

Global National Oral Health Research Strategies Initiative

Christopher H. Fox, DMD, DMSc
FDI World Dental Congress - Prague
05 September 2026



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INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
FOR DENTAL, ORAL, AND
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WHO World Health Assembly and Oral Health

2021 * WHA74

- Global Oral Health Resolution

2022 * WHA75

- Global Oral Health Strategy

2023 * WHA76

- Global Oral Health Action Plan

2024 * Bangkok

- Global Oral Health Meeting
- Bangkok Declaration

2025 * GOHC

- Global Oral Health Coalition

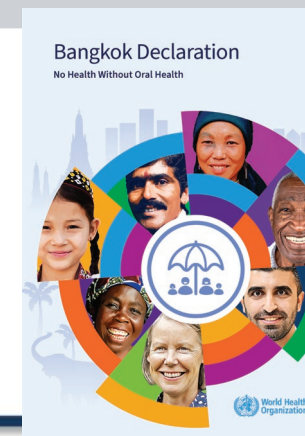
SEVENTY-FOURTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY
Agenda item 13.2

WHA74.5
31 May 2021

Oral health

The Seventy-fourth World Health Assembly,
Having considered the consolidated report by the Director-General;¹

Recalling resolutions WHA60.17 (2007) on oral health: action plan for promotion and integrated disease prevention, WHA69.3 (2016) on the global strategy and action plan on ageing and health 2016–2020: towards a world in which everyone can live a long and healthy life, WHA72.2 (2019) on primary health care; and decisions WHA72.11 (2019) on the follow-up to the political declaration of the third high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases and WHA73.12 (2020) on the Decade of Healthy Ageing 2020–2030;



 **WHO Foundation**

You're Invited!

**Workshop on the
Global Coalition on Oral Health:
The Call to Action**

Monday, May 19, 2025
14h30 - 16h30 CEST
WHO Foundation Offices
[RSVP here](#) by Wed, 14 May 2025

Following renewed momentum in the global oral health agenda and the concept agreed at the first ever WHO Global Oral Health Meeting, this in-person, invitation-only workshop will gather key representatives of Non-State Actors and UN agencies to advance the Global Coalition on Oral Health.

The purpose is to discuss the workstreams as defined by the Call to Action and initiate key workplans to drive coalition efforts forward towards achieving our collective goal of universal health coverage for oral health.

 **Please note:** Due to limited capacity, we reserve the right to limit registration by organization at our discretion to ensure diverse representation and participation.

For more information, kindly contact: [Benoit Varenne](#) (WHO) and [Geoffrey So](#) (WHO Foundation)

Research Foundation of the Resolution

- Global Burden of Disease Studies
- Oral Cancer Prevalence
- Economic Impact of Oral Diseases
- Quality of Life Studies
- Oral Diseases ↔ Other Diseases
- NOMA
- Documented Inequalities
- Common Risk Factors
- Fluoride Research
- Environmental Studies



JDR Clinical & Translational Research

April 2021

GUEST EDITORIAL

The Role of Research in the WHO Oral Health Resolution

B. Varenne¹ and C.H. Fox² 

Keywords: global health, United Nations, World Health Organization, non-communicable diseases, dental research, evidence-based practice

On January 21, 2021, the 148th session of the World Health Organization (WHO) Executive Board adopted a comprehensive resolution on Oral Health (WHO 2021a) after carefully considering the WHO Director General's report on *Oral Health: Achieving Better Oral Health as Part of the Universal Health Coverage and*

document to communicate the value of oral health to all policy makers, including, of interest to International Association for Dental Research (IADR) members, government research funders and private foundations.

The 2021 Resolution notes and builds on the inclusion of oral health in 2 United Nations (UN) political declarations: the UN General Assembly High Level Meeting on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases (UN 2011) and the UN General Assembly High Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage in

tropical diseases, as part of universal health coverage.

These 2 seemingly small mentions of oral health over the past decade set the stage for oral health ascending to the highest level of global health policy discussions.

The resolution also notes the Minamata Convention on Mercury (United Nations Environmental Programme 2013) and the need for focused research to develop viable replacement dental restorative materials to phase down the use of

Research Needed to Implement the Resolution

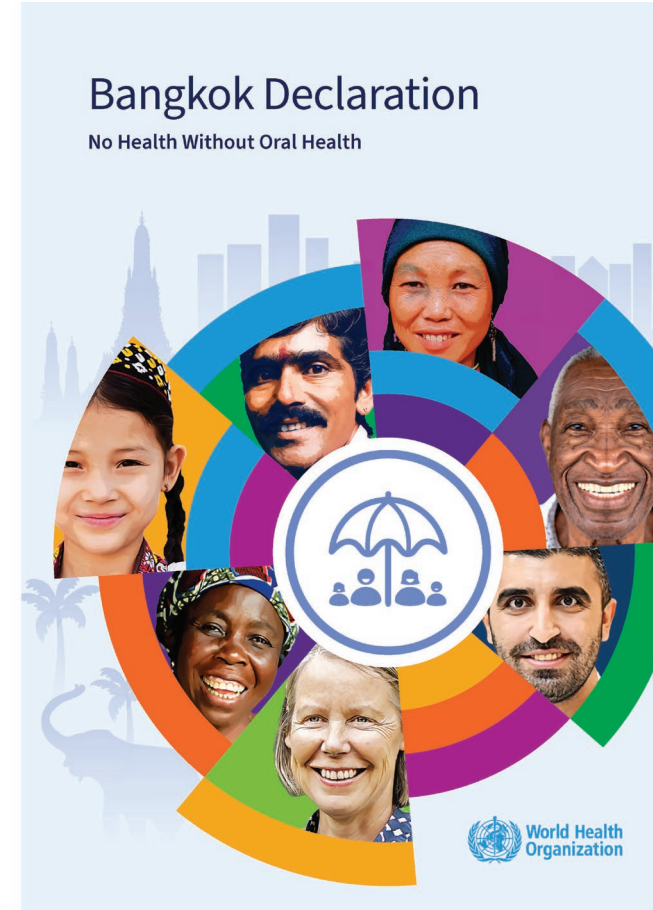


- Population Health Science
- Health Services Research
- Behavioral and Social Sciences
- Cost Effectiveness Research
- Evaluation Research
- Implementation Sciences
- Material Sciences
- Basic, Clinical, and Translational Research
- COVID-19

WHO Global Oral Health Meeting: Universal Health Coverage for Oral Health by 2030

Oral Health Research Agendas

- Advance **research** on effective, evidence-based interventions for the prevention and management of oral diseases and **develop national oral health research strategies** supporting population-level programs.
- Institutionalize the routine use of data, evidence and **research** findings to support evidence informed decision making for oral health at all levels.



Launch Global Coalition on Oral Health Side Event WHA79 – May 2026

- From Pledge to Action on UHC for Oral Health
 - Implementing the GOHAP 2023-2030 in Countries
- Two Core Workstream
 - Advocacy
 - Knowledge Translation



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Global Oral Health Action Plan – WHA76

6 GLOBAL TARGETS FOR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6

Global target 6: Research in the public interest



By 2030, 50% of countries have a national oral health research agenda focused on public health and population-based interventions.

50%



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A milestone for the oral health community: Canada's first National Oral Health Research Strategy (2024–2030)

Leigha D Rock^{*,†}, BDSc, PhD, RDH; Paul J Allison^{*,†}, BDS, MSc, PhD, FDSRCS(Eng), FCAHS

The National Oral Health Research Strategy (NOHRS)¹ was officially released at the Canadian Oral Health Summit in Halifax, Nova Scotia, on June 21, 2024.

NOHRS is a collaboration between the Canadian Institutes of Health Research's Institute of Musculoskeletal Health and Arthritis, the Canadian Association for Dental Research, the Association of Canadian Faculties of Dentistry, the Network for Canadian Oral Health Research, the Canadian Dental Association, the Denturist Association of Canada, the Canadian Dental Therapists Association, and the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA).

CDHA is proud to be a collaborator in this initiative. This strategy is a first of its kind and will inform governments and decision makers, funding agencies, researchers and their organizations, health care practitioners, the public, and others to focus both on emerging, priority issues for Canadian society and on innovative methodological and technological approaches to address these issues.

Recently, there have been significant changes and developments in oral health-related policy and in data on oral health and oral health care in Canada. For the first time in 15 years, national surveys of the oral health and oral health care of people living in Canada are currently being undertaken. The 2022–2024 Canadian Health Measures Survey (CHMS) cycle 7 includes clinical, biological, and self-report indicators of oral health. In addition, Statistics Canada is conducting the Canadian Oral Health Survey (COHS), which will gather information from Canadians on their care needs, ability to pay for oral health services, challenges in accessing oral health services, and experiences with the oral health care system.² The first Survey of Oral Health Care



Leigha D Rock



Paul J Allison

Providers (SOHCP) is also being conducted by Statistics Canada in collaboration with Health Canada.³ And all this work is in the context of the announcement in December 2023 of the Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP), which will help to provide oral health care coverage for those who do not have access to dental insurance and have a net family income below \$90,000.⁴ Finally, calls for proposals to the Oral Health Access Fund (OHAF) to expand access to oral health care by reducing non-financial barriers to care for targeted populations have recently been announced.⁵

Meanwhile, on the global stage, momentum for oral health and related research has continued to build with the publishing of *The Lancet* series on oral health in 2019⁶ and the establishment of a Lancet Commission on Oral Health in 2020.⁷ At the same time, the World Health Organization (WHO) engaged in an extensive consultative process to publish a global strategy and action plan on oral health, which highlights the need for countries to integrate oral health into primary medical care and into universal health coverage, and for countries to have an oral research strategy. NOHRS represents a major step for Canada in achieving a key action area for Strategic

Objective 6 of the WHO *Global Oral Health Action Plan 2023–2030*.⁸

The goals of Canada's NOHRS are to 1) galvanize the oral health and broader community to collaborate around the strategic priorities identified; and 2) leverage strengths in existing fields to foster and nurture new research areas and leaders and create the infrastructure required to address the identified priorities.

To undertake this work, we engaged in a broad and collaborative process, beginning with a meeting in Ottawa in March 2023 involving over 70 attendees from a broad

Discovery!

Canada's First National Oral Health Research Strategy (2024–2030)

L.D. Rock¹ , G. Akade², H. Al-Waeli¹, S. Allin³, K. Altabtbaei⁴ , N. Ameli⁴, C. Bassim⁵, C. Bedos², P. Benbow⁶, A.Y. Bhagirath⁴ , D. Chvartszaid⁷, V. D'Souza¹, K. Da Silva⁸, A. Elseoudi⁹ , A. Fadl¹⁰ , B. Ganss⁷, P. Ghanouni¹¹, S. Ghavami¹², N. Gomaa⁸ , S. G. Gong⁷ , D. Graf¹³, G.D. Guttmann¹⁴, A. Jessani⁸ , P. Kengne Talla², L. Kenwell¹, M. Khurram⁵, A. Leask¹⁰ , S. Madathil² , S. McKinstry¹⁵, H. Mulhall¹⁶ , B. Nicolau², O.O. Olatosi¹⁷, C. Powder¹⁸, F. Propser¹⁹, C. Quiñonez⁸, S. Abbasgholizadah Rahimi²⁰, D.P. Richards¹⁶, M. Rouabhia²¹ , R.J. Schroth¹⁷ , P. Sharma²², H. Szabo-Rogers²³ , A. Velly², L. A.C. Vieira⁸, D.T. Wu²⁴ , K. Zhou², and P.J. Allison² 

Abstract

Recent years have seen significant positive changes and developments in oral health-related policy and data on oral health and oral health care in Canada. Simultaneously, on the international stage, the momentum for oral health and related research continues to build. These changes have led to an initiative to create Canada's first National Oral Health Research Strategy (NOHRS), which was recently published by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research–Institute of Musculoskeletal Health and Arthritis (Allison and Rock 2024). In this communication, we describe the process that was used to undertake this work. We present the resulting guiding principles, the research priority areas, and the framework that emerged, which included 6 strategic priorities grouped into 3 themes: (A) Leading Issues: (1) access to care, (2) inequities, identities, and oral health; (B) Emerging Methods: (3) artificial intelligence, (4) omics; and (C) Overarching Approaches: (5) environmental sustainability, (6) knowledge mobilization and implementation science. In addition, NOHRS includes a series of proposed goals and a timeline over the coming years. The point is to encourage a broad range of individuals and groups of people to engage with this high-level strategy and create plans to implement it. This strategy directly answers the call by the World Health Organization for countries to establish a national oral health research strategy (World Health Organization 2024). We have engaged in an extensive, broad consultative process, resulting in a Canadian NOHRS that is tailored to the needs of our community. Its aim is to galvanize our community into action to address the priorities we have identified. By engaging in this process, we build upon multiple oral health-related initiatives in Canada and on the international stage. We hope to inspire and facilitate similar, much-needed work elsewhere.

Keywords: health services research, health inequalities, oral-systemic disease(s), public health, publishing, access to care



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Discovery!

Advancing a Global Oral Health Research Agenda

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IADR 2025 Workshop
Barcelona



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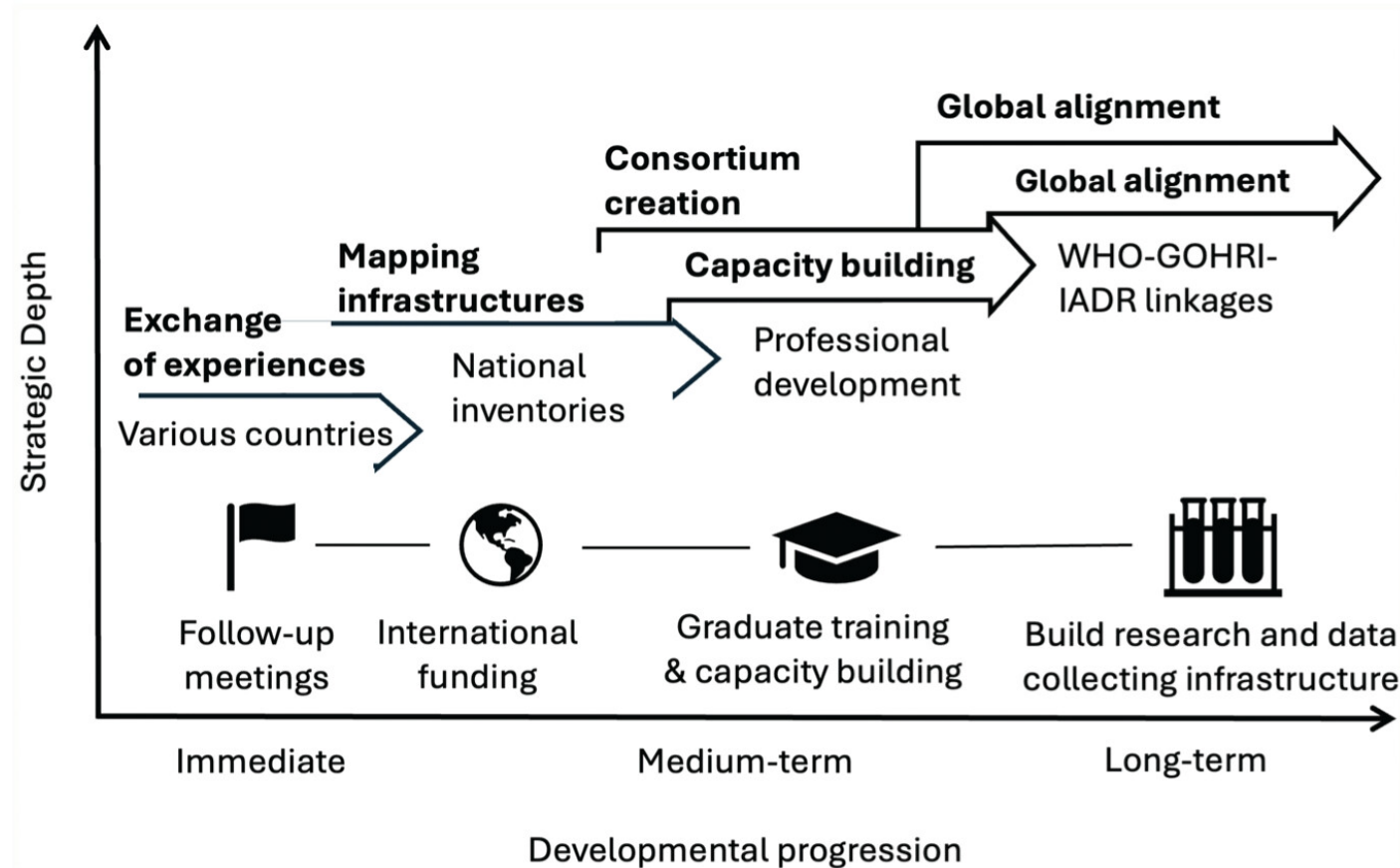
Abstract

National oral health research strategies (NOHRs) are increasingly recognized as critical mechanisms for aligning oral health research with public health needs, strengthening health systems, and advancing the World Health Organization's (WHO's) vision of "oral health for all." They are also pivotal for accelerating global progress toward Strategic Objective 6 of the WHO Global Oral Health Action Plan 2023–2030, which calls for the development of public health-oriented national research agendas. While global momentum for NOHRs development is growing, countries remain at markedly different stages of readiness and implementation. To support coordinated international progress, a satellite workshop was convened at the International Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research (IADR) General Session and Pan European (PER) Congress in Barcelona, Spain, in June 2025. The workshop brought together invited participants, policymakers, and researchers representing diverse geographic, economic, and governance contexts. Drawing on a preworkshop survey, invited workshop presentations, and structured breakout discussions, this article synthesizes key insights and lessons learned.



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From Local Action to Global Impact: The NOHRS Pathway



Thematic progression from local national oral health research strategy experiences to global coordination and integration.

Table. Summary of NOHRS Development Stages and Stakeholder Perspectives Presented at the Workshop.

Country/Stakeholder	Stage of NOHRS Development	Key Characteristics
Brazil	Advanced implementation	Established national governance structures; sustained funding mechanisms; strong integration within broader health research systems
Peru	Early implementation	Foundational partnerships established; institutional mobilization underway
Germany	Starting phase	Initial development efforts focused on aligning oral health research priorities with digital health and health systems research
Ireland	Early consideration	Exploratory consultations and situational analyses to inform potential strategy structure and scope
CIHR (Canada)	National research funder perspective	Emphasis on cross-sectoral collaboration and alignment with existing health research priorities
Patient and public contributors (United Kingdom, Spain)	Cross-cutting stakeholder input	Advocacy for patient engagement, equity, and contextual sensitivity in research agenda setting
WHO, IADR, FDI	International organizations	Support for international collaboration, capacity development, and advancement of the WHO GSAPOH

CIHR, Canadian Institutes of Health Research; FDI, World Dental Federation; GSAPOH, Global Strategy and Action Plan on Oral Health; IADR, International Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research; NOHRS, national oral health research strategy; WHO, World Health Organization.



National Oral Health Research Strategies: Advancing WHO Oral Health Goals

Monday, September 21 @ 11 a.m. EDT (UTC-4)



Speaker

Jennifer Gallagher
Kings College London



Speaker

Leigha Rock
University of Alberta



Speaker

Anne-Marie Glenney
University of Manchester



Speaker

Sue Pavitt
University of Leeds



Speaker

Christopher Fox
IADR Global
Headquarters



Moderator

Paul Allison
McGill University



Hosted by the Canadian Association for Dental Research

Next Steps: NOHRS

- Dissemination and Awareness Raising
 - CDO and FDI Public Health Section
- IADR to host Reference Documents and Support Materials for Countries to Develop their NOHRS.
 - Mapping the Global Evidence Base - Toolkit
- Training Workshop
 - *Possible* IADR/APR General Session in Melbourne – June 2027.
 - Particular Focus on LMIC Countries
 - Funding Needed!!



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