

THIRD PLACE: BEST PAPER AWARD

Assessing Evidence-Based Practice Knowledge, Attitudes, Access and Confidence Among Dental Hygiene Educators

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The Journal of Dental Hygiene Best Paper Award was created to recognize the most outstanding research paper published from the previous year (2015). All original research papers published in 2015 were evaluated by a panel of judges, using specific criteria, to make the final selection. Below is a reprinting of the abstract of the third place recipient. This manuscript first appeared in Volume 89, Issue Number 5 of the October 2015 issue of the Journal of Dental Hygiene.

Abstract

Purpose: To assess U.S. dental hygiene educators' evidence-based practice (EBP) knowledge, attitude, access and confidence and determine whether a correlation exists between assessment scores and level of education, length teaching and teaching setting (didactic, clinical or both).

Methods: A cross-sectional survey was conducted with a sample of dental hygiene faculty from all 334 U.S. dental hygiene schools. ANOVA and Pearson correlation coefficient statistical analysis were utilized to investigate relationships between demographic variables and application of evidence-based principles of patient care.

Results: This study involved a non-probability sample (n=124), since the total faculty among all U.S. dental hygiene schools was not determined. Analysis demonstrated a positive correlation between EBP knowledge, access and confidence scores indicating that as knowledge scores increased, so did confidence and access scores ($r=0.313$, $p<0.01$ and $r=0.189$, $p<0.05$, respectively). Study findings also revealed that faculty who held advanced educational degrees scored significantly higher in EBP knowledge ($F_{3,120}=2.81$, $p<0.04$) and confidence ($F_{3,120}=7.26$, $p<0.00$).

Conclusion: This study suggests the level of EBP knowledge, attitude, access and confidence increases with additional education. Therefore, more EBP training may be necessary for faculty who do not possess advanced education. Results of the study indicate that further incorporation of EBP into dental hygiene curricula may occur as dental hygiene educators' knowledge of EBP increases, which in turn could enhance students' acquisition of EBP skills and their application of EBP principles toward patient care.

Keywords: evidence-based practice, evidence-based dentistry, dental hygiene, dental education

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