

Advancing the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Global Oral Health Action Plan: the importance of reinforcing research and evidence-based education and practice.

Oral health education and clinical practice are optimally grounded in evidence and the scientific method. As such, they must be receptive to change and advancement in the use of technology, science and medicine.

At the core of the training of each member of the oral health team is a strong educational curriculum based on the best available evidence and the ability to demonstrate practical skills and competence. While the training provided in research methodologies and skills varies considerably, the core principle and ethos of appreciating the importance of scientific research and the scientific method is of central importance and must remain a priority.

The WHO global oral health action plan emphasizes the role of research, evidence-based practice, and data-driven decision making. The action plan stresses the importance of using data for design and implementation, which includes workforce planning, curriculum development, training and education, continuing professional development, and clinical practice.



Oral Health Education's Call to Action:

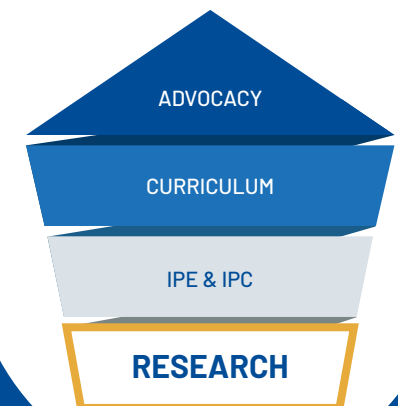
Advancing the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Oral Health Action Plan

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 ⁴ Call to Action:

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



adee ADVANCING EDUCATION AND ORAL HEALTH

ADEA THE VOICE OF DENTAL EDUCATION

Association for Dental Education in Europe
Dublin Dental University Hospital
Trinity College: D02F859
Dublin 2: Ireland

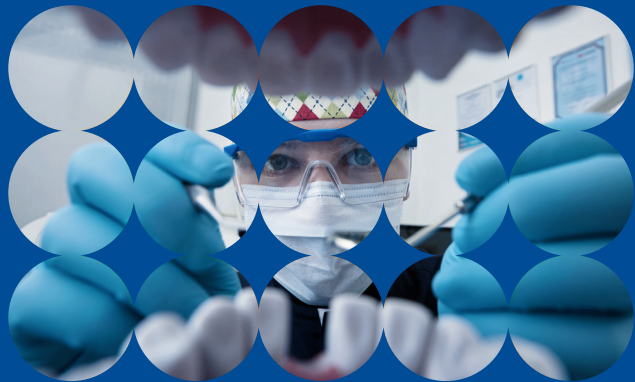
American Dental Education Association
655 K Street NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20001

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

Summary guidance on the role of Research & the Evidence Base

To enhance the role of research within the action plan the education associations have identified four areas where we suggest our members can assist:

- Ensuring students become competent users and advocates for research, the scientific method and data-driven decision making
- Enabling students and faculty to access and actively engage in research



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

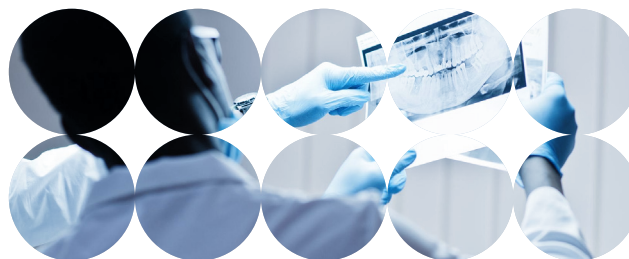
Summary guidance on the role of Research & the Evidence Base

1: Empowering students to become competent user of research & data

Clinical practice and the education of clinical practitioners must remain grounded in the scientific method and evidence-base of the professions. As our students progress through their curriculum it is imperative that they are encouraged and actively enabled to become competent users of research, astute assessors of the evidence base, and proficient in data-driven decision making.

The scientific method should remain the backbone of their education and practice. They should be empowered to critically and competently appraise published research and the 'grey' literature. In an era of virtual reality, social media, artificial intelligence, and a narrative led by influencers, the ability to identify best available evidence and its application to their practice is becoming an increasing challenge. Students should be trained in the competent use of AI and other such technologies, but must remain rooted in quality evidence and scientific method. We encourage our universities to enable students to call out pseudoscience and influencer-driven fads.

Graduating practitioners should have basic skills to evaluate research methodologies and appreciate how to structure, understand and communicate a literature review and to interrogate the findings of any research.



We are not suggesting that every student must actively engage in research, but they should have the skills to assess its validity and make informed decisions on the best available evidence.

2: Enable access to research

While appreciating that each country will have its own national priorities within the curriculum, where possible institutions should allow for some elements of research practice to its students.

This need not necessarily be an individualized research project, and could be a group research project, an action research based quality improvement project, a literature review project, other similar smaller scale projects that can be completed within the curriculum.

Students should be encouraged to explore a wide range of research topics, including educational methods, human factors, student and faculty experiences, quantitative or qualitative analysis, brief surveys, patient-related outcome measures or service improvements.

The key, however, is that students are provided with the opportunities to put into practice key research principles and analyses.

