Basic Guide to Oral Health Education and Promotion
Love your patients and they will do anything that you ask.
Ann Felton (1942–2007)

Ann Felton made patients smile and their smiles brighter. Ann was a dental hygienist, tutor and mentor, and ran her own oral health education course for dental nurses whom she referred to as ‘the darlings of dentistry’.

Ann wrote the first edition of this book in difficult circumstances, yet retained her love of the subject and her sense of humour throughout. This second edition is dedicated to Ann’s life and work.
## Contents

*Foreword* vii  
*Preface* ix  
*Acknowledgements* xi  

### SECTION 1  Structure and Functions of the Oral Cavity  
1 The oral cavity in health 3  

### SECTION 2  Diseases and Conditions of the Oral Cavity  
2 Plaque, calculus and staining 25  
3 Chronic gingivitis 35  
4 Periodontal disease 41  
5 Caries 53  
6 Tooth surface loss and sensitivity 65  
7 Xerostomia 76  
8 Other diseases and disorders affecting the oral cavity 80  

### SECTION 3  Oral Disease Prevention  
9 Diet and nutrition 109  
10 Sugars in the diet 117  
11 Fluoride 125  
12 Fissure sealants 135  
13 Smoking cessation and substance misuse 141  
14 Anti-plaque agents 150  

### SECTION 4  Delivering Oral Health Messages  
15 Communication 159  
16 Education and planning sessions 165  
17 Setting up a preventive dental unit 174  
18 Planning an oral hygiene session outside of the practice 179  
19 Practical oral hygiene instruction 182  

### SECTION 5  Oral Health Target Groups and Case Studies  
20 Pregnant patients 199  
21 Parents of pre-11 year olds 206  
22 Adolescents and orthodontic patients 216  
23 Older people 225  
24 At-risk and special-care patients 234
25 Minority ethnic populations in the United Kingdom 241
26 Other health professionals 245
27 Planning education case studies and exhibitions 248

SECTION 6 Oral Health and Society 255
28 Sociology 257
29 Epidemiology 262
30 Evidence-based prevention 272
31 UK dental services 277
32 Oral health promotion 283
33 Dental research 288

Index 295
Ann Felton and Alison Chapman have between them more than 50 years of experience in the delivery and training of oral health education, and Alison has been a qualified dental hygienist for over 30 years. Ann, together with Simon and Alison, ran an exceptionally successful oral health education course in Bristol for more than 10 years, with a pass rate of over 95% in the UK national examination, before developing an online course with the British Dental Association, which is proving to be very successful.

This has given them great experience and understanding of the subject and the needs of students. The delivery of dental care is undergoing fundamental changes and the need to develop practice teams with skill mix makes this book very timely. Practices need to consider how they can make best use of their staff to help deliver oral care to their patients now and in the future, and oral health educators are an important part of this process.

This book provides a most comprehensive review of the subject. Each chapter has clearly defined learning outcomes that make it easy to read and understand. It is an ideal revision aid and basis for any member of the dental team and other health professionals wishing to know about all the aspects of oral health education. It would also be a good reference book for all practices on the subject.

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Oral health is central to our general well-being. The health of the body begins with the oral cavity, since all our daily nutrients, beneficial or otherwise, pass through it.

Knowledge in the field of oral health is changing rapidly and there is a great deal to learn. Patients need trained oral health educators (OHEs) and promoters to help prevent and control dental conditions and disease. It is vital that dental and health professionals consistently promote the same messages to avoid confusion and ultimately improve oral health within the population.

This book covers the theoretical and practical aspects of oral health education and promotion, and is the course companion for UK dental nurses studying oral health education. It is also aimed at hygienists, therapists and dentists who regularly promote and practise oral health and require up-to-date, evidence-based knowledge (including professionals and trainees in developing nations where education has proven to be a cost-effective method of improving oral health). Other professionals such as health visitors, nurses, dieticians and midwives will also find the book invaluable.

Each chapter deals with various aspects of oral health in a logical order, and includes learning outcomes, detailing what the reader (particularly students) should have learned by the end of the chapter.

After reading this book, the reader should be able to:

• Confidently educate patients about diseases and conditions that affect the oral cavity; their treatment, management and prevention.
• Set up a preventive dental unit.
• Be aware of the wider context of oral health education and promotion in society.
• Use knowledge gained to help pass a qualification in oral health education.
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SECTION 1

STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE ORAL CAVITY

INTRODUCTION

This section looks at the structure and functions of the oral cavity in some detail. It includes the development of the oral cavity in utero, the structure of the tooth and its supporting tissues, plus eruption dates for primary and secondary dentitions.

It also includes the functions of the tongue in maintaining oral health and common conditions associated with it, plus the composition and role of saliva in keeping the mouth healthy.