

The need for evidence-based practice in fixed and removable prosthodontics

Sir,

Evidence-based practice in dentistry is now an old concept throughout the world and is defined as the practice of dentistry that integrates the best available evidences with clinical experience and what a patient prefer in making clinical decisions.^[1] The dental councils throughout the world are setting up policies so that communication within the dentists and general public is increased. These policies ensure to a great extent that dental practitioners in various fields of dentistry are developing treatment plans which ensure the patient's treatment needs with the best available evidence.^[2] The implementation of these policies require significant investments in the field of clinical dental research and the information obtained ensures that the general dental practitioners are providing optimal treatment to the patients. It is very significant that a pace is kept with other health professions and that a strong evidence-based foundation is built in the field of clinical dentistry. It is also important to mention the insurers of patients, the legal courts and the scientific community, all are demanding more evidence to support the effectiveness of dental health care strategies.

The practice of evidence-based prosthodontics can be termed as a life-long process which incorporates problem-based learning leading to the need for clinically important information about prosthodontic diagnosis, prognosis, therapy and other clinical related issues within the specialist. It starts with a patient and ends in a patient and now-a-day, prosthodontic practice is becoming more complex and very challenging mainly due to advancements in dental material science, the dental equipment and increased patient's expectations and demands.

In the field of fixed and removable prosthodontics like in other dental disciplines, several clinical procedures are practiced which lack the support of high-quality evidence, meaning

that he effect of the treatment is not known completely or partially. Carlsson^[3] conducted a Medline/PubMed search for selected articles that focused on best available evidence and concluded that common clinical prosthodontic procedures lack scientific support. He recommended that in the era of evidence-based dentistry, those interventions that are ineffective must be eliminated, and all the clinical decisions should be made according to the best available clinical evidence.

The importance of continuing education must be emphasized and one must keep pace with the recent advancements in prosthodontic science so that discrimination between weak and strong evidence could be done, and the learned clinical skills do not deteriorate with the passage of time after graduation.

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