



Tools to support teaching and conducting research

At the 3rd North American/Global Dental Hygiene Research Conference held during October, 2014, in Bethesda, Maryland, participants were provided with two resources designed to assist in fostering dental hygiene research and promoting translation of research evidence. These documents, the 'Dental Hygiene Research Toolkit' and 'Best Practices for Incorporating Dental Hygiene Research & Evidence Based Decision Making (EBDM) into Dental Hygiene Curriculum', were produced by the National Center for Dental Hygiene Research & Practice (NCDHRP) and edited by Denise M. Bowen, RDH, MS. For those of you unfamiliar with the NCDHRP, the mission is to *promote the health of the public by fostering the development, implementation and dissemination of oral health research, establishing an infrastructure to support dental hygiene research, and strengthening the scientific foundation for the discipline of dental hygiene.*

The Dental Hygiene Research Toolkit includes a selection of tools and resources designed to help dental hygiene scholars conduct research more efficiently and creatively. Topics incorporated are the research process, research ethics and protocol requirements, review of the literature, research design and methods, scientific writing and dissemination of research findings, the DHNet, and registering your study with the NIH. The section on the Review of the Literature covers the distinction between a literature review and a systematic review, and provides resources for evidence-based practice, literature reviews and critical appraisal, databases for searching the literature, and citation management software. The section on Research Design and Methods offers sources for survey research, qualitative research, systematic reviews and meta-analyses, and data analysis. The section on Scientific Writing provides tools related to writing resources, scientific oral presentations, style manuals, and dissemination and transfer of research knowledge. The DHNet section includes information on research agendas, databases, funding and training. The direc-

tory of tools listed is not meant to be all-inclusive, but does provide a framework for learning and knowledge expansion.

As research and evidence-based practice information is required in dental hygiene curriculum at all levels of instruction, it is important to provide guidance for what to include at each level: entry level, baccalaureate degree completion and master's degree programs. Each type of dental hygiene program can build upon the research skills previously acquired. 'Best Practices for Incorporating Research & EBDM into Dental Hygiene Curriculum' was designed to help dental hygiene educators teach introductory research methods and statistics. The document includes sample course syllabi, learning activities and teaching resources that will help dental hygiene faculty to create engaging course content. The guide provides an overview of competencies appropriate for each level of the dental hygiene curriculum. Curriculum content and student assignments are offered as examples for faculty to use to develop courses that are meaningful and challenging to students. Sample textbooks on research methods are listed to help instructors identify fundamental textbooks for course design and instruction.

There are two ways for dental hygiene researchers and educators to access these resources. Readers can explore the DHNet and the National Center for Dental Hygiene Research & Practice at <http://www.usc.edu/dhnet>. The documents are also available online at www.ifdh.org. The IFDH is pleased to promote the research activities of dental hygienists around the globe and hope that connecting our research colleagues to the tools developed by the National Center for Dental Hygiene Research & Practice will prove useful as we continue to strive to enhance the research skills of dental hygienists and improve the oral health of the public.

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