

Editorial

It's all about curiosity and collaboration!

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In June 2009, dental hygienists from across the United States, Canada and Europe came together to explore their questions and discuss how we could all work together to expand our knowledge about dental hygiene research. From June 15 to 17, 150 dental hygienists traveled to Washington, D.C. to talk about the future of our pro-

fession, the newest oral care technologies, the latest evidence linking oral health to systemic health, access to oral healthcare and many more topics. It was all about curiosity and collaboration!

Our common curiosity spurred us to explore a wide range of issues, as is evident from the work found in the research proceedings highlighted in this issue of the *Journal of Dental Hygiene*. The proceedings reflect the collaboration of 2 national organizations as well as collaborations among researchers. This issue of the *JDH* provides an overview of this collaborative research conference; however, the influence of the conference was greater than the sum of its various presentations. The conference provided diverse opportunities to make connections with others. Participants explored ways they could collaborate to further investigations and to explore areas of mutual interest in a more comprehensive way. It was all



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about sharing and expanding the horizons of our research to support the oral health of our societies. It was about building collaborations to more effectively use scarce resources in the best interests of the public.

Through this edition of the *Journal*, we would like to extend these connections to our members, the dental hygienists of North America, who have an equal sense of curiosity and a desire to collaborate. Our curiosity is a characteristic that brings us together regardless of the work setting – it underpins the relationship between research and practice. The questions we are exploring arise from you, the dental hygienists working with clients – be they individuals, families, groups or communities. The work of researchers is to take the questions that you identify and shape them into realistic and relevant research questions that can be explored in a systematic way. This is the foundation of our collabora-

tion. You stimulate the questions and we attempt to find ways to provide you with insights that will support client safety and better oral health outcomes.

We are now extending out to you, our members, an opportunity to foster additional collaborations. We hope that your curiosity will stimulate your interest in reading this issue

of the *Journal of Dental Hygiene* and that it will initiate further communication with researchers so that we can work collaboratively to meet the oral health needs of people throughout the world. Working together we can achieve so much more!

Sincerely,

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