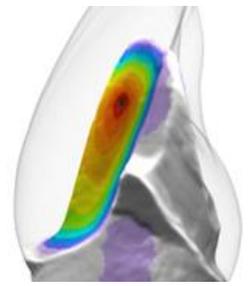


Association of Science Educators in Dentistry (ASEiD) (formerly the Association of Basic Science Teachers in Dentistry) April 2022



Editors Note

It came as pleasant surprise to be advised by the publishers just before Easter that a paper to which several of us have contributed was amongst the most cited in a widely respected journal. It reported on the consensus view of Special Interest Group (SIG) sessions held at successive series of annual Association of Dental Education in Europe (ADEE) meetings in the years immediately preceding the COVID pandemic. This culminated in a group session at the ADEE meeting in Berlin in 2019, summarised in an earlier newsletter. The group sought to define what basic science content should be included in an undergraduate dental curriculum together with some thought as to how this might be delivered. The degree of interest in the paper and the ongoing correspondence confirms that this is still a lively issue which continues to challenge the minds of many of our colleagues. Some of the issues are well defined...

- How to fit an expanded and ever more complex curriculum into a timetable whilst competing increasingly for timetable space with with clinical teaching
- How to help students see that core aspects of the basic sciences are fundamental to the provision of 21st century oral healthcare.

Others are emerging or re-emerging, for example...

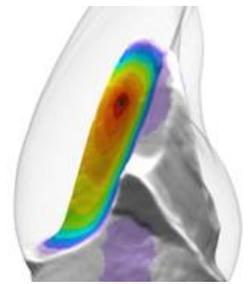
- A consideration of the extent to which oral healthcare practitioners should be trained to be oral healthcare physicians with a more clearly defined role in the management of broader health issues, and the extent to which a more robust coverage of basic science issues might help with this.

Our Association has a pivotal role to play in providing a platform for these discussions, and to act as a structure through which we can articulate and publicise our position to universities, professional or jurisdictional bodies. We need to consider our position and reinvigorate our activities so that we continue to advocate the importance of core basic science in dental curricula. We need to breakdown the divide that, in some quarters still exists between the clinical disciplines and the basic sciences so that students come to see them as an essential adjunct to clinical practice, as opposed to an exercise in scientific literacy useful when preparing for examinations. We need to be active in contributing to consultations put out by bodies such as the UK General Dental Council. It is pertinent to note, for example, that we did not contribute to a recent consultation on 'Educational Processes' to which we might reasonably have had a contribution to make, so our views were not heard, yet several other professional bodies did. In this respect, we have to ask if we have really been effective in living up to our mission in articulating the position of basic science teaching in Dentistry.

It is not only what we teach, but also how we teach it. Several of our colleagues have pointed out that it can be difficult to get students to engage with aspects of our teaching because they fail to see its relevance to contemporary dental practice. This places a responsibility on us to ensure that what we teach is both contemporary and relevant. One way of achieving this is by reaching out to other professional groups or specialist organisations within Dentistry and beyond, to find out what they need from us in order to deliver a contextualised and balanced curriculum. Once

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again the Association has a role in providing a forum in which these interactions might take place.

As we emerge from COVID there are challenges ahead, but there are also opportunities. Yes, we have had a difficult time, but we have also acquired new skills and have begun to look at what we do in a different way. If we can harness these skills from the new, post-COVID perspective, the future will be exciting. Our challenge will be to make this happen.

Getting Involved

As the Association emerges back into life from COVID , it would be great if any member who wishes to become more actively involved could make themselves known to the President or the Secretary/Treasurer.

Membership

The new committee, spearheaded by our President, Marcello Riggio have been on a membership drive which has now increased to 312. Our membership continues to be international with schools from the UK, Europe and further afield represented. If you know of anyone involved in the teaching of Basic or Applied Sciences to Dental or Oral Health students who are not members please refer them to our website where membership information can be found.

Future Meeting – save the date....

A summer meeting of the Association is being planned to take place in Plymouth on *the 6th and 7th of July 2022*. This will be a mixed 'Face to Face' and 'On-Line' meeting themed around '*e-Learning & Assessment in Dental Education*'. It will consider how some of the lessons learned as part of our response to the COVID crisis may be adapted to the teaching of the Basic Sciences in Dentistry as we move forward.

Further details together with travel details will be circulated and posted on the website as soon as they are available. If you would like to submit an abstract for consideration for presentation either as a poster or in oral format. Any abstract must be about 250 words and should be submitted electronically to the local organisers vehid.salih@plymouth.ac.uk or simon.whawell@plymouth.ac.uk by the 1st of June who can also provide further information if required.

If you have news or views that you would like posed in a forthcoming Newsletter please contact Jon Bennett at jon.bennett@oxon.org