

To: Dr. Erika Paterson

From: Meagan Rosenberg

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Subject: Proposal for Decreasing Needlestick Injuries at Arden Park Dental

Location of Study

Arden Park Dental will be the location of this study, which is in Stratford, Ontario Canada. It is a busy general dental practice with over 25 employees including: dentists, dental hygienists, dental assistants, sterilization technicians, administrators, a denturist and an oral surgeon.

Background Details of Readers

My intended audience for my formal report will be for the owner; Dr. Raphael Jankowski as well as the two Health and Safety representatives for the office; Tammy Stoddart and Kathy Johnston. With Dr. Jankowski being the owner, he always makes the final decision on any new implementations or changes within the office. Tammy, who is also the office manager is the one who makes a lot of the big decisions on policies and protocols in the office. Kathy, the second Healthy and Safety representative who is also an office administrator is quite new to the position on the Health and Safety board – but is very aggressive in her approach to making it the safest environment possible for patients and the employees. I chose these three people as my target audience because they have the authority to act on my recommendations.

Introduction

With having one of the most rewarding jobs in the healthcare field, comes great responsibility for the health of oneself. Dental office employees should be following strict protocols and guidelines for health, safety, and infection control at all times of practice. Employees are putting themselves at risk every day, by working so close with the public and infectious diseases. Needlestick injuries are one of the most common reported injuries at Arden Park Dental. These injuries are often overlooked by the employees as not being important, or worth the ‘headache’ to report them.

Local Anesthesia is provided to the patients daily at Arden Park Dental for restorative treatment, extractions and teeth cleaning. This means that there are lots of opportunities for a needlestick injury to occur to one of the employees.

Statement of Problem

Needlestick injuries are putting the employees of Arden Park Dental at risk for developing blood born pathogens including: Hepatitis B and C and HIV. Contracting any of these pathogens because of a needlestick injury would be devastating for the health of the individual.

Proposed Solution

The solution I feel that would help most to decrease the amount of Needlestick Injuries at Arden Park Dental is to provide all staff with an updated training course on preventative measures and controls to help decrease their chances of getting a needlestick injury. With all employees completing a WHMIS and a health and safety course at the beginning of hire, an updated refresher of all preventative measurements may help to decrease the chances of the problem.

Scope

The general purpose of this report will be focused on decreasing the number of needlestick injuries at Arden Park Dental. Over the next couple of months data will be collected from the employees at Arden Park Dental to help with the understanding of the how's and why's needlestick injuries are occurring. A few things I am planning to investigate are:

- Are employees continuously following the proper guidelines by wearing their personal protective equipment when necessary?
- What method is being used for recapping of the needle?
- Are employees following proper protocol for discarding sharps?
- What do the employees think would help to prevent needlestick injuries?

Methods

My primary data sources for the report will include surveys, interviews and observations. I plan on using a survey for all employees at Arden Park Dental to gauge their knowledge and experience with needlestick injuries. The interviews will be conducted with the two health and safety representatives on staff at the office to discuss what protocols and policies are currently in place for needlestick injuries and the effectiveness of them. Observations will be around the whole office, including how the employees are recapping, discarding and handling the needles.

Secondary sources will be limited as there will be enough primary sources. These few secondary sources may include publications and journal articles from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario.

My Qualifications

I have been working in the dental field for over four years and have been employed at Arden Park Dental for most of that time. I am very accustomed with the offices protocols and policies regarding needlestick injuries. My experience of being one of the former health and safety representatives at Arden Park Dental will be an advantage for a more detailed report.

Conclusion

Even with adequate policies and protocols set into place, employees are still injuring themselves with Needlesticks. Evidently, action is needed to help decrease the chances of more needlestick injuries from happening. With studying the above questions mentioned earlier I will be able to

determine a way to help Arden Park Dental with decreasing their needlestick Injuries to keep their employees safe.