



Regional Associations resources to support curriculum review aligned with the World Health Organisation Action Plan



ADVANCING EDUCATION
AND ORAL HEALTH



THE VOICE OF
DENTAL EDUCATION



June 2025

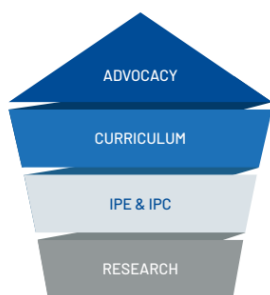
Contents

Preamble	3
Curriculum Hierarchy	5
Curriculum review aligned with WHO action plan	6
Curriculum topics for consideration	7
Stakeholder consultation in curriculum review	8
The concepts of a core curriculum	8
Tools that may assist	8
Topic checklist	10
Stakeholder checklist	14
Internal dissemination checklist	18

Preamble

In our call to action the oral health professional education associations at a regional level identified 4 priority areas that could be enabled through the associations and its members that will help address and enable the World Health organizations global oral health action plan. **These four areas are:**

Figure 1- 4 Principles for Oral Health Professionals Education to enable the WHO Action Plan



Advocacy for change in line with the principles of the Action Plan

Engagement with inter professional education and care

Reinforcing the research and evidence base in education and clinical practice

Encouragement of curriculum review to align with ethos espoused by the WHO

Concerning curriculum, it is important that we ensure oral health professionals' education is evidence based, contemporaneous and contextually relevant at a national level.

The WHO envisages a future that stresses the promotion of oral health as a critical and central element of general health and thus our oral health workforce curriculum needs to embrace the concept of universal health coverage, stress the importance of a preventative approach and a delivery model that is interprofessional and community based.

The purpose of this brief resource pack is to assist member schools and faculty as they approach their regular curriculum review so as to ensure this ongoing process within faculty now embraces reference to the aspirations of **The WHO Global Oral Health Strategy and Action Plan**. This document is not intended to replace or conflict with national guidance nor is it intended to replace research and peer review publications in the area of curriculum review. Its

purpose is simply to highlight and reinforce the need for curricular review that embraces the key principles of the WHO aspirations. The associations believe that this will enable a more effective and proactive future workforce that would better serve the populations.

The following is offered to guide institutional curriculum review as a process of self-assessment aligned with The WHO documentation. The aspiration is that over time the ethos and principles outlined in the action plan will be embedded within the regular and normal curriculum review process. In fact, it already is embedded within many national curricula.

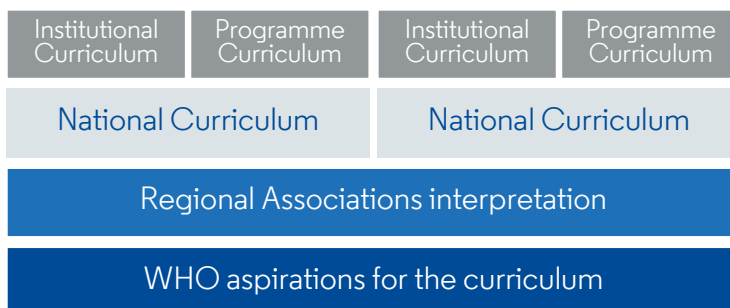
This document in no way claims to be comprehensive and aims to serve a wide variety of institutions and faculty at a diverse level of development. For this reason, we have approached it from a style and language perspective to be viewed as a minimum expectation and as such we anticipate that embracing this will be a simple task for many institutions and faculty.

The regional educational associations welcome comment on this document and view it as an ongoing live resource that will be further developed over time as it has been used by our membership. We encourage free and open dissemination and hope you find this approach helpful.

Curriculum Hierarchy

Given the composition of the oral health workforce and their scopes of practice are a national prerogative, so too is curriculum. National curriculum should be designed to respond to contextualised need and institutions and programmes must demonstrate compliance with these expressed curricula. In regions with cross country or state mobility it is ultimately the role of the national competent authority to ensure alignment. The role of the regional associations is one of facilitator, disseminator, primarily to support, at a national and faculty level, where invited to do so.

Figure 2 - The positioning of the role of the regional associations as disseminator and facilitator between WHO aspirations and National Curriculum



This document aspires to empower institutions, programmes and faculty to have sufficient base information on the WHO aspirations to engage in national, institutional and programme curriculum review.

Key take away:

Curriculum is a national prerogative, and institutions and programmes must comply in this regard. This should not however stop them from engaging in meaningful discussion that can enable impactful change resulting from the WHO global oral health strategy.

Curriculum review aligned with WHO action plan

In our collaborative response and review of the WHO action plan, the Regional Oral Health Professional Education Associations carried out a review of the 100 actions identified for implementation by a range of stakeholders by the WHO. We have recounted this process elsewhere.

This process also led us to identify areas within the curriculum, be that topics, approaches and principles that may need greater emphasis or a refocus in direction. The high-level principles we have identified with regards to the undergraduate dental curriculum are:

- Prioritisation of prevention & public health
- Reinforce reliance on evidence-based & research
- Regular review of curriculum to align with WHO principle
- Enable curriculum assessment and ensuring a quality delivery of education

The aspiration of this document is to encourage a dissemination of these principles and the aligned curriculum topics in the following section so as to enable awareness of the need for curriculum review at an institutional and programme level.

Key takeaway:

Education is the gateway to practice and as such the curriculum we deliver dictates the quality of the workforce we create. If the aspiration is as espoused by the WHO Global Oral Health Action Plan, a curriculum refocus on the principles it outlines should be undertaken by each programme and institution in partnership with the National Competent Authority.

Curriculum topics for consideration

Within these four areas specific topics have also been identified. Again, we are not suggesting that these are not already being implemented by faculty, rather we are encouraging a revisit so as to the reconsider the principles outlined by the WHO to ensure these are effectively and clearly communicated to the student body, our future workforce. The specific topics are:

- Community based oral health care
- Core research skills
- Data and information principles
- Digital oral health methodologies
- Environmental responsibility
- Evidence based practice
- Equity and access
- Global oral health priorities
- Inclusion and Diversity
- Interprofessionalism (IPE & IPC)
- Lifelong learning
- National contextual priorities
- Non-Communicable Diseases
- Oral-systemic health
- Prevention strategies
- Public health principles and systems
- Social responsibility
- Value for science, the scientific methods and research

Key takeaway:

National context will drive the priority of focus in each of these topics. Early engagement with the relevant stakeholder is critical. You may have to proactively do this rather than wait to be approached.

Stakeholder consultation in curriculum review

An effective curriculum will have an output focus, i.e. effectively ensure the delivery of high-quality graduates that can practice safely within their national scope of practice. Given the curriculum spans 4 to 6 years in most countries worldwide it must be acknowledged that change will be evolutionary rather than revolutionary.

For this reason, the associations advocate a year-by-year sequential review and that this review should include all the key stakeholder viewpoints:

- Accreditors
- Competent Authorities
- Faculty
- Funders
- Industry
- National government (Health and Education)
- Other healthcare professionals
- Public health expertise
- Student body
- Technological expertise (academic and clinical practice)
- The general public
- The oral health professions

The concepts of a core curriculum

Some states are considering the introduction of a core oral healthcare curriculum. In this instance it is imperative that the education providers of the entire oral health care professions are included in these discussion and curriculum reviews from the outset.

Tools that may assist

The associations appreciate that there will be nuanced national approaches at play in curriculum review and as such offering ridged tools and guidance on review may in fact be counterproductive. Instead, we offer a number of self-assessment check lists that we feel

may be useful in the carrying out of curriculum reviews focused on enabling the WHO principles.

- Topic checklist
- Stakeholder checklist
- Internal dissemination checklist

Editable versions of these are available for download from our websites under: <https://adee.org/oral-health-education's-call-action-advancing-world-health-organisation's-who-oral-health-action>.

Topic checklist

Topic	If currently addressed where/how	If not currently addressed where/how could it be	Key aspects to address	National priority	Internal responsible person	Expected delivery date for completion
Community based oral health care						
Core research skills						
Data and information principles						
Digital oral health methodologies						

Regional Associations resources to support curriculum review aligned with the
World Health Organisation Action Plan

Topic	If currently addressed where/how	If not currently addressed where/how could it be	Key aspects to address	National priority	Internal responsible person	Expected delivery date for completion
Environmental responsibility						
Equity and access						
Evidence based practice						
Global oral health priorities						
Inclusion and Diversity						

Regional Associations resources to support curriculum review aligned with the
World Health Organisation Action Plan

Topic	If currently addressed where/how	If not currently addressed where/how could it be	Key aspects to address	National priority	Internal responsible person	Expected delivery date for completion
Interprofessionalism (IPE & IPC)						
Lifelong learning						
National contextual priorities						
Non-Communicable Diseases						
Oral-systemic health						

Regional Associations resources to support curriculum review aligned with the
World Health Organisation Action Plan

Topic	If currently addressed where/how	If not currently addressed where/how could it be	Key aspects to address	National priority	Internal responsible person	Expected delivery date for completion
Prevention strategies						
Public health principles and systems						
Social responsibility						
Value for science, the scientific methods and research						

Stakeholder checklist

Stakeholder group	Key contact	Core messages on the topic under review	Date of latest contact	Their priority	Implication on way forward	Expected delivery date for completion
Accreditors						
Competent authority (regulator etc)						
Dept Health or equivalent						
Dept of Education or equivalent						

Regional Associations resources to support curriculum review aligned with the
World Health Organisation Action Plan

Stakeholder group	Key contact	Core messages on the topic under review	Date of latest contact	Their priority	Implication on way forward	Expected delivery date for completion
Faculty						
Faculty						
Funders						
Funders						
Industry						

Regional Associations resources to support curriculum review aligned with the
World Health Organisation Action Plan

Stakeholder group	Key contact	Core messages on the topic under review	Date of latest contact	Their priority	Implication on way forward	Expected delivery date for completion
Other healthcare professionals						
Public health expertise						
Student body						
Technological expertise (academic and clinical practice)						
The general public						

Regional Associations resources to support curriculum review aligned with the
World Health Organisation Action Plan

Stakeholder group	Key contact	Core messages on the topic under review	Date of latest contact	Their priority	Implication on way forward	Expected delivery date for completion
-------------------	-------------	---	------------------------	----------------	----------------------------	---------------------------------------

The oral health professions

Others as relevant

Internal dissemination checklist

Dissemination internal target group	Key contact	Core messages to communicate to this group on the topic under review	Date of latest contact	Their core messages/feedback/concerns	Implication on way forward	Commitment given to them
Leadership group						
Senior academics						
Post graduate student body						
Undergraduate student body						

Regional Associations resources to support curriculum review aligned with the
World Health Organisation Action Plan

Dissemination internal target group	Key contact	Core messages to communicate to this group on the topic under review	Date of latest contact	Their core messages/feedback/concerns	Implication on way forward	Commitment given to them
---	-------------	---	---------------------------	--	-------------------------------	-----------------------------

Alumni

Non-academic
staff

Outreach staff

Research staff