



November 3rd, 2014

Raising awareness of mouth cancer

Oral health promoters are raising awareness to help save lives during Mouth Cancer Action Month this November by backing the British Dental Health Foundation's annual campaign.

South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust's team cover Sunderland, South Tyneside and Gateshead. Oral Health Promotion Lead, Joanne Purvis, said: "By knowing more about the risk factors, living healthier lifestyles and by learning what to look for, people can help reduce their risk and lower the number of lives that mouth cancer affects. Early detection could save your life so it is really important not to ignore possible signs and that everyone has a regular check-up with their dentist to increase the chances of mouth cancer being detected. This latest campaign is all about taking action: don't leave that ulcer unattended for more than three weeks and don't ignore that unusual lump or swelling or red and white patches in your mouth."

More than 2,000 people die from mouth cancer each year in the UK, which is more than testicular and cervical cancer combined, and it takes more lives a year than road traffic accidents. More than 6,700 people were diagnosed with mouth cancer last year and the disease has grown by a third in the last decade. It remains one of very few cancers which are predicted to increase further in the coming years. Smoking, drinking alcohol to excess, poor diet and the human papillomavirus (HPV), which is transmitted via oral sex, are all risk factors for the disease.

The oral health promotion team will be offering the public free mouth screening and advice and guidance on the risk factors for the disease, its signs and symptoms and the importance of early detection near Tesco at Trinity Walk, Gateshead, on Friday, November 14th, from 9.30am-3.30pm.

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Pictured above: South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust oral health promoters Melanie Wooton and Ann Leather.

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

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