

Other journals in brief

A selection of abstracts of clinically relevant papers from other journals.
The abstracts on this page have been chosen and edited by Paul Hellyer.

Understanding patients: 1

Liu J, Gill E, Li S. Revisiting cultural competence. *Clin Teach* 2020; DOI:10.1111/tct.13269.

Every patient has a story, not just a history.

Culture is a multi-faceted social phenomenon, which includes such determinants as race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, spirituality, physical ability, education and socio-economic status. Cultural competence (CC) is 'a set of congruent behaviours, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals and enables that system, agency and those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.'

From a literature review, the authors conclude that CC is relevant not only at an individual level but at a team and organisational level. Individuals are, however, foundational and three domains are identified as central to CC development – affective (sensitivity, humility, openness), cognitive (cultural awareness, knowledge and understanding) and behavioural (cultural skills, supportive interaction, self-reflection). The consequent importance of leadership and faculty development is stressed.

In a multi-cultural society, clinicians are expected to be able to provide culturally sensitive and appropriate care for all patients. Innovative educational interventions are needed to ensure that current training is relevant to all students and practitioners.

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41415-020-2551-1>

Mothers' dental history

Hariyani N, Do L G, Spencer A J, Thomson W M, Scott J A, Ha D H. Maternal caries experience influences offspring's early childhood caries – a birth cohort study. *Community Dent Oral Epidemiol* 2020; DOI: 10.1111/cdoe.12568.

.... may inform the treatment of their children.

Early childhood caries (ECC) is one of the most common chronic diseases in young children, leading to pain, speech and chewing problems and a poorer quality of life. Research shows that there is a relationship between the mothers' caries status and that of their children. Maternal oral health is dependent on the interaction between social determinants and their own health behaviours, and reaction to preventive advice.

This longitudinal study followed all new mothers and their children (n = 2181) born between mid-2013 and mid-2014 in Adelaide, South Australia. Questionnaires were completed at birth and 3, 6 and 12 months. 47.7% (n = 1040) consented to a visual oral examination of both mother and child when the child was 24 months old.

The prevalence of ECC was 10.6% and children of mothers with high caries experience were at 2.27 times higher risk of developing ECC than those of mothers with low caries experience. Thus, modification of maternal oral behaviours may reduce the risk that their child develops ECC.

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41415-020-2553-z>

Understanding patients: 2

Leadbeater D, Holden A C L. How are the social determinants of health being taught in dental education? *J Dent Educ* 2020; DOI:10.1002/jdd.12487.

Dental education should be more than teaching technical competence.

On graduation, dentists are expected to provide care which is socially and culturally competent, giving priority to the interests of the patients. They are trained to treat oral disease, managing the destructive effect of dental caries and periodontitis, but with apparently little reference to the multiple social conditions which may contribute to these pathologies. However, these social determinants of health (SDH) need to be taught and assessed in dental school if their damaging effects are to be ameliorated.

A scoping review of the literature was undertaken to explore the extent to which SDH is taught worldwide to both undergraduates and practitioners. Community placements, along with journaling and reflection, were found in many studies but SDH was frequently peripheral to the main learning outcomes. With some exceptions (producing health education material, collaborating with a local community, for instance), the teaching offered rarely included those who were experiencing deprivation. The institutional structures within which the teaching took place were also found to be potential barriers to learning.

The complexity of health inequalities must be included longitudinally in the curriculum, by providing resources, stimulating discussion and developing reflection skills.

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41415-020-2552-0>

The older generation is becoming increasingly frail...

Barker R O, Hanratty B, Kingston A, Ramsay S, Matthews F E. Changes in health and functioning of care home residents over 2 decades: what can we learn from population-based studies? *Age Ageing* 2020; DOI:10.1093/ageing/afaa227.

...with consequences for all healthcare staff .

Using data from three existing population studies, the authors examine how the proportion of care home residents with complex multi-morbidity and severe disability has changed over time.

The prevalence of severe disability increased significantly between 1992 and 2014, shown by increases in the need for assistance with bathing and dressing. The prevalence of cognitive problems increased from 75% to 95% and the prevalence of cardiovascular disease doubled over the same time period. Future anticipated gains in life expectancy and the increasing proportion of those aged 85+ living in long-term care indicate a predicted need for an additional 71,125 care home places by 2025. The complex care needs of this population require the urgent attention of policy-makers, commissioners and providers to ensure that sufficient resources are available to meet the increasing demands placed on healthcare professionals.

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41415-020-2554-y>