

# Editorial

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## Conference Overview and Acknowledgments



The 2nd North American/Global Dental Hygiene Research Conference was held on October 20-22, 2011, in Bethesda, Maryland. The 3 day conference provided an opportunity for dental hygiene researchers throughout the U.S., Canada, Europe, Asia and Australia to convene and explore commonalities in their research interests, learn from each other about new and ongoing research programs and foster future collaborations. It is our hope that discussion and interest generated at the conference provided the networking support and intellectual stimulation needed to systematically and purposefully move our research forward. To this end, the purpose of the conference was to:

- Share new knowledge obtained through research investigations
- Explore how to translate research to practice in a meaningful and useful manner
- Increase and diversify the number of individuals engaged in oral health research
- Captivate, advance and nurture a cadre of dental hygiene researchers
- Provide information about valid and useful research tools and resources
- Develop and refine research project conceptualization and grant writing skills
- Provide workshops for hands-on training in manuscript preparation, statistics, clinical research, qualitative research and searching for best evidence
- Promote the effective use of web-based technology for networking, collaborating and disseminating research findings

In order to achieve these objectives, a program devoted to a wide range of topics was created. Participants had the opportunity to hear updates on oral cancer research and screening, and the state of the science related to use of lasers in dentistry to enhance their ability to translate this knowledge into education and clinical practice. Participants also were able to meet colleagues who are conducting original research about problems encountered every day in practice in order to improve the quality and type of care we provide to our clients. Opportunities to learn about this research were made through 33 poster and 26 oral presentations.

Another opportunity to network with colleagues with similar research interests was through the 10 different Special Interest Group (SIG) sessions devoted to access to care, caries, clinical dental hygiene practice, educational research, health behaviors, health literacy, oral cancer, oral systemic link, periodontics and technology. Through the DHNet Network Section, we look forward to providing a home base for future discussions and building a critical mass of dental hygienists who can participate in future research activities and projects.

Finally, based on the outcomes from the first conference in June 2009, a program was created to enhance training and skill development on a wide range of topics. Eight different continuing education workshops were specifically designed on the following topics: Grant Writing, Manuscript Preparation and Professional Presentations, Keeping Current: Clinical Decision Support Systems, Overcoming the Fear of Statistics, Getting Started in Clinical Research, Introduction to Preparing a Systematic Review, Design Considerations in Qualitative Research and Emerging Science that Influences Practice (bisphosphonate-induced osteonecrosis, tobacco cessation interventions, CAMBRA and its implementation in practice). Over 18 hours of CE credit were offered over the 3 day conference.

This conference has required over a year of planning, and we must acknowledge the contributions and support that we have received from many individuals and organizations along the way. First, we thank the Canadian and American Dental Hygienists' Associations for again partnering with the National Center for Dental Hygiene Research & Practice to invite dental hygienists from across the continent to participate in this event. Conference attendees represented 9 countries, including 35 states in the U.S., Canada, Australia, Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands and Sweden. Participants included 22 graduate dental hygiene students, 85 full and part-time faculty from universities, dental schools and community colleges, 7 dental hygienists from dental school research centers and private research companies, 18 full-time dental hygiene clinical practitioners and public health/hospital dental hygienists, 1 government director, 28

hygienists, dentists and leaders representing various industries, 6 professional association representatives, 4 journal editors and 3 entrepreneurs/independent contractors.

We thank the members of our Advisory Board for volunteering their time and talents, for facilitating workshops and for moderating each of the sessions during the meeting. We also thank our volunteers for managing the registration tables and the many companies who graciously donated copies of their research to share with all of the conference participants to further our knowledge and understanding of their products and services.

Most importantly, we extend our deepest and most heartfelt gratitude to our corporate sponsors, The Procter & Gamble Company, Colgate-Palmolive

Company, Philips Sonicare, Discus, a Philips company, Johnson & Johnson and 3M ESPE. We gratefully acknowledge Hu-Friedy Manufacturing Company for an educational grant to support the attendance of our full-time graduate dental hygiene students. This conference would not have been possible without educational grants from our corporate partners, and we thank them for their kindness and generosity.

**Advisory Board:** Denise Bowen, RDH, MS; Jan Clarkson, BDS, PhD; MaryAnn Cugini, RDH, MHP; Jacquelyn Fried, RDH, MS; JoAnn Gurenlian, RDH, PhD; Harold Hensen, RDH, MS; Alice Horowitz, RDH, PhD; Salme Lavigne, RDH, MS; Tara Johnson, RDH, PhD; Linda Kraemer, RDH, PhD; Margaret Walsh, RDH, EdD; Patricia Walters, RDH, MS; and Karen Williams, RDH, PhD