Global Networking Model: International Association for Disability and Oral Health

Author: Shelagh A Thompson Chair, Education Committee International Association for Disability and Oral Health, Professor in Special Care Dentistry University of Liverpool

AIM- iADH Education
Future dental graduates will see increasing numbers of patients with special health care needs; their confidence and attitude to providing care for diverse groups of patients correlates with the quality and content of their undergraduate education in Special Care Dentistry (SCD).1 Despite educators questioning the need for increasing education in SCD within dental schools, there has been little addition to or harmonisation of learning outcomes and assessments within existing dental curricula.

The value of education in SCD to reduce inequalities in oral health was established in key papers in 20082 and 2012.3 The need for harmonisation of dental curricula has been a goal of ADEE for many years with Profile and competences for the graduating European dentist-update 2009 http://www.adee.org/documents/adee-forum+iadh_profile_competence_2009.pdf and this is also demonstrated within new ADEA guidelines- ADEA Compendium of Curriculum Guidelines (Revised Edition) Allied Dental Education Programs May 2015–2016 http://www.adea.org/capd/tools/.

METHODS- Innovation in educational development
The iADH Education committee in 2010 initiated an international consensus process to develop guidelines for programmes in SCD. The committee was co-chaired by A. Dougal (IE) and S. Thompson (UK) with members from France, Canada, Argentina and Greece; a global network developed, of educators and clinicians in SCD who aimed to develop curricula and educational resources in SCD for dental undergraduates, postgraduates and the wider team. Social Media was an important innovation (led by AD) in eliciting interest in the iADH Education project.

RESULTS
iADH Working Group outcomes:
1. Publications- 3 papers EJDE, BDJ, JDOH
2. iADH Website- host resources
3. iADH Newsletter
4. SCIFB Blogs- call for participants
5. Expert panels in curriculum development
   1. Undergraduate Curriculum 2012
   Experts from 32 countries participated in a scientific Delphi panel and consensus process to agree on learning outcomes to import into contemporary dental curricula, to ensure graduates gained a sound knowledge and understanding to meet the oral health needs of vulnerable groups within their communities. Evaluation and assessment within the curricula was essential for quality assurance to provide educators and regulators with evidence of the opportunities that undergraduates have to demonstrate knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours to enable them to provide simple clinical care in SCD.

The Undergraduate Curriculum in SCD was published in 2012 with cross-cultural translation into 4 languages4 www.iadh.org.

The curriculum focuses on the special care needs of people with disabilities, development of a conceptual framework for curriculum planning, and competency assessment.

Objectives
1. Enhance understanding of disabilities
2. Develop educational research
3. Develop educational resources
4. Develop educational guidance
5. Develop educational collaboration
6. Develop educational policy
7. Develop educational technology
8. Develop educational evaluation
9. Develop educational dissemination
10. Develop educational funding

Competencies in SCD
Domain 1: The Scope of Special Care Dentistry
Domain 2: Access and Barriers to oral health for people with disability and other marginalised groups
Domain 3: Knowledge and care for people with disabilities
Domain 4: Communication skills in special care dentistry
Domain 5: Impact of environments, disabilities and systemic conditions on oral health and oral function
Domain 6: Clinical Management of patients requiring Special Care Dentistry

REFERENCES
1. ADEA 2012: http://iadh.org/groups/education/curricula

Authors: Dr A Dougal (Ireland), Dr S Thompson (UK) and Dr D Faust (France).

Working Group: Dr S Chandra Pani (Saudi Arabia), Dr C Friedman (Canada), Dr W L Chai (Malaysia), Dr E Heidari (UK), Dr M Munnelly-Romer (USA), Dr G Scagnetti (Argentina), Dr J P Rodriguez (Mexico), Dr G Ting (New Zealand), Prof J Nunn (Ireland).

2. Postgraduate Curriculum Guidance 2014

Key Areas in Special Care Dentistry
1. The Professional, Political and Ethical Context of Special Care Dentistry
2. Impairment, Disability and Oral Health
3. Medical Sciences related to Special Care Dentistry
4. Psychology Related to Special Care Dentistry
5. Dental Public Health and Oral Health Promotion
6. Oral Healthcare Planning and Teamwork
7. Clinical Special Care Dentistry
8. Research and Governance

Authors: Dr A Dougal (Ireland), Prof S Thompson (UK) and Prof J Nunn (Ireland).

Working Group: 44 experts from 17 countries, available at www.iadh.org

Learning outcomes can be used to develop modules to meet requirements of national professional and educational bodies.

To date, these have been incorporated into a number of Doctorate, Masters and Diploma and Certificate programmes globally.


7. Education Symposia at IADH biennial Congresses

e.g. 2016 Continuing Post-Doc Dental Education and Accredited Training in Special Care Dentistry-Global Perspectives, SCD&A/ IADH Congress, Chicago 2016

8. Shared Learning Resources http://iadh.org/education/

9. Develop educational research (Lead-D Fausts (France)- Attitudes Toolkit


CONCLUSION- Shaping the future of SCD education

Global networking was the key factor that enabled educators and clinicians interested in Special Care Dentistry to develop undergraduate and postgraduate curricula for Dental Schools across the world5.

Expansion of the iADH Education committee membership in 2016/17 will encourage key educators from international education associations to develop educational resources and research. Continued interest in SCD education is evident by increasing publications in peer-reviewed journals.

Leading institutions internationally have started to embed teaching and learning in SCD within their curricula providing students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to meet the oral health needs of vulnerable groups within their communities at undergraduate, allied health professionals and postgraduate level.

Dental Schools should appoint a teaching lead in SCD to encourage harmonisation of teaching and standardise learning outcomes, ensuring graduates in the future have the competencies and confidence to provide simple care for patients requiring Special Care Dentistry and improve health outcomes for people with disabilities. In future, the role of the wider dental team should be emphasised, including the need for inter-professional education within wider health and social care teams; the work of the IADH Education has only just begun.