

The home page of the website of the American Dental Hygienists Association (ADHA) may remind one of a global news site, such as CNN or The New York Times. One of the most organized, timely and detailed websites available, <http://www.adha.org> is the website for the largest professional organization representing the interests of dental hygienists. The home page is filled with news and information important to dental hygienists at all stages of their careers.

Members of the ADHA enjoy professional support, educational programmes, and numerous opportunities for participation in association decision making. The mission of this organization is to advance the art and science of dental hygiene, and to promote the highest standards of education and practice in the profession. Along with the most current headlines, this website lists a column on the left side of the home page listing 'sections'. The various sections include information on topics such as the ADHA Institute for Oral Health, the Annual Session, Continuing Education, Governmental Affairs, Job Listings, National Dental Hygiene Month, Patient Education and Professional Issues. The purpose of this article is to highlight several features of the ADHA website.

The *ADHA Institute for Oral Health* is a non-profit organization created to provide support and funding for educational scholarships, fellowships, research grants, community spirit and community outreach grants to dental hygienists throughout the country. The Institute supports activities to promote the art and science of dental hygiene and the future of the profession. The programmes concentrate on dental hygiene practice, delivery of oral health care services, and creating opportunities for dental hygienists. Descriptions of the funding programmes, including eligibility requirements and downloadable applications, can be found in this section of the website. All benefits from the Institute's programmes are the result of donations.

Continuing Education is an important and continual selection in the ADHA website. Presently, 11 online courses are available for members to accrue continuing education credit. Subject areas have an expansive range, from eating disorders to dentin hypersensitivity to medical emergencies. All courses offer two credit hours upon completion. Also included in the continuing education section is a complete list of courses offered by individual states. A comprehensive alphabetical listing of states shows what is currently available.

One of the choices on the home page is the section titled *Education and Careers*. This section contains detailed informa-

tion about earning a dental hygiene education, including admission requirements, prerequisites and the differences between certificate, associate and baccalaureate degrees. Entry-level dental hygiene programmes are easily found by alphabetical state listings, and all the schools contain addresses, phone numbers, e-mail information and names of contact persons. In addition, information is available for institutions which offer programmes in degree completion, Master of Science degree in Dental Hygiene, masters' degree in related disciplines, re-entry programmes, and distance learning programmes.

The thought of taking another clinical board examination may make one grimace, but the *Education and Careers* section continues with information for those individuals who may be moving to a new state. Dental hygiene licensure facts are listed along with national and regional examination information, state testing agencies and dates of the various examinations.

Another subdivision under the section on *Education and Careers* contains information for hygienists considering a career in a foreign country. Working abroad is a popular choice among dental hygienists, and this section contains facts concerning laws and regulations in the country, passports, driving, licensure and continuing education requirements. Specific information on 16 countries is also available, courtesy of the International Journal of Dental Hygiene. Some of the countries include: Australia, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the UK.

The *Student* section of this website is an incredible asset to the dental hygiene student. The website encourages suggestions and ideas from the student population regarding issues facing dental hygiene students. It also offers opportunities for students to share common experiences. Information and benefits about being a member of the student organization (SADHA), along with a membership application, is also accessible in this section. Those students seeking scholarship information should be directed to this site. The scholarship fund was established over 40 years ago to assist students interested in pursuing a career in dental hygiene. Tips for being successful on state board examinations are listed in a positive, confident manner. In addition, interview tips, resume and cover letter assistance is offered for the recent graduate in the ADHA employment reference guide.

The *Patient Education* section is inspiring. Beginning with basic information on brushing and flossing, this section includes fact sheets on topics such as malodour, oral cancer,

periodontal disease and diabetes. Currently, three posters are available online and can be easily downloaded: Life Saving Advice, Dealing with Gum Disease and Oral Cancer (this poster was a National Health Information award recipient). Many oral health tips are listed for everyone from children to the elderly patient. Information is available for many patient concerns, such as tooth whitening or nutrition, and three downloadable ADHA public service announcements are easily viewed in video format.

This article has only highlighted a brief portion of the website: <http://www.adha.org>. With a goal of improving the public's total health, the mission statement of the American Dental Hygienists' Association is to advance the art and science of dental hygiene by ensuring access to quality oral health care, increasing awareness of the cost-effective benefits of prevention, promoting the highest standards of dental hygiene educa-

tion, licensure, practice and research, and representing and promoting the interests of dental hygienists. The website of the ADHA is a comprehensive and educational site for the dental hygienist at any stage of their career, from the student, to the clinical hygienist, to the educator or any member of this organization.

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