



May 28th, 2014

Keep smiling

Oral health promoters are putting a smile on the faces of both young and old.

During National Smile Month (May 19th-June 19th), the team from South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust, who cover Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland, are going in to secondary schools and care homes to raise awareness of the importance of oral health.

Team manager Joanne Purvis said: "Poor oral health is not necessarily just about yellowing teeth and bad breath. Bleeding gums are among the first and most obvious signs of gum disease and, left untreated, can cause a whole range of problems. Research suggests there is a link between poor oral health and dementia, pneumonia, colon cancer, heart attacks, strokes, complications during pregnancy and erectile dysfunction. Regular visits to the dentist - as often as they recommend - can help to nip problems in the bud."

The key messages of National Smile Month are:

- Brush for two to three minutes twice a day using a fluoride toothpaste
- Cut down on how often you have sugary foods and drinks
- Visit the dentist regularly, as often as they recommend

ends

Pictured above: The photograph shows Oral health promoter Pauline Wright, centre, with residents of South Shields care home Harton Grange, Ailsa Lidster and Tommy Grant

Issued on behalf of South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust by Kay Jordan

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