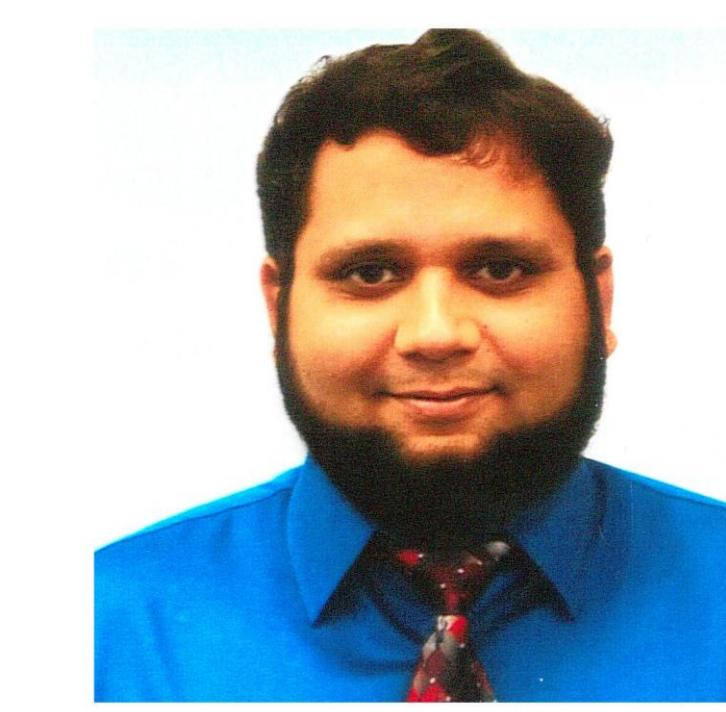


Evidence-based Referral Systems for Medical and Dental Collaboration

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INTRODUCTION

Interprofessional education (IPE) and collaboration in healthcare has a noticeable impact on patient health outcomes and may ultimately reducing healthcare costs.

Properly structured and implemented referral systems from medical to dental and vice versa is an essential step in accomplishing IPE collaborative practice.

The purpose of this study is to identify and describe various referral systems, with the best to be recommended to a community health center in Dallas, Texas.

METHODS

Online engines and resources including PubMed, ADA, National Academy of Medicine, Google Scholar and NIH were searched using the terms of referral, integration, medical to dental, FQHC, communication, protocol, community clinic, monitoring and evaluation, and organizational partnership.

Inclusion criteria comprised of FQHC, US, medical to dental integration and exclusion criteria international systems.

Interprofessional education (IPE) collaboration in healthcare has a positive effect on patient's health and can reduce healthcare costs. A well implemented referral system is important in establishing IPE practice.

Domain	Oral Health Delivery Framework	Dental Quest Institute Medical Oral Expanded Care (MORE Care)	Integration of Oral Health & Primary Care Practice (IOHPCP)
Structured Referral (Ask, Decide, Act, Document, Follow-up)	✓	✗	✗
Quality Improvement & System Approach	✗	✓	✗
Bidirectional Referral System	✗	✓	✗
Improved Interprofessional Communication	✗	✓	✗
MORE CARE Referral Tool (Low, Medium, & High)	✗	✓	✗
Risk Assessment	✗	✗	✓
Oral Health Evaluation	✗	✗	✓
Preventive Intervention	✗	✗	✓
Communication & Education	✗	✗	✓
Interprofessional Collaborative Practice	✗	✗	✗

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DISCUSSION

Three referral systems were identified: Oral Health Delivery Framework, Dental Quest Institute Medical-Oral Expanded Care (MORE Care) and the Integration of Oral Health and Primary Care Practice (IOHPCP).

Amongst these systems, common themes are shared EHRs structure, strong partnerships among providers, and patient screenings by allied healthcare workers to identify the need for referral.

CONCLUSIONS

Medical dental collaboration is key as oral health is connected to overall health and vice versa.

All health organizations need to establish well-structured referral systems in order to improve communication, promote IPE and collaborative practice, and ultimately improve the public's health.