

Highlights of the 17th International Symposium on Dental Hygiene

By **Christine A. Hovliaras-Delozier, RDH, BS, MBA**

The International Federation of Dental Hygienists (IFDH) held the 17th International Symposium on Dental Hygiene (ISDH) at the Westin Harbour Castle Hotel and Convention Center, July 19 - 21 in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. The theme for this exciting and motivating meeting was "The Many Cultures of Dental Hygiene." Over 700 dental hygienists from 25 member countries participated in this wonderful educational experience. Dental hygienists from around the world assisted host country Canada as volunteers during the meeting.

ADHA delegates to IFDH were Tammy O. Byrd, RDH, and JoAnn Gurenlian, RDH, PhD, both past presidents of the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA). Jean Connor, RDH, ADHA president, and Margaret Lappan Green, RDH, MS, ADHA immediate past president, were in attendance, as well as Ann Battrell, RDH, BS, MSDH, ADHA executive director and me as editor-in-chief of *Access*.

Research and Systematic Reviews

On Thursday, the ISDH began with an exciting "Researchers Connections" breakfast, where dental hygienists talked about how research has impacted their careers and the current level of research they are involved in today. It was enlightening to hear about the type of research that many of these individuals were involved in, in their respective work environments. Pfizer sponsored the "3 Minute Empowerment: Improve Efficiency, Support and Behavior Change," a breakfast



The "Researchers Connections" breakfast provided time for networking among hygienists at all levels of research involvement.

workshop with Dr. James Bond. I also attended a pre-symposium workshop on the strengths and limitations of systematic reviews sponsored by the Canadian Dental Hygienists' Association.

Opening Ceremonies and the Sunstar World Dental Hygienists Award Presentation

Later on Thursday, the opening ceremonies of the 17th ISDH were initiated by the president of the Canadian Dental Hygienists' Association, Bonnie Blank, RDH, who then introduced the president of IFDH, Sue Aldenhoven, RDH, from Australia. Many speakers followed, offering greetings and acknowledging the educational experience many of us would participate in during the next three days.



Opening ceremonies included greetings from around the world.

That evening, Sunstar Americas, Inc., sponsored the Sunstar Foundation for Oral Health Promotion Awards Ceremony and Welcome Reception, which featured Japanese culture and cuisine. Between the Japanese drummers and artists making origami animals, everyone got to experience the culture of Japan.

The Sunstar Foundation established the World Dental Hygienists Award in 2004, to recognize dental hygienists' contributions to the dental community and to the general public. The award is given to the winners in the following categories:

- 1) a research paper in dental hygiene
- 2) a report of activities that contributed to promoting oral health, and
- 3) a dental hygiene student's activity report or essay on dental hygiene or volunteer work.



The first-ever awards presentation of the Sunstar Foundation World Dental Hygienists Award

This year, Birgitta Soder, RDH, from Sweden won category 1 for "Risk for Development of Atherosclerosis in Women with High Amount of Dental Plaque and Severe Gingival Inflammation." Elina Katsman from Canada won category 2 for "The Experience of a Canadian Dental Hygienist in the Dominican Republic." Tomomi Nishimura, Chegusa Takahashi and Eri Takahashi from Japan won category 3 for "Dental Hygiene Residential Care in a 3-Year Dental Hygiene Education Program in Japan." The first Sunstar World Dental Hygienists Award presentation was conducted by colleagues from Sunstar Americas, Inc., and Marjolijn Hovius, RDH, president-elect of IFDH presented the award to each winner.

Music Therapy, Positioning Dental Hygiene in Health Care, Tobacco Cessation and Much More

On Friday morning, Deforia Lane, PhD, MT-BC, from the United States provided the opening keynote address, "Music Therapy in Health Care - An Evidence Based Approach." Lane explained the beneficial role that music therapy can play in helping to calm patients and relax them when they undergo dental procedures in an office or educational environment.

Throughout the meeting, a generous selection of panel discussions, single-presenter sessions and moderated free paper presentations were offered on a vast variety of clinical, professional, educational, social/cultural and historical topics. Presenters from all over the globe shared their knowledge and insights with audiences they might not have had the opportunity to reach except for this excellent forum.

IFDH Vice President Perno Goldie, from the United States, served as moderator for the panel discussion, "Positioning Dental Hygiene in Health Care," with Wayne Powell, BA, MA, and Kathy O'Loughlin, DDS, from the United States and Kenneth Eaton, DDS, from the United Kingdom. The panel explored our role within the oral health care professions and reflected on ways that we could integrate more fully into the health care systems.

Jacquelyn L.S. Fried, BA, RDH, MS, from the United States moderated the "Tobacco Use, Prevention & Cessation: An International Challenge" workshop, which included on its panel Sharon Compton, DipDH, BSc, MA, PhD; Joan M. Davis, RDH, BS; and Thoerria Najjar



Three American dental hygienist editors enjoyed a taste of Japan at the Sunstar Foundation for Oral Health Promotion Awards Ceremony and Welcome Reception. Left to right: me; Jill Rethman, RDH, BA, Dimensions of Dental Hygiene; and Maria Perno Goldie, RDH, MS, Modern Hygienist, who is also vice president of IFDH.

Philander, who discussed the global overview of tobacco cessation interventions, impact on patients and populations, and creating strategies for leadership roles internationally in the future.

The Vision of Dental Hygiene, Collaborative Research, Multi-Skilled Professional

On Saturday, the last day of the symposium, I attended the "Vision for the Dental Hygiene Profession" panel, which included IFDH President Aldenhoven as the moderator and panelists Marjolijn Hovius, RDH (Netherlands), JoAnn Gurenlian, RDH, PhD (United States), Christine Nathe, RDH, MS (United States) and Kerstin Ohrn, PhD, RDH (Sweden). This session focused on the future of our profession globally, and the panelists discussed issues affecting dental hygiene, which included technology, research, education and service models.



I took a moment between educational sessions to network with colleagues from the Israel Dental Hygienists Association.



Colleagues from IFDH and ADHA relaxed before the gala. Seated, left to right: Leah Littlejohn, RDH, IFDH treasurer; IFDH Vice President Perno Goldie; IFDH President Aldenhoven; IFDH President-Elect Hovius. Standing, left to right: ADHA Delegate to IFDH Byrd; ADHA President Connor; ADHA Executive Director Battrell.

Michele Darby, BSDH, MS, from the United States served on a panel discussion with Canadian and Austrian dental hygienists on collaborative research strategies and the how-to of balancing health ethics and research ethics.

ADHA Immediate Past President Green served on a panel discussion on "The Multi-Skilled Oral Health Care Professional," with colleagues from the United Kingdom and Australia. The panelists discussed dual-skilled and multi-skilled oral health practitioners and the issues affecting them, as well as the concept of the primary care practitioner to provide primary health care in the future.

Networking and Collaboration

On Friday and Saturday evening, many hygienists attended the "Canada Symphony of Seasons" dinner and the "Around the World in Eighty Days" gala dinner and silent auction to benefit the Canadian Foundation for Health Research and Education. These



ADHA President Connor and Esther M. Wilkins, RDH, DMD at the gala



ADHA Delegate to IFDH Tammy Byrd and I (on the right) with delegates from the Italian Dental Hygienists Association

were exciting events and a wonderful opportunity to meet new and interesting dental hygienists from around the world.

ADHA and IFDH

ADHA President Connor, ADHA Executive Director Battrell and I joined several IFDH line officers for dinner. **special feature** continued on page 30

2007 - 2010 IFDH Officers

The newly installed line officers of the IFDH are:
 Marjolijn Hovius, RDH – President (Netherlands)
 Maria Perno Goldie, RDH, MS – President-Elect (United States)
 JoAnn Gurenlian, RDH, PhD – Vice President (United States)
 Leah Littlejohn, RDH – Treasurer (Australia)



Left to right: me, ADHA President Connor, Ken Littlejohn, IFDH Treasurer Leah Littlejohn, IFDH President-Elect Hovius, ADHA Delegate to IFDH Byrd, IFDH President Aldenhoven, IFDH Vice President Perno Goldie, ADHA Executive Director Battrell and George Goldie

■ Q&A with Sue Aldenhoven, RDH, and Marjolijn Hovius, RDH By *Christine A. Hovliaras-Delozier, RDH, BS, MBA*



IFDH President Aldenhoven and President-Elect Hovius graciously granted me an exclusive interview for Access.

Access: What is the goal of this International Symposium on Dental Hygiene, the theme of which is the "Many Cultures of Dental Hygiene?"

Sue Aldenhoven: The goal of symposia is to provide a forum for the exchange of knowledge, research and technology and to provide dental hygienists worldwide with the opportunity to network and build or renew friendships with their global colleagues. The theme not only reflects the multicultural nature of the IFDH 26 member countries, but also the diversity of settings in which dental hygienists work worldwide.

Access: What has IFDH accomplished under your leadership as president?

SA: The Federation continued to grow and establish itself as the representative body of dental hygiene globally. We celebrated our 20th anniversary and to commemorate this we launched an electronic newsletter, "Contact International," that can be accessed via the IFDH Web site. The Web site was further developed and is now a source of reference and consultation for our global colleagues. Readership of the "International Journal of Dental Hygiene" continued to grow as the journal further established itself and to raise awareness of the dental hygiene profession. IFDH member countries celebrated International Dental Hygiene Day on the second Wednesday of October every year. In recognition of the cultural differences of our member countries, at our recent house of delegates meeting, it was resolved that each member country have the flexibility to hold this special day at a time and date that suits their specific calendar rather than on the nominated date. We worked to[ward] and realised our goals, one of which was to raise the profile of the dental hygiene profession to the public, the profession and allied professionals.

Access: What are some of the issues that IFDH as an organization has had to face?

SA: We continue to liaise with global dental organisations and hope in the future we can establish closer liaison and open lines of communication with a view to working collaboratively on projects that will improve the oral and total health of the community.

Marjolijn Hovius: We are growing all the time and have evolved much more as a profession and as an organization and want to work in collaboration with other dental and health care organizations.

Access: What are some of the trends that dental hygienists need to know about globally in order for them to consider becoming a member of IFDH?

SA: IFDH provides dental hygienists with a network of contacts with dental hygiene professionals in other countries. International meetings provide the forum for mutual discussions about trends in dental hygiene and a realization that the same trends are occurring globally, whether it be legislation, education, scope of practice, threats and opportunities. The steady growth of our profession has been documented in a longitudinal study, the International Profile on Dental Hygiene, that can be accessed on the IFDH Web site, which tracks the changes that have been occurring globally. We can learn from the experiences of our colleagues and adapt their strategies to further our goals.

MH: If dental hygienists are able to do something in one country, then I can say to my government in the Netherlands that we want to do the same thing. If they can do it there and it is safe, then there should be no arguments that it can't be done here. It is important to use ideas and strategies from some countries to help other countries achieve their goals in dental hygiene.

SA: It is important to respect and understand the oral health requirements of each country; however, if the precedent has been successfully set in one country, then why would it not work in another country? That is the strength of networking through IFDH as it provides dental hygienists with a global perspective of their profession and the opportunity to share ideas and learn from each other.

MH: Education occurs through certain steps. You go to one step and stay there a little bit and then go to another and stay there a little bit. Through the evolution, you repeatedly have the same type of issues. Being in IFDH offers you the opportunity to reflect and understand what is happening in other countries. If you see what is happening in other countries, you can see what is happening in your own. In Denmark, dental hygienists are paid by insurance companies and are paid like dentists. If they can manage it there, then why can't we manage it somewhere else? It gives you a lot more potential to negotiate with the dental organization, as well as your own dental hygiene organization. In addition, dental hygienists must work as a team with their colleagues

IFDH Q&A continued on page 29

IFDH Q&A *continued from page 29*
— it should be a team effort.

Access: As the new IFDH president from 2007 to 2010, what is your vision for IFDH?

MH: My vision is to be more conscious of all the good things that dental hygienists are doing. The one thing I learned from the Sunstar Awards is how little dental hygienists know about what other dental hygienists do. In my inaugural speech, I will focus on reaching out to others. I challenge them to tell other people about what you are doing, like Elina Katsman who went to the Dominican Republic on a holiday. When she was there she saw that the people there had very bad teeth and she wanted to do something. She got funding and has 20 different centers with 200 volunteers and 72 people who are paid who provide preventive care to these people. She has treated over a million people including children and adults in the span of 11 years to provide them with preventive care. Elina is not the only one, there are others. The way she did it can be used to educate others.

SA: As a profession and as individuals we need to market ourselves by raising awareness of all the valuable work dental hygienists are doing to improve the oral health of the community.

MH: We don't promote ourselves enough. So many wonderful things are happening and you want to help others. The researchers in IFDH want to do the research and publish it on the Web site so others can use it. It is a win-win situation for everyone. I really think the delegates in IFDH are such a strong body of women and I am really looking forward to working with them. In American, you would say "exciting," but I am going to say "interesting" of how we are going to continue to develop IFDH as an organization.

SA: The house of delegates meeting provided IFDH with more practical yet visionary ideas for the next term and beyond.

MH: Stimulating things have come out and we need to be focused.

Access: Anything else that you would like to share with the readers of *Access* which include members of ADHA, potential members, and student dental hygienists who are members of our SADHA?

MH: I think they should join the IFDH. It is such a way to broaden their scope and we sometimes tend to be narrow as dental hygienists. Sue has taught me so much in the three years of working with her in IFDH. I hope that I will teach Maria several things in the next three years. If everyone can do that, we grow. You need to keep your mind open. Becoming a member of IFDH and attending an IFDH meeting is a way to open your mind.

SA: I think it is so important to believe in themselves and remain true to their beliefs. Don't be afraid to take the next step, whether it be higher education, continuing their professional development, working in a specialty, supporting their professional association or participating in the events of an international organization such as IFDH.

MH: They should aspire to outgrow their mentors.

SA: Take responsibility for their own professional development and be a good ambassador for their profession. It is so empowering to be part of such a dynamic and progressive profession they should aspire to become mentors themselves.

MH: They have to accept that they need to become better qualified. We have quite a few students who outgrow you as a faculty member and this is a part of life.

Access: This reminds me of what my parents told me that you only want better for your children, and we can use this analogy in that we only want better for our students than what we had.

special feature *continued from page 28*

ner. This was a wonderful opportunity to meet the president, president-elect and treasurer and get a chance to interact with them on a professional level. I had the opportunity to interview Sue Aldenhoven and Marjolijn Hovius (see sidebar on pages 29 and 30).

■ The 2010 IFDH Meeting - Glasgow, Scotland

Michael Wheeler, RDH, president of the British Dental Hygienists' Association (BDHA) and Marina Thompson, BDHA president-elect invited everyone to the 2010 IFDH Meeting in Glasgow, Scotland, July 1-3. It will be another exciting meeting with educational sessions, free papers, poster presentations, exhibitors and many collaborative and networking sessions.

Closing Ceremonies

The keynote speaker for the IFDH closing ceremonies was Joanne Clovis, DipDH, BEd, MSc, PhD, from Canada, who delivered "Inter-Professional Education, Practice, and Research: Making the Connection for Dental Hygiene."

She spoke about what "inter-professional" means, the advantages and barriers of it and how this can provide meaning and value to the dental hygiene profession.

If you are interested in joining the IFDH, please visit their Web site at www.ifdh.org. ■