Gender Issues in the Dental Curriculum

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Pamela Zarkowski JD, MPH
University of Detroit Mercy
Women’s Health Across the Lifespan—Policy

- Professional Organizations
- Academic /Institutional Policy
  - College/School
  - University
- State and Federal Legislation
American Dental Association

This publication does not set any standards of care. Scientific advances, unique clinical circumstances, and individual patient preferences must be factored into clinical decisions. This requires the dentist’s careful judgment. Balancing individual patient needs with scientific soundness is a necessary step in providing oral health care.

Includes an appendix on Key Questions for Women’s Oral Health – to ask the female patient and the physician.

Women’s Oral Health Issues

American Dental Association’s Council on Access, Prevention and Inter-professional Relations, November 2006
Professional Organizations: ADHA

- American Dental Hygienists’ Association
- Standards for Clinical Dental Hygiene Practice
  
  http://www.adha.org/resources-docs/7261_Standards_Clinical_Practice.pdf

  • Provide a framework for clinical practice that focuses on the provision of patient-centered comprehensive care.
  
  • **Assessment**-Patient history: diversity and cultural considerations (e.g. age, gender, religion, race and ethnicity)
  
  • **Risk Assessment**: Age and gender
Professional Organizations: ADEA

- American Dental Education Association
- ADEA Competencies for the New General Dentist

Manage the oral health of the infant, child, adolescent and adults as well as the unique needs of women, geriatric, and special need patients

- Competency 6.1
ADEA Competencies-Broader Perspective

- Evaluate and integrate emerging trends in health care as appropriate.
- Evaluate and integrate best research outcomes with clinical expertise and patient values for evidence-based practice.
- Provide prevention, intervention, and educational strategies.
- Participate with dental team members and other health professionals in the management and health promotion for all patients.
- Manage the oral health care of the infant, child, adolescent, and adult, as well as the unique needs of women, geriatric, and special needs patients.
ADEA Competencies-Broader Perspective

- Prevent, identify, and manage trauma, oral diseases, and other disorders.
- Select, obtain, and interpret patient/medical data, including a thorough intra/extra oral examination, and use these findings to accurately assess and manage all patients.
- Recognize the manifestations of systemic disease and how the disease and its management may affect the delivery of dental care.
- Formulate a comprehensive diagnosis, treatment, and/or referral plan for the management of patients.
Academic/Institutional Policies

- Climate
- Curriculum
- Culture
Academic Policies: Curriculum

- Competencies
  - Behavioral
  - Biomedical
  - Clinical
  - Cultural
  - Didactic
  - Interprofessional
  - Professional
Medical Student Competencies

- Explain sex and gender differences in normal development and pathophysiology as they apply to prevention and management of diseases.
- Effectively communicate with patients, demonstrating awareness of gender and cultural differences.
- Perform a sex specific and gender appropriate physical examination.
- Discuss the impact of gender based societal and cultural roles and context on health care and on women.
- Identify and assist victims of physical, emotional and sexual violence and abuse.
- Assess and counsel for reduction of risk, including lifestyle changes and genetic testing.
- Access and critically evaluate new information and adopt best practices that incorporate knowledge of sex and gender differences in health and disease.
- Discuss the impact of health care delivery systems on populations and individuals receiving health care.

  APGO Core Competencies.
Gender

- Gender refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women.
Minimum Competencies for Public Health Professionals

A gender competent public health professional will:

- Recognize the effects of one’s own gender identity and biases on public health work.
- Recognize the importance of the gender perspective to meet public health objectives and outcomes.
- Identify and respect gender differences and gender diversity.
- Work towards reducing gender inequalities by situating gender within a framework of the social determinants of health using an equity and rights perspective.
- Evaluate existing information, research, policies and programs using gender analysis including gender analysis of institution to determine the power dynamics that shape these processes.
- Develop research, policies and programs that integrate gender perspectives.
Minimum Competencies for Public Health Professionals

- Incorporate gender within indicators for monitoring information, research, policies and programs.
- Identify key partners and work collaboratively towards building a gender perspective to meet public health objectives.
- Develop communication and advocacy skills that help them to become gender competent agents of change.
- Recognize the impact of a well functioning health system including allocation and budgetary issues and the implications of other social sector allocations for gender equity in public health.
  - Integrating Gender into the Curricula for Health Professionals
Pharmacy Competencies

Themes

- Sex and Gender Factors
- Lifespan Issues in Women’s Health – Infants to Reproductive Years
- Lifespan Issues in Women’s Health: The Reproductive Age: Pregnant and Lactating
- Lifespan Issues: Women’s Health: Climacteric, Menopause, Postmenopausal
  - Health Profession Training, Education and Competency: Women’s Health in the Pharmacy School Curricula
Competencies Needed by Health Professionals for Addressing Exposure to Violence and Abuse in Patient Care

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<tr>
<th>Institutional Competency</th>
<th>Program Requirement</th>
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<td>Adopt an Interdisciplinary approach to violence and abuse.</td>
<td>Recognize that competencies apply to all physical and behaviors health professions education.</td>
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<td>Provide for multidisciplinary instruction. Develop parallel and complementary competencies for front line worker and advocates</td>
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<td>Coordinate learning objective across different disciplines.</td>
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<td>Academy on Violence and Abuse</td>
<td>Value inter-professional contributions</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.avahealth.org">www.avahealth.org</a></td>
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Culture and Climate Policies

- Workplace Messages
  - Formal and informal hierarchy
  - Respect

- Curriculum Messages
  - Course content
  - Patient care

- Institutional Policies
  - Ethnic Harassment Prevention
  - Gender and Sexual Harassment Prevention
  - Wellness-counseling, health
  - Support
  - Safety
Contributing Dynamics

Hidden Curriculum

- Role modeling negative attitudes.
- Education does not occur in a vacuum: “hidden curricula of observed behavior, interactions and overall norms and culture of a students’ training environment are extremely powerful in shaping values and attitudes. It often contradicts what is learned in the classroom.

  - IOM: Heath Professions Education: Health Professions Education; A Bridge to Quality. Washington DC, National Academy Press, 2003
State Policy: Women’s Health

- Topics and policy ideas intended to provide background, raise awareness and highlight various options legislators may consider improving women’s health in their states. (Nat’l Conference of State Legislators)

- Chronic Disease
  - Cancer, diabetes, heart disease and osteoporosis

- Coverage and Access to Care
  - Ensuring quality, insurance coverage, expanding the health care workforce

- Maternal and Reproductive Health
  - Breastfeeding, education, family planning, home visitation, prenatal care and teen pregnancy

- Mental Health
  - Mental health access & treatment, elderly depression, postpartum depression, violence and suicide

- Public Health and Wellness
  - Communities, employers, immunizations, nutrition and oral health

State Policy: Women’s Health

- Create an office, commission or task force to address women’s health issues.
- Raise awareness about women’s health issues by creating a women’s health week or month.
- Consider supporting institutions and studies that focus on women’s health research.
- Explore ways to use existing state and federal resources aimed at improving women’s health.
- Explore creating a task force or program to specifically address the health of female veterans.

Federal: Proposed Legislation and Policies

- Breadth of Legislation Suggested Promoted
  - Breast Cancer Patient Protection Act
  - Mobile Mammography Promotion Act
  - Violence Against Women Health Initiative Act
  - March for Military Women Act
  - Safe Cosmetics Act
  - Communities of Color Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Act
  - Denouncing practices of female genital mutilation, domestic violence, honor killings, acid burnings dowry deaths and other gender based persecution.
  - Healthy Media for Youth Act
Federal: Affordable Care Act (ACA)
Women’s Health

- Broad Protections against Sex Discrimination across the Health System
- Expanding and Strengthening Private Coverage
- Insurance Programs for Specific Conditions under the New Health Care Law
  - Medicaid Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment
- Expansions and Improvements in Medicaid
  - Medicaid Coverage of Smoking Cessation treatment
- Explicit Protections for Domestic Violence Survivors
Additional Developments

- The HHS Coordinating Committee on Women’s Health (CCWH) conducted a multi-phase initiative to identify opportunities and strategies to advance the health status of women and girls beyond 2010. The process included gathering feedback from more than 1,000 key informants including experts from government, academia, and health services as well as consumers, researchers, and advocacy groups.

- The National Institutes of Health Office on Research in Women’s Health released its strategic plan for the upcoming decade in Moving into the Future with New Dimensions and Strategies: a Vision for 2020 for Women’s Health Research.

- The Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau is exploring the potential development of a national performance or outcome measure for women's health for state-level reporting under the Title V Block Grant Program.
References/Resources

- Institute of Medicine’s Report “Exploring the Biological Contributions to Human Health: Does Sex Matter?”


Thank you!

pamela.zarkowski@udmercy.edu