Odontologia Baseada Evidência Brazil, 17–24 November 2003

Following the success of the evidence-based dentistry conference in Atlanta (Georgia, USA), I am pleased to report on two similarly successful conferences and workshops held in Brazil in November 2003. The events were organised following the attendance of the Maria Navarro Dean of the dental faculty from the University of São Paulo at Bauru, and Professor Aronita Rosenblatt from the dental faculty at the University of Pernambuco at the Atlanta meeting.

The Bauru event was a 2-day conference followed by a 3-day workshop and the Recife event a half-day conference followed by a day of workshops. The majority of the sessions over the week were presented by Debora Matthews and me; Richard Niederman had to

leave early because of family commitments and, unfortunately, Valeria Marinho — who many will recall from her excellent and extensive series of Cochrane topical fluoride reviews — was unwell. But despite these minor setbacks, and the temperatures in the 30°C range, both events were very well-attended and attracted over 200 participants in all. These included both staff and students from the two dental schools along with staff from other medical disciplines.

The team outlined the evidence-based approach and the underlying skills of question formulation, searching for evidence and critical appraisal. These were then developed in interactive workshops looking at appraisal techniques for systematic reviews, randomised controlled trials, cohort studies, diagnostic tests and guidelines. The whole programme was presented with simultaneous translation and happily this did not prevent enthusiastic participation, with much interaction between the speakers and the audience. It was refreshing to see such a level of enthusiasm for this approach and the determination of some of the staff and students to understand and pursue the evidence-based approach in their dental schools in Brazil.

The hospitality offered by our hosts was also outstanding: we thank them and also the Brazilian Government which helped fund the conferences.

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Evidence-Based Dentistry (2004) **5**, 15. doi:10.1038/sj.ebd.6400245