



Dental

DECEMBER 1993

Research News

Happy Researching for 1994

Stimulus & Challenge Research Development Office, (902) 494-1675

The voice of Dal Dental research

VOLUME VII, NUMBER 12.

### Achievements and Future Goals

The year end is a time to reflect on past achievements as well as to looking forward to the challenges that lie ahead and to making plans to achieve the manageable goals or perhaps those goals which are just out of reach. Who knows, we may surprise ourselves and achieve the impossible dream. In November we had to forward our documentation on Accreditation to the CDA. The documentation on Research compiled by the Research Development Office of our achievements during the past five years, dramatically underlined the incredible progress and headway which the Faculty of Dentistry at Dalhousie University has made in a relatively short time. The Accreditation Report of 1987 had a recommendation which stated, "That the Faculty of Dentistry is encouraged to pursue the declared goal of achieving a strong faculty commitment to and participation in research activity." In looking at the achievements since that report, we should feel proud that we can say that with our heads held high, we have had a major commitment to research in our Faculty. The Dental Research News of November described the difference between "Support" and "Commitment". The analogy was given of a bacon and egg breakfast, in which the chicken had been supportive while the pig had clearly been totally committed. The documentation provided in our Accreditation


Report of 1993 shows that our faculty has been totally committed to research for the past six years. Our policy on research has clearly brought home the bacon. In addition Dalhousie University has also now designated health related research as an area of special emphasis. During the past five years we have maintained a high level of research collaboration with the Faculties of Science, Medicine and Health Professions, this collaboration should increase in the future with the special emphasis on health related research.

The Research Development Office is convinced that our faculty members are significantly more informed and up to date in their area of speciality because of their research interests. The faculty members with an enquiring mind sharpened and intensified by research are also better able to keep up to date and current with other related subject areas. The introduction of a student research fellowship award by IADR in 1990 and the granting of this prestigious IADR David B. Scott Student Research Fellowship Award to one of our third year Dalhousie Dental undergraduate students, emphasizes the important role attained by our Faculty of Dentistry in integrating teaching and research activities. Our new DDS curriculum provides us with a significant opportunity for faculty members to engage in educational research. Our major research efforts over

the past five years is partly responsible for the enthusiasm generated to develop our science based curriculum. Our new curriculum which is science based, requires that fundamental questions must be addressed, thus our teaching program can stimulate and help our research and at the same time our research program in return aids, facilitates and improves our teaching.

Perhaps one of the most impressive developments in our research activities has been the willingness to undertake the difficult task of obtaining research support from the private sector. During times of economic depression within the industrial and government sectors, we have been able to attract major industrial support for our research, a total of \$605,627.00 was obtained between 1988 and 1993 from five separate industrial research grants.

Our recent initiative which aims to try to get a number of individuals working together in a clinical research program funded from alumni sources, should consolidate our clinical research efforts. We have an opportunity to increase the thrust of our clinical and educational research so that it will aim to address the many important areas for which we have a lack of relevant knowledge.

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The Dental Research Development Office set up in 1987 has witnessed in the past several years a larger number of individuals engaged in research, than ever before in the history of Dalhousie University's Faculty of Dentistry. Faculty members have presented more research papers at international research meetings than any other single faculty of dentistry in Canada during the past three years. The faculty has presented 182 abstracts at the IADR/AADR meetings during the past six years, this represents 75% of all of such abstracts presented in the history of the Dental Faculty at Dalhousie University. During this period the faculty obtained its first MRC Development Grant, its first MRC Programme Grant, its first MRC University/Industry Grant, and its first University Industrial Chair. The total research funding brought in since 1980 is \$3,835,604.00, which is over 90% of the total funding obtained during the whole history of the faculty. It is true that the number of abstracts presented at IADR meetings do not tell the complete story about the level and quality of research, any more than the number of research dollars which have been brought in. However, the number of abstracts presented each year and the level of research dollars do provide a crude measure of the health of the research in our institution. Clearly the health of dental research at Dalhousie has never been better. During the period 1989-1992, at least 134 Abstracts were presented together with 124 publications and 5 book chapters, at least 20 international and 19 national presentations were made.

We have witnessed an unbelievable and dramatic change in the research capabilities within the Faculty of Dentistry at Dalhousie over a relatively short period of time. The research strength in our Dental Faculty has never been as high as at present.

Our research record in recent years is impressive. Amazingly over 50% of the total research funds obtained in the history of the Faculty of Dentistry from federal agencies (MRC and NHRDP) have been realized in the short 12 month period April 91 to March 92. However, it is also important to note that much of our research in the past 5 years has in fact been conducted in the absence of research funding.

### Promoting Scholarly Activities

We are engaged in significant long term planning for collaboration with our colleagues in the Faculty of Medicine and in the Health Professions. The Faculty of Dentistry are participants in the setting up of an "Atlantic Canada Clinical Trials Consortium." The international reputation of Dalhousie in the field of dental research and scholarship now stands very high indeed. Unquestionably we have an established climate which is conducive to research and academic pursuits. The Faculty of Dentistry at Dalhousie University can now claim to be an academic institution with a well balanced research base of international quality. However, we should not be content to rest upon our laurels but be vigilant and aggressive in fostering and supporting the research base and improving our research performance. We have introduced a program to provide a major improvement in the level of participation in clinical research within the faculty during the next 2 to 3 years. Faculty members are being encouraged to utilize their unique clinical skills in clinical research studies. Over the past six years a number of initiatives have been undertaken to strengthen, maximize and advance the level of dental research, such as: regular research seminars, funding of summer students, seed funding, and improved research

communication such as the publishing of our regular monthly Dental Research News. Funding has been provided to support the attendance of faculty members at workshops dealing with clinical research methodology. One faculty member was supported to visit another facility to acquire laboratory skills which enabled him to develop a research program using an artificial caries model. These methods have been successful in stimulating and providing increase awareness, of research opportunities and have inspired and facilitated research activities. In times of constraint such as we are experiencing within the university sector, at a time when application for research funds are extremely competitive, we are pleased to note that our faculty is performing better in terms of research and scholarship than at any time in its history.

At Dalhousie we have aimed to emphasize the importance that we attach to teaching as well as to research, and we have promoted the integration of the two. We believe that our students should have the opportunity to learn of the research role of their faculty, especially through direct involvement in that research. Our Faculty of Dentistry has an excellent record of involving dental students in faculty research. The IADR David Scott award in 1990 was seen as a reward and tribute to all of our excellent Dalhousie Dental students who have participated in our research during the past several years. We recognize that our dental student population of today is a very important source of future dental scientists and possible future faculty members. The involvement of students in our research within the faculty is one way of making a contribution to the future of dental science in Canada. The research experience

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of our students at Dalhousie may pave the way for a dental science career. It is encouraging to know that by involving our dental students in our summer research projects we stand a chance of improving the future for clinical scientists. A study has found a positive correlation between exposure to research during professional degree studies and the development of a career in which research is a major activity.

### Our Mandate

As dental academics we recognize that we belong to that segment of the profession of dentistry who must seek out new knowledge in order to better serve mankind and contribute to the body of scientific dental knowledge. Involving our undergraduate students in this process is seen as part of our mandate. During the past 5 years over 70 students have participated with faculty members in summer research projects. In addition a total of 34 of these undergraduate dental students have presented papers at IADR/AADR meetings during this period. This participation in international research meetings has provided these students with an excellent learning experience which has enriched their undergraduate dental education.

### External Research Funding

Our Accreditation report of 1993, documents that a total of 18 external research grants worth \$3,397,730.00 were obtained by our faculty during the period 1988 to 1993. These competitive funds have been obtained from both the federal and private sector. In addition the Faculty has received a total of \$52,848 to support student undergraduates research participation through the MRC Farquharson Summer Research Scholarships. If this MRC support is based upon the research activity in our Faculty of Dentistry at Dalhousie University, we believe that this level of MRC

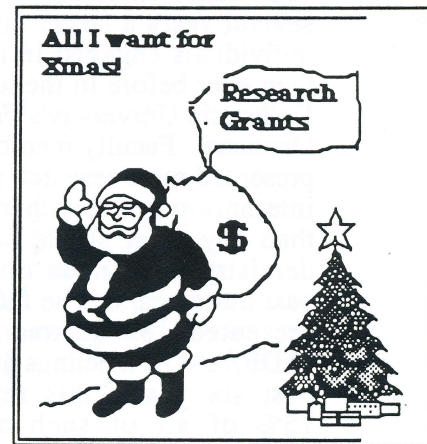
support does not reflect the total quantity and quality of research activity which has been conducted during the past five years. Only Laval and Saskatchewan share this low level of Farquharson Summer Research Scholarship funding. During a period in which the level of research productivity at Dalhousie University, Faculty of Dentistry has significantly increased, we still lag far behind in this area of support. In comparison the funding provided to other Faculties of Dentistry was much higher. During this period, McGill received \$76,425, Western Ontario and Manitoba \$88,080, Alberta received \$92,520, Montreal \$105,696, UBC \$118,750 and Toronto received a massive \$192,976.

### Unfunded Research

Amazingly a total of 71 research projects were listed in the Accreditation Report of 1993 which had been undertaken during the last five years which did not require major funding from external agencies. This very large number of small projects which have been conducted during the past five years in the absence of major external grant funds is a testament to the wonderful attitude and spirit for research within the faculty. These projects have been conducted predominantly with small amounts of seed funding from the private sector, the MRC general research grant and Alumni funds.

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**GREETINGS OF  
 THE SEASON  
 AND BEST  
 WISHES FOR A  
 HAPPY NEW  
 YEAR TO ALL  
 READERS.**  
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### Christmas Wish!



### Three Deadlines

- 1) Annual membership Subscription to CADR. January 1st 1994.
- 2) Registration fee for the 1994 IADR/CADR meeting, February 4th 1994.
- 3) Getting your slides or poster ready for the IADR/CADR meeting in March 1994.

**Right NOW!**



### Resolve

**Make a new year resolution** to have your name recorded for posterity as a contributor to the rapidly developing research history of The Faculty of Dentistry, and don't forget to have it recorded in the pages of the Dental Research News.



**Dalhousie Dental  
 Research 1987-93**

