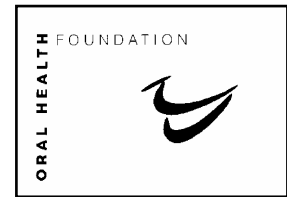




The University of Sydney
&
The Oral Health Foundation
The Monitor Practice Program
Newsletter



March 2005 Issue 1

Welcome to the first issue of our newsletter, dedicated to keeping benefactors of The Oral Health Foundation, Faculty members, and study participants aware of the progress of our research.

This project is the inspiration of A/Professor Wendell Evans, who has been instrumental in the establishment of the Community Oral Health and Epidemiology Research Unit, recognized as one of the research strengths of the Faculty of Dentistry at the University of Sydney. The research focus of this unit is health promotion, in particular, the prevention of oral disease and the reorientation of health services in NSW. The unit contributes to the teaching in the BDent (undergraduate) program at the University of Sydney in relation to cariology, preventive dentistry, and community oral health. In cariology, this has culminated in the development of a caries management policy that was adopted by the Faculty of Dentistry as the basis for teaching and learning caries management within the BDent Curriculum. The Monitor Practice Program takes the key elements of this policy, and aims to demonstrate the cost-effectiveness of this approach in private dental practices.

Who else is involved in this project.....?

Professor Eli Schwarz (Current Dean – Faculty of Dentistry – University of Sydney)

Professor Schwarz has a distinguished career in Community Dental Health, his service being recognized in his native Denmark with the conferring of the Royal order – Knight of the Royal Order of Dannebrog (KOD). More recently, he founded the Global Alliance for Oral Health, a non-profit organization dedicated to initiate, fund, implement, and support preventive, interceptive, curative, and educational projects that aim to promote oral health and prevent oral diseases. He has acted as a scientific reviewer for many of the most prestigious dental research publications including: Community Oral Health and Epidemiology, Acta Odontologica Scandinavica, and the European Journal of Public Health. With 93 articles in peer-reviewed publications, 28 book chapters / reports / monographs, and over 60 invited oral presentations world-wide, Eli's knowledge and experience is widely acknowledged by educational and research institutions.

Christine Pollicino (Health Economist – School of Public Health – University of Sydney)

Christine Pollicino has diverse experience in conducting economic evaluations including cost-effectiveness analyses of preventive programs. In addition to her publications, Christine teaches Master students 'Clinical Economics' at the University of Sydney. On numerous occasions she has reviewed grants and protocols for various committees including the NHMRC, and papers for the Medical Journal of Australia. She is also actively involved in the health economics community and is currently a member of the International Health Economics Association (iHEA).

Adrienne Kirby (Senior Biostatistician – NHMRC Clinical Trials Centre)

In her role as senior biostatistician, Adrienne designs and analyses multi-centre clinical trials, develops new trial and statistical methodologies, and plays a leading role in initiating and conducting new courses on statistical and trial methods. She is actively involved in the broader statistical/medical community and her advice is often sought from the Faculty of Agriculture and others in the broader research community.

Adrienne has been involved with the pioneering LIPID (Long-term Intervention with Pravastatin in Ischaemic Disease) trial with over 9000 patients randomised into the trial, resulting in over 15 publications in peer reviewed journals

Brad Curtis (Research Manager and PhD candidate)

Dr Curtis graduated in dentistry from Sydney University in 1986 and worked in private dental practice until 2002. He completed his Master of Public Health degree in 2004 including an honours treatise exploring a method of evaluating patient preferences for dental health outcomes. In 2003/04 he was employed within the School of Public Health as an Associate Lecturer in the disciplines of Epidemiology and Biostatistics. He developed and presented a course for dental postgraduates entitled 'Research Methods for Dental Postgraduates', covering design, methodology, and statistical issues in consideration of research projects. Dr Curtis teaches biostatistics to Reproductive Endocrinologists in preparation for their Fellowship exam. He is currently enrolled in his PhD of which this project is a component and is a Mentor for BDent3 students.

How are things progressing.....?

- The project is currently in the early stages of recruitment. The scientific protocol was finalized in November 2004; Ethics approval was obtained in December 2004
- We have applied to the NHMRC for funding support (\$320,000) , and applications to the Australian Dental Research Fund (\$9800), and NSW Dental Board (\$9800) were recently lodged
- The ADA (NSW Branch) has very generously funded the placement of a flyer advertising the existence of the project in successive branch news bulletins from March- June 2005;
- A letter detailing the project has been forwarded to the Divisional representatives of the ADA within NSW;
- We seek to recruit practices from 4 distinct locations within NSW: Sydney CBD, suburban Sydney, rural NSW (fluoridated water supply) and rural NSW (non-fluoridated water supply);
- Six months has been allowed for recruitment (from March 2005) – at present we have expressions of interest from Central Sydney, Annandale, Rosebery, Parramatta, Crows Nest, Armidale, Central Coast, Bathurst, Elderslie, Wagga, and Merrylands. We will be visiting each of these locations over the next few months to (hopefully) finalize the recruitment process.

Everyone who receives this newsletter deserves our thanks in one way or another – either for their financial support through the foundation, for promoting the project and encouraging the researchers through the peer support and review process within the faculty, or by involvement in the project “at the coal-face”. When established in 2000, the goals of the Oral Health Foundation were defined as:-

- To support education and research activities at the Faculty of Dentistry.
- To unite Faculty alumni and the general community in the support of the Faculty.
- To promote the advancement of the oral health of the community.

We feel that our project will be a valuable tool in bringing these aims to fruition!!