

## Palliative Care Dentistry: Editorial Note

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Palliative care dentistry was defined by Wiseman<sup>1</sup> as the study and management of patients with active progressive and far advanced disease in whom the oral cavity has been compromised either by the disease directly or by its treatment; the focus of care is quality of life. The palliative care team consists of specialists in various fields of medicine who provides care and treatment to the patients. Dental professionals are important members of extended palliative care team. They have a number of key roles, including

- Training of another members of team.
- Management of specific oral problems.
- Management of complex oral problems (in combination with other members of the team).

The functions where a dentist can play his role in the palliative care team are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

- Dentist can recognize tumours of head and neck or any oral manifestations of haematological malignancies.
- Squamous cell carcinomas which are most commonly found in head and neck can be identified by dental professionals.
- Oral mucositis or stomatitis should be taken care by the dentist during the treatment of cancer.
- The other conditions like radiation caries, candidiasis during chemotherapy should be taken care by the dentist.
- The post radiation osteonecrosis is another complications of post radiation therapy which can treated by the dentist himself [1,2].

- Dentist can help in rehabilitation of the post treatment defects like difficulty in speech, speaking and esthetics.

**Bibliography**

1. Wiseman MA. "Palliative care dentistry". *Gerodontology* 17 (2000): 49-51.
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