keeping their teeth longer, do you see potential for more attention to oral care in your nursing home?

- And for better follow-up of oral care?
- What are the prerequisites for this?

What is your opinion of your current oral health policy in your nursing home today?

- If you had the power to decide (e.g., in elections), what would you change with regard to oral health policy?

Closing questions

Before we conclude, are there any topics that we have not yet addressed that you would like to share?

Summary of the discussion:

- To summarize, the main points I noted from this conversation are: Do you agree with this summary?