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Shaping the Future of Dental Education

The Shape of the Future of Dental Education for Dental Caries- and how we get there: Introduction to the ACFF Caries Workshop

Author:

Nigel B Pitts, FRSE, BDS, PhD, FDS RCS (Eng), FDS RCS (Edin), FFGDP(UK), FFPH, Director:
Dental Innovation and Translation Centre (DITC), Kings College London Dental Institute,
Guy's Hospital, London SE1 9RT, UK: nigel.pitts@kcl.ac.uk

The story so far

There has long been a recognition of the need to develop a standardised, evidence-led core Curriculum in Cariology. It is important to give credit to ORCA and ADEE for rising to this challenge in Europe; both back in 2010 and more recently. A lot has now been achieved on a global basis by many, as was reported at the Workshop (1). However, we still have a way to go to achieve sustainable implementation of the Core Curriculum in Cariology internationally.

Who are “we”?

As the diverse presentations from many countries and organisations at the Workshop revealed, many different people have already been involved in this journey. Key contributors include: ORCA, ADEE, the ICDAS Foundation and ICCMS™, ACFF, EDSA, EDHF, EADPH, EAPD, PBOHE, ADEA and now the AAC - see (2) to decode Acronyms. In addition, many dedicated individual educators around the world are making important contributions.

Where are we now?

Over the last decade and a half we have assembled a wide range of resources to share:

- A published European Core Curriculum in Cariology (3), developed (4) at the same time as the ICDAS Foundation were developing their Caries Management System, **Fig 1**. This System became the ICCMS™ (5) whose latest iteration is the simplified “4D” model, **Fig 2**.
- Adapted versions of the European Core Curriculum in Cariology have been developed in Colombia (6) and the USA (7) and this process is currently underway in Malaysia, Japan and elsewhere.
- Up-to-date reviews of the evidence across a range of topics in caries have been published (8).

- eLearning materials for ICDAS and now ICCMS™ are accessible for free through the ICCMS™ website (9), where you can also find calibration and eLearning support and training (10).

Where do we need to go next?

We need a student-friendly suite of attractive materials, embracing and using new technologies and capable of engaging ‘*Generation-Me*’ students and others with a short attention span. We also need to address the requirements of implementing the Minamata Treaty on phasing down the use of dental amalgam, and to develop seamless Electronic Health Records which capture the full richness of ICCMS™ as well as linking to other aspects of oral health and health. Other next targets include promoting awareness of the oral microbiome and the microbiological balance required to maintain oral health and health, as well as ensuring that Caries Education does not stay in a silo – it needs to be delivered across dental and healthcare teams.

How do we get there?

The findings of the Caries Workshop (1) and the others from the same meeting (11-14) provide a way forward for: Interprofessional Education, Global Networking, the use of New Technology and Assessment in a Global Context. They also start to identify the different types of stakeholders who can influence professional progress in this area (15).

We will deliver the Future of Dental Education for Dental Caries by working together, using newly enhanced technology to educate, assess, communicate, link patient records and share high quality materials, operating through our growing global networks.

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Figures and Legends

Figure 1 - The five Domains of the European Core Cariology Curriculum overlaid with the ICDAS caries continuum to inform clinical decision making.

Figure 2 - The latest iteration of ICCMS™ - the simplified "4D" model.