

## Advancing the World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Oral Health Action Plan through Interprofessionalism.

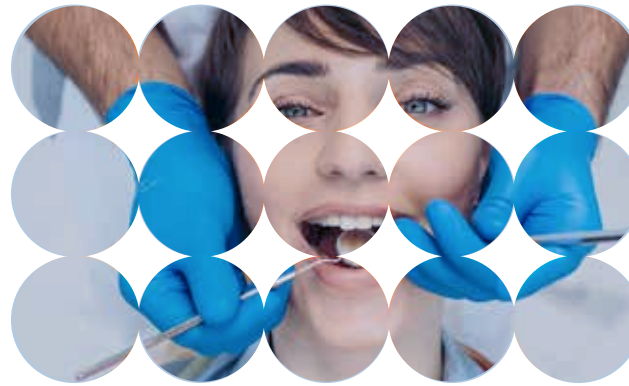
An essential tenet to implementing the WHO global oral health action plan is the concept of workforce planning for members of the oral healthcare team (OHT).

OHT membership is the remit of governments and it is likely that policy changes will encourage greater use of interprofessionalism (IP) and a reframing of what constitutes the OHT. From an academic perspective the concept of IPE has been embraced for some time to varying degrees of success.

Through collaborative discussions regional educational associations have identified 3 core interprofessional objectives that our member institutions should be aware of:

1. Greater use of existing members of the oral health team through IP
2. Enabling meaningful interprofessional education that provides deeper understanding of interprofessional care
3. Embracing the upskilling of other professionals to carry out defined oral health practices

The key issue is integrating oral health into general healthcare, as emphasized by the action plan.



## Oral Health Education's Call to Action:

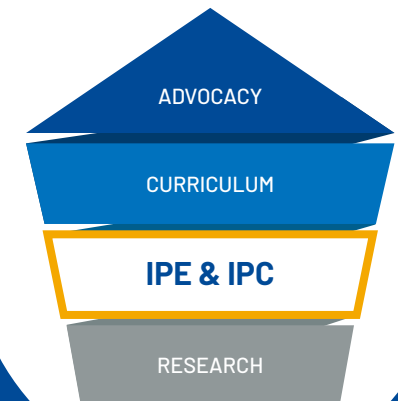
Advancing the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Oral Health Action Plan

### Our call to you to act:

1. Prioritisation of prevention & public health principles
2. Rely on evidence-based research
3. Regular review of curricula so they address key WHO principle
4. Enable ongoing curriculum assessment & ensuring quality education

## Oral Health Education's <sup>3</sup> Call to Action:

Advancing the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Oral Health Action Plan



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**OHPE:** Oral Health Professionals Education  
**UHC:** Universal Health Coverage  
**IPC:** Inter Professional Care  
**IPE:** Inter Professional Education  
**IP:** Intra Professional

**Summary guidance on Inter-professionalism**

## 1: Intra-professionalism and oral health team membership

Acknowledging national and regional priorities in oral health there is clearly different membership of the OHT from country to country. It is imperative that each member of the team has a defined scope of practice, including accountability. It is also important that members of the oral health team commit to working with other professionals in a respectful and accountable manner.

Any changes made nationally in oral health team membership should be accompanied by updates to scope of practice, which in turn will dictate a need for curriculum review by institutions.

Ensuring you engage at an early stage in national workforce planning, particularly discussions focused on oral health team membership, should be a priority.

As the OHT evolves it may be prudent for institutions to consider having discussions with national competent authorities and those who oversee the national curriculum and scopes of practice to consider formulating a core shared curriculum throughout the OHT.



## 2: Interprofessional education to enable positive working environments that deliver and then to professional care experience for the service user

Dental education associations encourage the use of meaningful approaches to IPE that integrate other health professionals and the oral healthcare team in a variety of educational and practice settings. This should span all levels of healthcare provision including primary, secondary and tertiary settings.

IPE should serve a number of purposes, including:

- Developing skills to communicate with other healthcare professionals
- Understanding one's own and other scopes of practice to ensure working within legislative remit
- Knowing when to refer patients to other health professionals
- Enabling effective team-working and communication skills
- Enabling synergies in clinical practice settings for the benefit of patients
- Exposure to a wide variety of healthcare settings and healthcare providers



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**UHC:** Universal Health Coverage  
**IPC:** Inter Professional Care  
**IPE:** Inter Professional Education  
**IP:** Intra Professional

## 3: Upskilling of other health professionals in nationally defined oral health skills

At a national level countries may need to respond creatively in addressing the need to provide other healthcare professionals with oral healthcare skills.

A key part of these discussions in some countries is the role other healthcare providers can play in enabling an improved oral health service. The educational associations encourage existing OHT members to approach these discussions in a positive and open manner.

As academics our role is to ensure that any additional skills taken on by OHPs are clearly defined withing scopes of practice and the level of training and expectations upon them in practice would be the same if it were a member of the dental team.

Engaging in these discussions early will ensure clarity around what skills and competences are being considered suitable for other professionals, the impact this may have on existing curriculum and how your institutional response may need to evolve.

Clarity in role, delegation, accountability and scope of practice are paramount in discussions here.

### How the Associations plan to help

To enable members to engage in IPE discussions the associations commit to evolve online resources that will include:

- Competencies and learning outcome in IPE
- Best practice examples of IPE and IPC in