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# Comfortable Mouths in the Terminal Phase of Life: Feasibility of an Intervention Study for Xerostomia Management in Hospice Patients

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## Introduction

More than 80% of hospice patients experience dry mouth, which reduces quality of life due to an increased risk of infections, loss of taste, and difficulty swallowing. In collaboration with these patients, a Dexpanthenol gel has been developed to meet their needs. Evaluating the Dexpanthenol gel in hospice care is challenging.

## Aim

Evaluating the feasibility of implementing intervention research procedures for Dexpanthenol gel in hospice patients suffering from dry mouth.

## Method

A mixed-method cross-sectional feasibility study.

- Patients aged >18 years with dry mouth (Utrecht Symptom Diary [USD] score > 0) were included.
- Over a period of three days, patients were asked to complete questionnaires once daily, before and after applying the gel

Primary outcomes: inclusion rate, dropout rate, data completeness, and perceived feasibility of the procedures by healthcare professionals and patients.

Secondary outcome: change in dry mouth as measured by the USD.

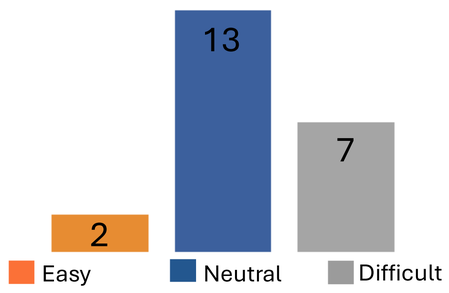
Consistent communication with hospice teams, a shorter study duration, and tackling gatekeeping are essential for ensuring the continuity of the study.


## Results

A total of 42 patients participated, of whom 28 completed the study. Reasons for dropout included deterioration (n=9), patient preference (n=3), and death (n=1). One patient developed mucositis (n=1). The difference in dry mouth was significant each day.

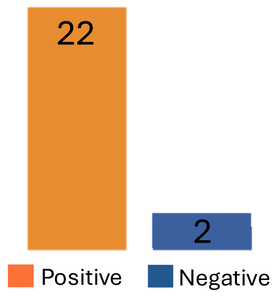
### Healthcare providers

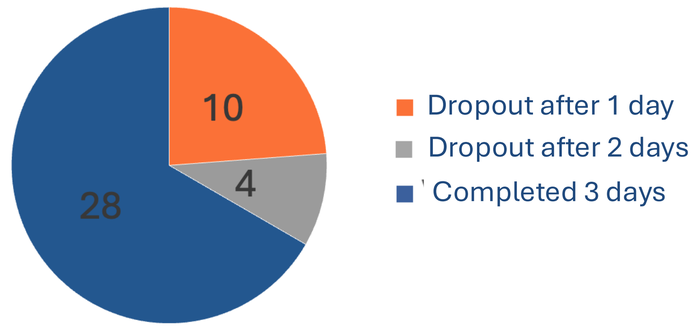
**What was it like to approach patients for the study?**



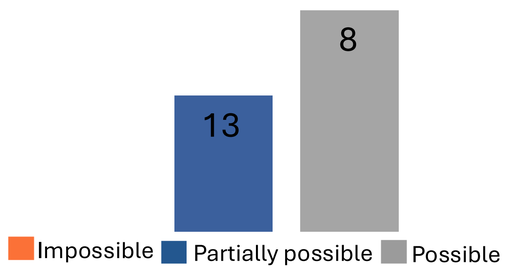

### Patients

**How did you experience participating in the study?**

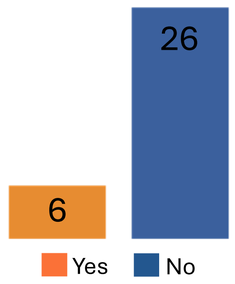


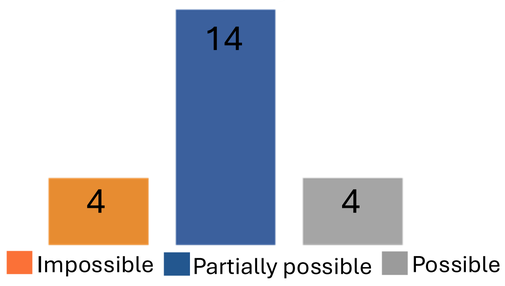

**Was the research manageable alongside your current work?**



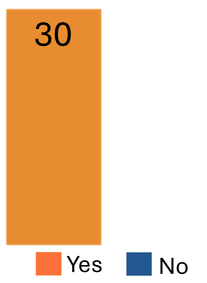

**Was the study too burdensome?**

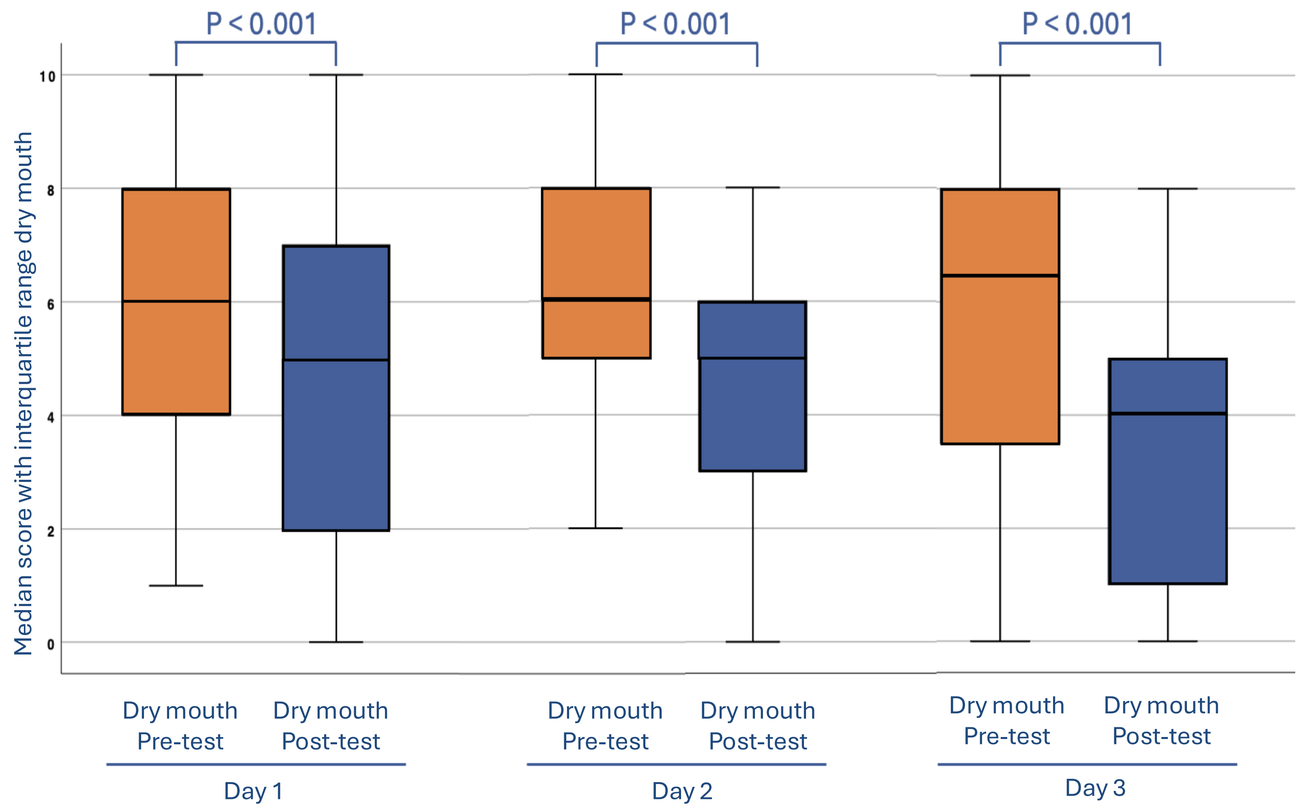



**Was there enough time to conduct the study?**




**Were the questionnaires clear?**




## Conclusion

The study demonstrates the feasibility of a Dexpanthenol intervention for dry mouth in hospice care, with positive feedback and participation and dropout rates that support further research.

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