

# Dental Research News

Research Development Office, (902) 494-1675

## VOLUME V, NUMBER 3.

**NHRDP Epidemiology Grant**  
 Dr. Amid Ismail received a welcome letter in February from Minister Perrin Beatty. The letter informed him that the funding from the National Health Research and Development Programme for the project entitled "Formulation Grant Application: National Dental Epidemiology Project - Sampling and Analysis." had been approved. Funding of \$34,500.00 will be provided for this important pilot project.

### Rewards of Research

"Research can let us share in the rewards of technological innovation, improve the health and longevity of our citizens, enrich our cultural resources, improve the quality of the environment in which we live, enhance individual intellectual opportunity, and assist us to meet our international responsibilities towards the under-developed parts of the world."

John B. Macdonald.

### War or Science

"Research is not only morally better than warfare, it is also more economical."

Daniel E. Koshland.

### War Casualty?

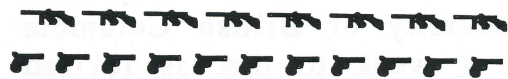
One of the casualties of the 'Gulf War' will be Statistics Canada, which is one of a number of government departments taking cuts. Statistics Canada will be losing \$4.5 million from its budget. It has been suggested that there will be no Canadian R&D statistics collected for the years 1990, 1991, or 1992. Statistics of Canadian Science in recent years have tended to document a decreased spending on R&D as a proportion of gross domestic product. It is unfortunate that we may not have any evidence for the trends during the 90-92 period.



### Dental Casualty?

The Medical Research Council Have announced that the General Research (Discretionary Funds) to medicine (\$50,000), dentistry (\$15,000), pharmacy (\$15,000), and veterinary medicine (\$10,000) has been cancelled for this year. This represents a saving by MRC of \$1,125,000. No specific reason has been given for the cuts, however, it could be that all government departments and programmes have been requested to make cuts to their budgets. Based upon government estimates the amount cut out of the MRC budget would pay for just over two weeks of the Canadian participation in the Gulf War. The MRC have put forward statistics to show that 1990-91 was the first period in which real growth of the MRC budget could be documented since 1985. The budget increase of 9.8% when related to the Consumer Price Index represented a real growth of just over 4%. The July 1990 figures indicate that dentistry received 2.6% of the operating grant funds from MRC. This dental funding was shared out between 32 operating grants and 2 programme grants. The value of the grants was \$4.1 million. The loss of the MRC discretionary funding for 1991-92 will be a blow to our faculty, however, it is hoped that it will

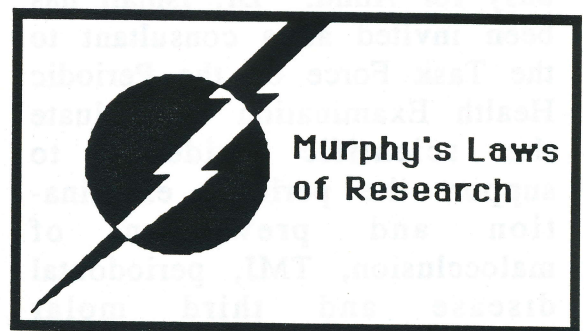
not significantly effect the continued growth in our research activity during the next twelve months. The MRC Council are to review the decision this month let us hope that they reverse the decision. No suggestion has been made so far which indicates that the MRC Farquharson Summer Research Scholarship programme will be affected. Only once during the past 15 years has either of these MRC programmes been cancelled.



### Reason for Research Support

"The foremost reason for supporting research in universities is to strengthen a social goal—that of having strong universities."

John B. Macdonald



19) The difficulty in using statistical methods is finding the test which will give you the answer that you want.

### Amid A Lot of Research Activity

Amid Ismail has been very active during the past few weeks. Dr. Ismail was invited in November to present a one day workshop on Water Fluoridation and Dental Public Health to the Newfoundland Department of Health. Over 50 Dentists, hygienists, and dental assistants attended the workshop.

Also, in November, Dr. Ismail was invited by the University of British Columbia for a week to discuss revised criteria for diagnosis of dental caries and dental fluorosis. After a one day discussion and exercises, the dentists/researchers participated in an epidemiological examination in primary schools in Vancouver for 3 days.

The future also looks very busy for Amid. Dr. Ismail has been invited as a consultant to the Task Force on the Periodic Health Examination to evaluate the scientific evidence to support the periodic examination and prevention of malocclusion, TMJ, periodontal disease and third molar removal, among others. The Task Force which is the most prestigious scientific group in the world has been reviewing and publishing guide-lines on all examination and preventive procedures in medicine.

Dr. Ismail will assist Dr. Don Lewis from the University of Toronto in this important task. The Task Force is supported by Health and Welfare, Canada and is chaired now by Dr. Goldbloom from Dalhousie University's Faculty of Medicine.

Dr. Ismail is also collaborating with the Department of Health, N. S., to evaluate the need for preventive programs in Kentville and Truro. Dr. W. MacInnis is a co-investigator in this project.

Dr. Ismail has been asked to consult with the Department of Health, N. B., to evaluate the fluorosis status of residents which have consumed water from wells with high levels of fluoride.

Dr. Bennett and Dr. Ismail have completed a pilot project to evaluate the number of students with high caries scores in Harbour View School in Dartmouth. Screening criteria were tested and the team, in collaboration with researchers from Laval University and Montreal, will work on a model demonstration program to control dental caries in children with high prevalence.

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### Naturally

"a desire of knowledge is the natural feeling of mankind."

Samuel Johnson.

### The Value of the Literature Review.

A critical review and summary of the literature in the area of relevance provides the researcher with an opportunity to become acquainted with the work of other investigators dealing with similar problems. It will show what aspects of the problem others have studied, what approaches they have used, what results and difficulties they have encountered. This gives the researcher an excellent basic working knowledge of the dimensions of the research problem. It is true to say that without such information it would be difficult to proceed with the research project. It is particularly important to avoid the previous mistakes of previous researchers. Reviewers of your research proposal will want to know the nature of existing research on the subject; and particularly the extent to which you are acquainted with it. They will also require to know how your proposed study differs from previous research.

Some years ago a well known and rather arrogant researcher in the UK would respond to questions had he read the latest paper by so-and so by saying "I don't read papers I only write them." There are some who support this point of view on the grounds that the

more that is known about the research of others, the less chance there is for bringing a fresh point of view, originality, and creativity to the proposed research. However, while there may be some validity in this viewpoint, it can clearly be argued that there may be a considerable loss of time and effort if the previous research work of others is completely ignored. This is particularly true if you are commencing research in a new field. Clearly you must acquire a wide background in the methods and techniques and background theory relating to the research problem before hoping to proceed to solve it. It would also be very important to know whether previous investigations had been conducted which may merit repeating or follow-up experiments.

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### Wonderful and Depressing.

Concern about the volume of government paperwork and increased politicization and accountability prompted Stuart Aaronson of NIH to make the following statement:-

"the Worry is that we are in the most wonderful time now in biology— the problems are finally solvable. But all the young people, when they see what's involved, are going to become lawyers. It's depressing in this period of scientific plenty."

### **AADS Participation by Dalhousie**

The following two research papers were presented by Dalhousie Faculty members at the 68th AADS Annual Session in New Orleans in March.

"A Multi-Center Study of Student Performance on the Group Embedded Figures Test and the Impression/Die Matching Test."

D. V. Chaytor, H. J. Murphy, M. A. Boyd and R. LaFleche.

"Average Scores Achieved on the English and French Versions of the D.A.T. in Canada."

I. C. Bennett and M. A. Boyd.

At the same meeting Ken Zakariassen participated in a panel discussion on 'Closing the Gap Between Research and Endodontics'.

Three posters dealing with new educational programs were also presented.

"An Innovative System for Foundation Science Education in the Undergraduate Dental Curriculum." -F. W. Lovely.

"Addressing Concerns of Dental Hygiene Part—Time Faculty."

M. G. E. Forgay, H. J. Murphy, M. E. Kinnear and N. R. Prowse.

"General Dentistry Treatment Presentations"

W. A. MacInnis, B. D. Moxley and T. L. Boran.

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### **Top Research Directorship for Healy.**

Dr. Bernadine Healy has been nominated as the next Director of the National Institutes of Health.

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### **Research Funding?**

"In 1912 the most famous physics laboratory in the world, 'Cavendish', had a total budget of about \$12,000. Lord Rutherford in the years following 1920 financed a dozen Nobel Prize winners and never had more than a \$10,000 a year to spend."

John B. Macdonald.

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### **The Importance of Research**

"In an age when new technologies are transforming the world, it is important that society should renew its dedication to the importance of research undertaken simply for the sake of learning."

John B. Macdonald.

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### **"RESEARCH NEWS ITEMS"**

Do you have any research news which you would like to share with your colleagues? If so, please forward such items to the Research Development Office. It would help if submissions were produced on a (Macintosh) disc in Microsoft Word, or simply call 1675.

