



Dental PBRN Newsletter

Winter 2006

IN THIS ISSUE

[News Items](#)

[Executive Committee Members](#)

[Current Protocols](#)

[Contact Us](#)

Welcome to the Dental PBRN quarterly newsletter! This newsletter is designed to provide you a synopsis of the contents of our website, <http://www.DentalPBRN.org>. The website has been updated with exciting new features, including literature articles, a poll, and a helpful tip of the month. We have also begun a Dental PBRN e-mail list. This will give you an opportunity to chat with other dentists participating in the network and discuss the latest trends and newest materials in dentistry.

You can also view the projects we are currently recruiting dental practitioners for as well as suggest and view new research ideas.

When you visit our website you can complete your online training course that will provide the foundation for you to begin on a project.

News Items

Three Studies Approved

The first three studies of the Dental PBRN were approved by the Protocol Review Committee December 10th! The enrollment for the studies will begin early this year. The first study is a questionnaire regarding caries risk assessment; the second study involves the placement of restorations on previously unrestored surfaces; the third study looks at the reasons for replacement of restorations. Please visit the website, www.DentalPBRN.org, for details of the studies.

For the second and third studies, practitioners need to be certified in Human Subjects Protection. You can take an online course for this certification at www.DentalPBRN.org. If you are unsure of your certification status or need certification, please contact your regional coordinator, found in the "Contact Us" section of this newsletter.

Practitioners also need to attend an orientation session prior to the second study. If you are unsure if you have attended a session, please contact your regional coordinator, found in the "Contact Us" section of this newsletter, or the "Contact Us" section of our website, www.DentalPBRN.org.

Dental PBRN display booth at Alabama Academy of Pediatric Dentists

On December 2, 2005 Ms. Jackie Love, Research Specialist, presented a display booth with information about the Dental PBRN. She distributed flyers and enrollment questionnaires to over 50 pediatric and general dentists that attended the meeting. The Dental PBRN is actively recruiting pediatric dentists to participate in future research projects that are being proposed. There are 40 pediatric dentists currently enrolled in the Dental PBRN from the state of Alabama.

Our Mission:

"To improve oral health by conducting dental practice-based research and by serving dental professionals through education and collegiality."

News Items continued

Dental PBRN presentation to dental hygienists

On November 14, 2005 a lecture was presented to the Birmingham Dental Hygiene Study Club. Approximately 20 hygienists attended the session. Dr. Sonia Makhija gave a presentation and discussed the Dental PBRN's activities to date and planned activities. She and Jackie Love answered questions and distributed flyers, the newsletter, and the enrollment questionnaire.

Dental PBRN lecture given at the Norwegian Dental Association

Dr. Ivar A. Mjör, co-Chair of the Dental PBRN, lectured about Practice-Based Dental Research at the Annual Meeting of the Norwegian Dental Association on October 15, 2005. He also participated in a Panel Discussion on "Visions for the Future" on October 14, 2005 where he emphasized the importance of practice-based research.

Alabama Dental Society Orientation Session held

On October 14, 2005 an orientation session was held for the Alabama Dental Society, which is the Alabama chapter of the National Dental Association. A total of 10 practitioner- investigators attended the session. Drs. Gregg Gilbert and Sonia Makhija gave presentations and discussed the Dental PBRN's activities to date and planned activities. This orientation session resulted in an increase in our number of enrollees to the network as well as new research topic ideas for future projects!

The Dental PBRN is an effort to help dental professionals directly improve the efficiency and effectiveness of dental care. Essentially, it is research done about and in the "real world" of daily clinical practice.

Executive Committee Members

The Executive Committee is the governing body for the Dental PBRN. Its members comprise six Dental PBRN dentists in private practice, the Network co-Chairs, the Director of the DPBRN Coordinating Center, and the NIDCR representative. Currently, we have an Interim Executive Committee, whose members have been appointed. Ultimately the six practitioner-investigator members will be elected from among the Dental PBRN membership for three-year terms and constitute the majority voting authority on the Executive Committee.

The duties of the Executive Committee are to act as the administrative and executive arm of the PBRN. It makes decisions on day-to-day operational issues; considers and adopts changes in study procedures as necessary; reviews and implements recommendations from the Institutional Review Board and/or Data and Safety Monitoring Board; reviews progress of studies in achieving their goals; and reviews data collection procedures. The Executive Committee also prioritizes research topics for protocol development, reviews protocols prior to submission for funding, and has the authority to make suggestions for submission of manuscripts for publication of Dental PBRN study results. The Executive Committee meets once every one to two months. The typical meeting is held by videoconference, but occasionally occurs by telephone conference call. In this issue, we have highlighted 4 of our members:

Executive Committee Members continued



Paul Benjamin DMD, MAGD, FACD has been in general private practice for 30 years. He also is an adjunct clinical instructor at both the University of Florida and the Oral Surgery Department at the University of Miami.

Some have referred to much of dental research conducted to date as "scientifically valid, statistically significant, but clinically useless". We would like to change that.



Brad Rindal, DDS is Investigator at the HealthPartners Research Foundation. He also maintains a clinical practice in TMD/Orofacial pain and is an Adjunct Associate Professor at the University of Minnesota School of Dentistry.



Martha Wallace, DMD, MS, MPH graduated from the University of Alabama School of Dentistry in 1973 and later earned both a Masters Degree in Public Health and a MS. She has experience in clinical research and currently has a private practice in Birmingham, Alabama.



Daniel J. Pihlstrom is a dentist with Permanente Dental Associates in Portland, Oregon and has served on the Dental PBRN Interim Executive Committee since July of 2005. He has enjoyed the opportunity to participate on the Executive Committee of the Dental PBRN and is excited about the role the Dental PBRN will play in engaging dentists to become more involved in clinical research and advancing the science and practice of dentistry.

Current Protocols

“An Internet Intervention to Improve Oral Cancer Prevention”

This is an internet-based clinical trial of oral cancer prevention. To be eligible to participate in the study, you must have internet access in your dental practice. The project is directed at prevention of oral cancer in dentistry by offering internet education and tools for your practice and support for all members of your practice. The project is not very time-consuming, does not require training beforehand, and should enhance preventive care and risk management in your practice. To participate, you must: (a) complete a series of internet continuing education modules; (b) encourage your staff to support the project by also completing the modules; (c) designate a staff member to distribute 100 postcard surveys to patients at four different times for total of 400 postcards; (d) use the educational tools to enhance the preventive care in your practice. In addition to other benefits, your practice will be paid an honorarium for its participation. **Due to the success of the recruitment of this study, we have increased the number of participants from 140 to 190. As of January 24, 2006 we have 181 practitioner-investigators. Enrollment is now closed.** This project began before we received the large NIDCR grant to fund our Dental PBRN.

“Practice-Based Root Canal Treatment Effectiveness Among Diabetics and Non-Diabetics”

This a retrospective cohort study to test the hypothesis that endodontic treatment failure is significantly higher among dental patients with diabetes mellitus type II when compared to non-diabetic controls. The idea for this research project was a result of ideas provided by dentists who completed the Dental PBRN enrollment questionnaire. All that is required from you is to assist our Research Specialist, Ms. Jackie Love, to allow her to abstract treatment record information on these patients. Currently this protocol is only open to Alabama dentists because this project was funded before we received the large NIDCR grant to fund our Dental PBRN.

Contact Us

Andrea H. Mathews, BS, RDH is Program Manager for the Dental PBRN. She can be reached at ahmathews@uab.edu, or at her office in the Department of Diagnostic Sciences in the School of Dentistry at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.