**Innovation**
A departure from current practice

The University of Iowa has developed an innovative, practical guide to create collaborative learning and assessment tools for our learners to advance their thought process in the continuum from novice towards expert.

In order to emulate an expert’s thought process, we interviewed recognized colleagues to delineate the steps of their clinical decision making, creating a list of questions to guide and assess learners.

The development of this guide is a departure from current practice, as it is broadening educational pedagogy by defying traditional approaches to critical thinking through a structured process vetted by experienced practitioners.

**Significance**
A convincing argument on the impact of dental education

It is vital our graduates from the health professions are able to critically think in clinical settings. To achieve this outcome, educational programs are challenged to develop learning and assessment tools that empower learners to progress their thought processes.

**Collaboration and Resources**
A collective effort of knowledge and time

Development of these tools involves institutional collaboration and dedication of time to interview, analyze, and create meaningful guides for novice thinkers.

**Implementation**
A sustainable plan for continuous integration into the dental curriculum

The implementation of this concept through the dental curriculum has been championed by administration and key faculty. As the concept and interest evolves, the application of the tools are expanding throughout the curriculum. At this stage, the tools are intermittently utilized in each of the four years and introduced into graduate courses. The next step is to vertically integrate this process into the curriculum in a systematic way, enabling learners to apply the expert’s thought process to patient care.

**Measurement of Outcomes of Innovation**
A quantification of impact and outcomes

The impact and outcomes of the process to create collaborative learning and assessment tools is measured by:

- Number of tools developed and implemented;
- Feedback from learners;
- Feedback from faculty;
- Increased collaborative networks formed;
- Continuing evolution and integration and mapping of the tools throughout the curriculum.