

## The WHO's Oral Health Action Plan will potentially transform oral health services & in turn oral health professionals education.

The plan outlines ambitious targets at WHO & national government levels that if embraced will enable change in many forms, at different speeds & in different directions by national governments.

Depending on contextual enablers & challenges, these changes may transform the oral health workforce and how they become professionals.



### What has this to do with me?

Given change will be driven & empowered by national government engagement you might ask what has this to do with you, an academic? The answer of course is a lot. It is important that OHP educators inform themselves of the principles of the action plan, actively engage with consultations & advocate for the changes that are contextually relevant in your regions.

**Remember there will be no one size fits all answer, it will be contextually driven & supported.**

**OHPE:** Oral Health Professionals Education  
**UHC:** Universal Health Coverage  
**IPC:** Inter Professional Care  
**IPE:** Inter Professional Education



## Oral Health Education's Call to Action:

Advancing the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Oral Health Action Plan

### Our call to you to act:

1. Prioritisation of prevention & public health principles
2. Rely on evidence-based research
3. Regular review of curricula so they address key WHO principle
4. Enable ongoing curriculum assessment & ensuring quality education

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## Oral Health Education's<sup>1</sup> Call to Action:

Advancing the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Oral Health Action Plan



**ADVOCACY**

**CURRICULUM**

**IPE & IPC**

**RESEARCH**

**Summary guidance on Advocacy**

## What are the key principles?

With 100 identified actions allocated to a variety of actors it can be challenging to ascertain what the key messages are? The regional education associations in their review of the action plan suggest there are two key messages that education should advocate for that will result in impactful change & meaningful benefit to the wider population.

### 1. Advocacy for a view of Oral healthcare as:

- A central part of Universal Health Coverage prioritising a prevention approach
- Being receptive to innovative workforce planning approaches & that fully embrace Inter-professionalism

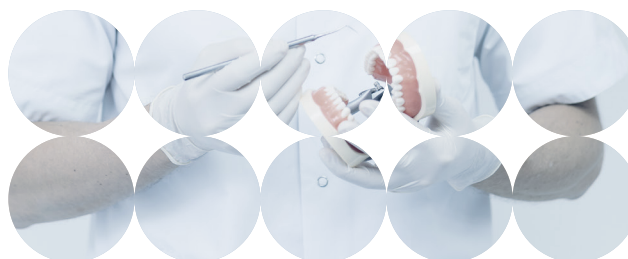
### 2. Advocacy for a view of oral health professionals' education as:

- Grounded in the evidence & research base throughout the professional lifecycle from graduation, clinical practice & continuing professional development
- Enabled through core contemporaneous, contextually appropriate curriculum that is responsive to evolving workforce models

## Advocating for a view of Oral healthcare aligned with the WHO action plan:

For the WHO there is **'no health without oral health'**. In this view, of oral healthcare, it is a core element of universal healthcare coverage. This perspective views oral health as an essential right of citizens of all countries & understands this may be more effectively provided through a publically funded dental care models. The WHO acknowledges a one size fits all approach will not work.

Emphasising a need for contextual & cultural relevance is stressed. In some countries this may see the expansion & regulation of existing oral health professionals, in others it may see the introduction of new oral health professionals, while in others still it may see elements of oral health being discharged by other healthcare professionals. Regardless it is likely to result in change in delivery models & the enabling of inter-professional community based care.



## Advocating for a view of Oral health professionals' education:

In an age of AI, social media, influencers & what appears to be a decreased value on scientific & academic freedom & rigour it has never been more important to advocate for what dentistry is founded upon. Oral healthcare & the curriculum is & must remain grounded in science, the evidence base & research.

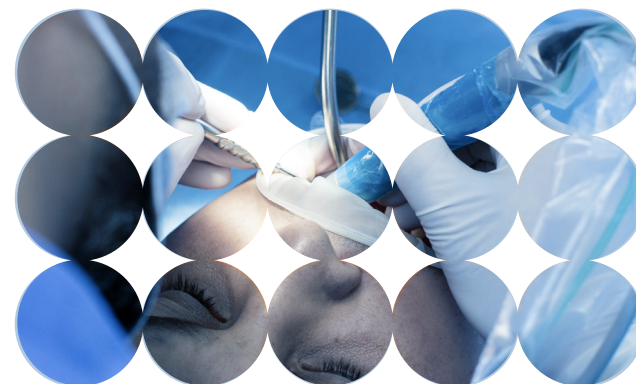
There can be no room for a downplaying of concepts of professional integrity and academic rigour. Curriculum must continue to be evolved based on proven science and research. As must our approaches to teaching, learning & assessment.

As academics, we view graduation as the gateway to professional practice & this must remain grounded in the demonstration of competent, safe & ethical practice.

## The when, where and how of advocacy:

From an education perspective, it is important that we engage in national consultations at an early stage. Remember this is a global plan enacted nationally so:

- Make yourself and colleagues aware of national consultations so you can have early input
- Strive for alignment with national scope of practices
- Approach with an open mind to change & an embracing of inter-professionalism
- Stress the importance of prevention strategies, and the need for equitable access to sustainable practice delivery models



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