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Carrie Bigelow, RDH, MS, a May 2007 graduate of the Master of Science Degree Program in Dental Hygiene Education at University of the North Carolina School of Dentistry, was recently named by the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA) as the winner of the 2007 ADHA/Sigma Phi Alpha Journalism Award.

This journalism award program, sponsored by Johnson & Johnson, is intended to honor a student who has written a review or original research paper that contributes to the dental hygiene body of knowledge and is of the quality to be published in the *Journal of Dental Hygiene*, the scientific, peer-reviewed journal of the ADHA. Students enrolled or within 6 months post graduation from a baccalaureate, degree completion bachelors, masters, or doctoral level program were eligible to apply. Candidates submitted their manuscripts for the competition and the papers were sent out for peer review and ranking by a selection committee.

Bigelow is currently pursuing a career in academics in Michigan.

Bigelow was the recipient of the 2006 ADHA Summer Student Internship. She spent 2 weeks at ADHA headquarters and 2 weeks at Sunstar Americas, Inc., both in Chicago, Ill.

Bigelow completed her undergraduate degree at Texas Woman's University in Denton, TX. She has practiced in Switzerland, Hong Kong and the United States.

Bigelow's winning manuscript will be published in the *Journal of Dental Hygiene*. In addition, she will receive a plaque along with a \$1,000 cash award provided through the generosity of Pfizer, Inc.

Honorable mention was extended to 2 candidates for their papers. Danielle Furgeson, RDH, BA, MS, May 2007 graduate of the MS program in Dental Hygiene Education at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill School of Dentistry, Chapel Hill, NC; and Mary E. Cosaboom-FitzSimons, RDH, BS, MS, a graduate of the MS program in Dental Hygiene from the Gene W. Hirschfeld School of Dental Hygiene Health Sciences, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Va;

Dental Hygienists' Views On Oral Cancer Control in North Carolina

Carrie Bigelow, RDH, MS; Lauren L. Patton, DDS, Director, General Practice Residency and Professor, Department of Dental Ecology; Ronald P. Strauss, DMD, PhD, Distinguished Professor and Chair, Department of Dental Ecology; Rebecca S. Wilder, RDH, MS, Director, Graduate Dental Hygiene Education and Associate Professor, Department of Dental Ecology. All are from the University of North Carolina School of Dentistry, Chapel Hill, NC.

Abstract

Many oral and pharyngeal cancers (OPC) are preventable. Early detection improves survival rates. Dental hygienists have opportunities to help reduce the oral cancer burden among their patients.

Purpose: The purpose of this project was to qualitatively assess North Carolina dental Hygienists' views regarding OPC prevention and early detection.

Methods: Sixteen practicing dental hygienists participated in 2, 8-person focus groups. Focus groups were taped, transcribed, and analyzed qualitatively for content.

Results: Four major themes arose: 1) The charge of the dental hygienist was not necessarily to diagnose cancer, but to recognize abnormalities and initiate referral when necessary; 2) The dental hygienist is only helpful in the tobacco cessation process if the patient has a desire to quit; 3) The dental hygienist is most effective if the patient believes the provider is genuine and truly cares about the patient's well-being; 4) There is always a need for continued education in oral cancer screenings and tobacco cessation, specifically for hands-on courses. Barriers to performing OPC exams included: financial, time, and insufficient dentist support. Barriers for dental hygienists in providing tobacco cessation counseling included: lack of patient interest, lack of patient education materials and resources, smoking parents of adolescents, personality issues, and provider-patient diversity in age, gender, ethnicity, and culture.

Conclusions: Dental hygienists felt their most important contribution to oral cancer control was patient education and oral cancer awareness. Professional continuing education is important and barriers need to be addressed to improve oral cancer control efforts.

Keywords: oral cancer screenings, dental hygienists, oral assessment, tobacco cessation

The Role of the Student Professional Association in Mentoring Dental Hygiene Students for the Future

Danielle Furgeson, RDH, BA, MS, Mary George, RDH, MEd, Associate Professor, Department of Dental Ecology; Samuel Nesbit, DDS, MS, Clinical Associate Professor, Diagnostic Sciences & General Dentistry; Charlotte Peterson, RDH, MS, Clinical Associate Professor, Department of Dental Ecology; Diane Peterson, RDH, MEd, Consultant and Assistant Professor, Department of Dental Hygiene; Rebecca S. Wilder, RDH, MS, Director, Graduate Dental Hygiene Education and Associate Professor, Department of Dental Ecology. Furgeson, George, Nesbit C. Peterson, and Wilder are from the University of North Carolina School of Dentistry, Chapel Hill, NC. D. Peterson is from Vermont Technical College, Williston, Vt.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the role of the Student American Dental Hygienists' Association (SADHA) in mentoring/developing dental hygiene students for the future. This project also assessed attitudes and practices of SADHA advisors towards the utilization of SADHA as a mechanism for mentoring dental hygiene students' professional development to meet the oral health needs of the public, and the goals of the ADHA. These goals include promotion of education beyond the baccalaureate level to develop qualified faculty, encouraging dental hygiene research, and promoting leadership. The study also evaluated if geographic region and academic setting impacted the utilization of SADHA.

After IRB exemption, a pilot-tested questionnaire was administered using Survey Monkey, an online survey website, to 277 individual contacts at American Dental Association (ADA) accredited dental hygiene (DH) programs. A response rate of 68% was achieved with 186 individual responses. Eighty percent of respondents indicated offering no mentoring opportunities while incongruously, 58.3% felt they actively mentor through SADHA. When asked what the main focus of SADHA should be, SADHA advisors ranked community service/philanthropy as number one. SADHA chapters at institutions that offer a Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene (BSDH) degree-completion program offer more mentoring opportunities ($p < .001$). Programs offering the BSDH offer a wider variety of topics from guest speakers ($p = .038$). SADHA chapters in western states have a higher graduate conversion rate than other regions ($p = .018$).

SADHA Advisors do not agree on how SADHA should be utilized. The majority of SADHA chapters are not offering mentoring opportunities outside of the traditional curriculum for leadership and career development. What is clear is that both students and advisors desire more interaction with the local ADHA components and constituents. In order to address these issues, efforts should be made to provide networking support among SADHA Advisors and increase faculty perception

of the importance of the professional association and the role of students in its future. The ADHA should consider developing a mentoring program that builds strong partnerships among all state constituent and components and SADHA.

Community-Based Collaborations by Nurse Practitioners and Dental Hygienists

Mary E. Cosaboom-FitzSimons, RDH, BS, MS, Gene W. Hirschfeld School of Dental Hygiene Health Sciences, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Va; Michele L. Darby, BSDH, MS, Eminent Scholar and Graduate Program Director, Gene W. Hirschfeld School of Dental Hygiene, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, Va.

Abstract

Dental caries remains the most common childhood chronic infectious disease, disproportionately striking poor, minority children. Weaknesses in the existing American health care system and regulatory practices limit comprehensive, accessible, affordable oral health care to those most in need, and impede collaborative patient care among health care providers. The purpose of this paper is to outline how collaborative relationships between nurse practitioners and dental hygienists could improve access to quality, primary oral and general health care in the United States. A collaborative model of practice is proposed for nurse practitioners and dental hygienists in community-based health service programs for improving children's oral health. Integrating dental hygiene and nursing models of care could promote comprehensive, cost effective, accessible, preventive health care, which is urgently needed by millions of unserved children in the United States.