

## Professor of Evidence-Based Care appointed in Manchester, UK

### Jan Clarkson

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**Helen Worthington has been appointed Professor of Evidence-Based Care by the University of Manchester in the UK. This reflects her achievements in a career that has contributed to developments in the design and conduct of clinical research and the synthesis of evidence for healthcare interventions in dentistry.**

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After leaving Altrincham Grammar School for Girls, Helen Worthington obtained a First Class Honours Degree in Mathematics from the University of Sheffield, then completing her postgraduate qualifications at the University of Manchester. Since the mid-1970s, she has advised researchers at Manchester Dental School. Her work with the Dental Health Unit, a unique collaboration between the university and Industry, involved her in

the early fluoride toothpaste trials and the evolution of such studies. As the statistician for large-scale clinical trials has developed her knowledge of the design and analysis of caries clinical trials and of the application of statistical prediction models for dental disease and treatment. It is through her experience in randomised controlled trials that she developed a particular interest in the activities of the Cochrane Collaboration.

In 1995, Helen became joint co-ordinating editor of the Cochrane Oral Health Group and it is her expertise in this area that benefits our profession most. She has provided methodological support for many of the Cochrane reviews so far published and is co-author of over 25 reviews and protocols in the Library. She is an active member of the Cochrane Methodological Group and renowned for her skills in experimental design, particularly for cross-over and split-mouth studies. As Director of the Research Methods and Statistics component of the Masters programme in Dental Specialities she is responsible for teaching research methods to all postgraduate dental students at Manchester University. The MSc/MPhil module is highly rated and around 30 students complete it every year. Her promotion of evidence-

based oral care reflects her strong background in medical statistics and expertise in the dental field. She is also interested in developing the methodology for systematic reviewing of evidence for treatments and procedures in oral health.

Helen's international reputation for methodological expertise is reflected in the extent to which she is invited to lecture world-wide. She has contributed to several textbooks and is an editor of the first Evidence-Based Dentistry book, published at the beginning of the year, entitled *Evidence-Based Dentistry for Effective Practice*. Her publication record is impressive, including more than 150 peer-reviewed articles. She supports many dental organisations, among them the BASCD — the British Association for the Study of Community Dentistry, and the IADR — the International Association for Dental Research. In addition, Helen is active in guideline development groups such as the National Institute for Clinical Excellence Guideline on Dental Recall and the UK Childhood Cancer Support Group Guideline on Oral Care.

Helen is a unique individual and someone who expects high standards of others whilst always giving of her best. She is responsible for many clinicians, enjoying training them in research methods and also in helping them conduct high-quality research. For those who work closely with her, she provides inspiration and unwavering support. The title of her Chair could not be more suited to reflect her past achievements but also her intentions for the future, in particular taking forward the Cochrane Oral Health Group.