



The mouth and AIDS: lessons learned and emerging challenges in global oral health: introduction

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International oral and dental health in HIV disease

It became clear some 25 years ago that for the Oral AIDS community to be able to make an impact, international workshops identifying the major global challenges were needed. There was also a need to agree on a classification and criteria for the identification of oral lesions. The subsequent seven world workshops have been held over the last 28 years in San Diego, USA (1986); San Francisco, USA (1992); London, UK (1996); Skukuza, South Africa (2000); Phuket, Thailand (2004); and Beijing, China (2009). The 7th World Workshop on Oral Health and Disease in AIDS was held in Hyderabad, India, 6–9 November 2014, sharing the aims below and also aimed to identify the major research questions relating to the aetiology, diagnosis, treatment and social impact of oral HIV lesions. These workshops have led to an ever changing international research agenda which informed the research strategy of NIDCR, especially with regard to the Oral HIV & AIDS Research agenda (OHARA).

The strategic goals of International Oral AIDS Collaborations remain:

- 1 To bring together clinicians and non-clinical scientists who have an interest in the oral manifestations of HIV disease, whether clinical, basic mechanisms or treatment.
- 2 To share worldwide perspectives, knowledge and understanding of oral health and disease in HIV infection.
- 3 To agree definitions and classifications of HIV-related oral diseases worldwide.
- 4 To identify research needs taking account of the global perspectives and opportunities.

The 7th World Workshop brought together approximately 135 participants from 31 countries. It was structured in a similar way to the 6th World Workshop on Oral Health and Disease in AIDS, also supported by the National Institutes of Health, with respect to multiple research questions being discussed as part of individual workshop sessions which followed plenary lectures from world experts in each area. The 7th World Workshop was conducted so as to ensure that the key challenges that lie

ahead in this field were addressed as well as reflecting on progress so far in the field, and especially advances since the last World Workshop. An International Scientific committee was invited to submit research questions relating to three themes: (i) clinical science in relation to oral aspects of HIV infection, (ii) basic and laboratory science in relation to oral aspects of HIV infection, and (iii) social and behavioural science aspects of oral aspects of HIV infection. These workshop questions were prioritized by the International Steering Committee and addressed a variety of topics within pathogenesis, epidemiology, and translational clinical research.

The discussion of research questions was addressed by experts in each of nine individual workshops (three on each theme) and led to a consensus paper based on recent reviews of the literature and the workshop discussants' own research experience in the topic discussed. These papers, along with papers from plenary lectures, form the basis of this publication. There was some overlap between certain workshops with respect to topics covered and questions asked and/or discussed to insure broad participation and diverse points of view. However, in presenting the research agenda developed as part of the 7th World Workshop on Oral Health and Diseases in AIDS, we chose to minimize any redundancy across workshop sessions in the interest of clarity and conciseness. All these papers are included in this issue and so form the basis of a comprehensive global and updated agenda for oral HIV/AIDS research. What is clear is that after nearly 30 years and with so much achieved, there is still so much to accomplish.

This issue is dedicated to the memory of Dr Suniti Solomon, who did so much to help and raise the profile of HIV disease in India (Solomon *et al*, 2016). Dr Solomon received a special award at the Workshop, recognizing her enormous contribution to the field. Unfortunately, Dr Solomon died at the end of July 2015. A tribute can be found in this issue (Kumarasamy *et al*, 2016).

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