



10 Steps to Medical-Dental Collaboration

Step 1

Contact a local physician or county medical society director to attend a meeting of the local medical society. Discuss with the medical society officers the possibility of an opportunity to present dental issues to the membership.

Step 2

Contact your local hospital continuing education coordinator to offer a “Grand Rounds” or “Dental 101” CE offering. An alternative is to have an introductory “Dental Issues” CME course for local physicians and chiropractors. The ADA-endorsed *Smiles for Life* oral health curriculum would be a useful resource.

Step 3

Invite the president of the local medical society and/or hospital board president to a local dental society meeting for communication/networking opportunities.

Step 4

Invite the dental director and executive director of the local community health center to a dental society meeting to meet local dentists and specialists. Discuss the possibility of local dentists serving on health center committees or the CHC board to ensure cross collaboration between medical/dental departments. Realize that about 70 percent of health center dentists are ADA members.

Step 5

Schedule a dinner meeting with local OB-GYN physicians/staff to share information about the importance of oral health for pregnant women. Offer written materials and support to encourage their patients to seek dental care during their pregnancy. Module 5 of *Smiles for Life* addresses “Oral Health and the Pregnant Patient.”

Step 6

Visit a local pediatrician’s or family practitioner’s office and schedule a luncheon in-service with office staff. Bring oral hygiene educational materials to reinforce the opportunities for medical staff to encourage the importance of oral health as part of overall health. Stress the first dental visit by age one.



Step 7

Schedule a luncheon in-service with hospital Radiation/Oncology staff. Discuss the role of oral hygiene with restorative/rehabilitative needs for patients with cancer. Provide oral hygiene samples/written materials and offer to be a referral source for oral health questions.

Step 8

Schedule a luncheon or dinner in-service with local periodontists and internal medicine specialists. Discuss the role of periodontal disease in maintaining optimal hemoglobin A1C levels for diabetic patients. Elaborate on the patient satisfaction possibilities with comprehensive patient care.

Step 9

Meet with local physician assistants/nurse practitioners to perform a “Dental 101” type continuing education meeting. Discuss dental emergencies/oral cancer and the role they can play in collaboration with the dentist in facilitating resolution of patient’s dental pain needs.

Step 10

Attend a hospital ER department/senior nurses’ meeting to discuss dental issues. Advise them on the role they can play in collaboration with dentists with regard to dental disease management.

Questions? Contact us!

American Dental Association

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For more information about the American Dental Association’s *Action for Dental Health: Dentists Making a Difference* campaign, visit [ADA.org/action](https://ada.org/action).