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Inter-Professional Education Opportunities in the European Undergraduate Dental Hygiene Curricula

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Abstract

Problem Statement: In 2020, the common European Curriculum for Dental Hygiene (ECDHyg) was published using a learning outcomes approach. The development of the ECDHyg curriculum used the same methodology as those that formed the 2017 Graduating European Dentist; New Undergraduate Curriculum Framework (GED). Dental educators delivering the same (or closely related curricula) with commonality or partial alignment of Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) across Dentistry and Dental Hygiene Programmes, could find scheduling efficiencies and quality enhancement in their teaching. In turn, these activities could also be advantageous to students as part of an Inter-Professional Education (IPE) initiative where students on different programmes work effectively together.

Purpose/Goals/Objective: To compare the major domains, competencies and ILOs of the European Undergraduate Dental Hygiene and Dentist undergraduate curricular documents.

Key features: ECDHyg and GED each contain 4 major domain areas. Consistent domains are Professionalism, Safe and effective clinical practice and Patient-centred care, with only a minor wording difference in the fourth major domain; 'Dentistry in Society' (GED) and 'Oral Health in Society' (ECDHyg). GED contains a total of 154 ILOs versus ECDHyg with 109 ILOs. Comparing the wording of the curricular documents, there was a high level of similarity between the 'Areas of competence' within each Domain. Of the 109 ECDHyg ILOs, n=33 had been fully *adopted* from the GED, 56 had been *adapted* (minor changes in wording only) from the GED and 20 had been *developed* (significant additions/changes/re-wording) from the GED.



ILOs (194/105) in the Dentistry curriculum as compared with Dental Hygiene although, of the 105 Dental Hygiene ILOs, 89 (33 adopted + 56 adapted; 82%) were highly consistent with those of Dentistry.

Conclusions: The high level of similarity between European undergraduate curricula for dentists and dental hygienists provides numerous new opportunities. The significant overlap provides dental educators involved in the design of undergraduate curricula the prospect of designing subject content that could be co-taught (and assessed) due to shared (or closely related) ILOs. *The future in our hands:* Common teaching could form part of an array of IPE initiatives which may benefit students working within a dental team during their study and post-qualification.

Learning outcomes

1. Delegates will be signposted to key publications in the development of curricula for Dental Hygiene programmes.
2. Attendees will identify the similarity in approach in developing European curricula for Dentistry and Dental Hygiene.
3. Delegates will recognise the subsequent opportunities for Inter-Professional Education across Dentistry and Dental Hygiene programmes.