



Dental Practice-Based Research Network  
www.DentalPBRN.org

# DPBRN Newsletter

Fall 2011

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Welcome to the Dental PBRN quarterly newsletter! We invite you to see other details at our website, <http://www.DentalPBRN.org>. You can also view the projects for which we are currently recruiting practitioners, 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 if you have not already done so.

DPBRN continues to be extraordinarily active and productive, as this edition of the newsletter demonstrates - thanks to all of our practitioner-investigators!

## News Items

*DPBRN HealthPartners Principal Investigator awarded a grant from NIDCR to examine the question: Does Participation in a Dental Practice-Based Research Network Impact Treatment?*

Dr. Brad Rindal, Director of the DPBRN Minnesota region and Principal Investigator at the HealthPartners Research Foundation, was recently awarded a grant from NIDCR (R03-DE-022089) to examine the question: Does Participation in a Dental Practice-Based Research Network Impact Treatment?

The study addresses this important question by examining actual care-delivery patterns of dentists. Dr. Rindal and his investigative team will utilize electronic clinical data from the HealthPartners Dental Group (HPDG), including diagnosis codes, caries depths and treatment data to determine if dentists with a high level of DPBRN participation are quicker to assimilate DPBRN research into their practices. HPDG has a thorough dental record that is easily married with HealthPartners administrative data. Patient diagnosis and treatment data aggregated by provider will be examined in 2005, prior to the implementation of the DPBRN. They will then examine the dental practice patterns again in calendar year 2009 and will evaluate the personal characteristics of dentists in calendar year 2005 among dentists who later went on to participate in DPBRN. The dentists will be stratified into three categories based on level of involvement in the DPBRN: not enrolled, enrolled but minimally involved, enrolled and involved.

Congratulations to Dr. Rindal and his colleagues at the HealthPartners Research Foundation!

Follow us on these  
networks:



### Mission Statement

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



DPBRN 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.

### *DPBRN Blood Glucose Study featured in NNOHA Newsletter*

The National Network for Oral Health Access (NNOHA) featured a story on DPBRN practitioner-investigator Dr. Gary Lease and his staff from the South Lake Community Health Center Dental Clinic in Groveland, Florida in its Summer 2011 quarterly newsletter. Dr. Lease participated in DPBRN Study 15 entitled 'Blood Glucose Testing in Dental Practice'. The story highlights a patient who, because of enrolling in the study, was diagnosed with diabetes and is now under medical care.

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### *Dental hygiene educator in the MN Region dedicates sabbatical to increasing engagement of the dental team in practice-based research*

Debra Sidd, RDH, RF, MEd has been a dental hygiene educator for more than 30 years. Recent engagement with The Dental Practice-Based Research Network (DPBRN) has further energized her already-accomplished career. Awarded a one-year sabbatical from teaching, she will use the time to promote involvement of the entire dental team in practice-based research activities. Her rationale: evidence-based improvements in care can only be achieved when the entire team is engaged in the process. She sees involvement in practice-based research as a way to support that engagement.

Teaching her dental hygiene bachelor's degree students about evidence-based practice in 2008 led Sidd to meet DPBRN Minnesota Regional Primary Investigator, Brad Rindal, DDS and then Regional Coordinator, Merry Jo Thoele, RDH, MPH. She states, "Being fairly new to research myself, their insights and expertise inspired me and informed my course design." Sidd invited them to participate as guest speakers and developed a better understanding of DPBRN activities when Dr. Rindal addressed the network with her students. "As chair of the dental hygiene program at Normandale Community College from 2008-2010, I saw the need to sequence evidence-based decision making (EBDM) throughout our dental hygiene curriculum."

Seeing the importance of EBDM in the educational setting, Sidd is now inspired to engage providers already in practice. With input from Dr. Rindal and Regional Coordinators Emily Durand, RDH, RF and Sarah Basile RDH, MPH, Sidd is organizing a symposium for the entire dental team with the following two strategic priorities: (1) to effectively increase the participation of the dental team in dental practice-based research network activities; (2) to actively engage an effective team approach to evidence-based improvements in patient care.

The event will be highly collaborative, engaging a range of stakeholders in the planning process. Sidd states, "I am grateful to have this opportunity and hope our efforts encourage effective partnerships which truly impact the quality of dental care." The symposium will take place Friday, May 11th, 2012 at Normandale Community College in Bloomington, MN

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## *DPBRN presents to dental students at University of Florida*

As part of the initiative to increase awareness about practice-based research, The DPBRN at the FL/GA regional site is making presentations to the undergraduate dental students. One of the classes that learned about The DPBRN was Dr. Shannon Wallet's research elective course in the College of Dentistry at the University of Florida. Dr. Wallet's semester long class educates students of all classes on the various aspects of research in dentistry.

In August, The DPBRN staff gave a PowerPoint presentation to 41 of the dental students in this class. The presentation highlighted the latest efforts from The DPBRN group to initiate clinical studies and to disseminate research information. The students enthusiastically participated in the class and manifested their own ideas about research topics that they thought might be critical to patient care.

In October, Dr. Wallet's research elective class and the UF Student Research Group subsection of the American Association of Dental Research will host a joint presentation at the College of Dentistry. This presentation will include an interactive session with several practitioners from The DPBRN, who are active in the network, and have participated in multiple in-office studies. The continued DPBRN involvement in the education process will serve to increase its collaboration with the dental students and further its presence in the curriculum at the College of Dentistry.

The DPBRN expects that students who are introduced to practice-based research early in their dental careers will most likely continue to be interested in research after they graduate and hopefully become practitioners-investigators and advocates of dental research as an integral part of routine clinical practice.

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## *DPBRN presented at the Alabama Academy of General Dentistry 38th Annual Annual Review of Dentistry Conference*

DPBRN gave presentations at the Alabama Academy of General Dentistry (AGD) conference held September 8-10, 2011 in Destin, FL. The topics covered included: "Upcoming National Dental Practice-Based Research Network: Why it will benefit your practice", "Regional differences in diagnosing questionable occlusal caries lesions", "CONDOR study of Osteonecrosis of the jaws", and "Patient satisfaction with dental restorations".

## **Testimonial**

I have been involved as a co-author on three manuscripts that have reported results from certain DPBRN studies. When contemplating the results and contributing to the discussion, I start to take inventory of my current practice patterns.

Recently I was involved in a manuscript that will report on the use of rubber dam by DPBRN dentists during root canal treatment. My practice pattern was to use it for all posterior teeth, but not all anterior teeth. I have changed that pattern as a result of my involvement. I met with my dental assistants to inform them of this change in my clinical practice. I also discussed these results with the other dentists in our clinic. One dentist, a 2008 graduate of the University of Minnesota, reported that she was taught that if you cannot place a rubber



**Mike Bauer, DDS**

Full-time private practice in  
general dentistry

HealthPartners Riverside Clinic

continue next page



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.

continued Testimonial:

dam, the patient should be referred to an endodontist or an extraction should be considered. I can report that our clinic has used results from this DPBRN study and made changes that will improve the quality and safety of the care that we deliver to our patients. I can attest to the fact that DPBRN participation has changed the way that I practice, and my patients benefit from this!

## Contact Us

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