

AAPHD Policy Statement on the IOM's Report: Dental Education at the Crossroads: Challenges and Change

Approved by the Assembly of AAPHD Members September 26, 1996

The Institute of Medicine (IOM), part of the National Academy of Sciences, established the Committee on the Future of Dental Education "to identify measures to strengthen dental education in the United States and stabilize its position within the university." The specific charge to the committee was to examine the current status of dental education and oral health in the United States and consider future scientific, demographic, economic, organizational, and other developments that may affect oral health status and the system for educating dentists and other dental personnel; develop a statement of how, over the next 25 years, oral health and oral health services should be improved in the United States, and identify the short-term and long-term implications of this statement for dental education and public policy; describe strategies that will help dental education, research, and practice improve oral health by responding effectively to current problems and future developments in both science and society; and consider ways in which each dental school can better relate to the mission of its university and to the community at large.

Through site visits, personal interviews, mail and telephone surveys,

and oral and written testimony from the dental, medical, and lay communities, the committee collected "information and perspectives of dental education in the context of the broader systems of health professionals' education and health care delivery." Based on their findings, the committee issued a report, entitled "Dental Education at the Crossroads: Challenges and Change," in January 1995. This report included 22 recommendations covering dental education, research, and dental care delivery. Supporting materials for the recommendations were contained in the report and in background papers published in the *Journal of Dental Education*.

- Whereas, the American Association of Public Health Dentistry (AAPHD) seeks to improve the oral and general health of all Americans; and

- Whereas, the AAPHD believes that education, research, and patient care delivery are necessary to improve the oral and general health of all Americans; and

- Whereas, the Committee on the Future of Dental Education, Institute of Medicine, National Academy of Sciences, issued its report "Dental Education at the Crossroads: Challenges and Change," containing 22 recommenda-

tions to improve dental education, research, and patient care; and

- Whereas, the AAPHD has reviewed the IOM report and other documents and developed a response, identifying relevant and important recommendations to which it would respond; therefore,

Be it resolved that the AAPHD:

- Endorses the Institute of Medicine's report "Dental Education at the Crossroads: Challenges and Change"; and

- Supports implementation of those findings and recommendations targeted toward improving the health of the public and securing the future of dental education; and

- Calls upon other dental, health, education, and public health organizations to work cooperatively with the AAPHD in implementing these recommendations; and

- Calls upon federal, state, and local governments as well as appropriate private entities to maintain their commitment to oral and general health through continued and enhanced support of prevention and public health programs, including community outreach; dental research; dental education, including graduate programs in dental public health; and personal dental services.