

Developing a Community Directed Research Agenda for Oral Health and Diabetes

The goal of this proposal is to develop a community-oriented research agenda for the prevention of oral diseases and promotion of oral health and diabetic health in the Chicago Latino community as collaboration between the UIC PRC and the College of Dentistry. This goal is based on the need for bi-directional information on diabetes and oral health to better serve a high risk Latino community, whose health may be complicated by the separate provision of general health care and oral health care. The goal will be achieved through the training of College of Dentistry faculty members in qualitative, community-oriented research techniques, especially for interviews and focus groups. The interviews will be held with community leaders and health care providers who serve the Latino Greater Lawn community in Chicago. The focus groups will be held with high school students, parents of small children, diabetic adults and older adults from the Greater Lawn Latino community. The purpose of the interviews and focus groups is to elucidate attitudes of the community toward the relationship of oral health and diabetes, discover who are salient message-givers in this area, and how messages about the bidirectionality of oral health and diabetes can best be delivered to the community. As information is gathered, it will be synthesized and evaluated for the community's issues and perspectives. A research agenda will be designed using the information gathered as a basis for the development of community members and health care providers. In summary, the study has four aims: 1. To train College of Dentistry faculty members on effective focus group and interviewing methodologies; 2. To develop discussion guides for the community focus groups sessions and for the health care providers and community leader interviews soliciting their views on the relationship of oral health and diabetes, including how to transmit that relationship to the community; 3. To conduct community focus groups with health care providers and community leader interviews soliciting their views on the relationship of oral health and diabetes; and 4. To develop a research agenda based upon the input from the focus groups and interviews, and feedback provided by a joint concluding workshop.

John Crawford, BDS, Ph.D.
University of Illinois at Chicago
College of Dentistry
Professor, Department of Periodontics