

Chui's Student Excellence Scheme: Ho King Chun Leadership Fund

HKU IADR Team: Learning Report

4th Meeting of the International Association for Dental Research Asia-Pacific Region 2019

Brisbane Exhibition and Convention Centre

28th-30th November

Team Members: Goh Hui Ying, Law Ka Wing, Li Pok Sze Belinda, Ng Wing Nok Isaac, Sung Nicholas David

The '4th Meeting of the International Association for Dental Research Asia-Pacific Region 2019' was held at the Brisbane Exhibition and Convention Centre in Brisbane, Australia, during 28th-30th November 2019. The International Association for Dental Research (IADR) is a non-profit organisation founded in 1920 with over 11,400 individual members worldwide, dedicated to driving dental, oral and craniofacial research to advance health and well-being through discovery and dissemination.



HKU IADR Team comprising of 5 HKU BDS Year 6 students, attending the IADR-APR 2019 Conference to present original research in the field of Behavioural, Epidemiologic and Health Services Research. Professor May Wong (second from right) is a Professor in Dental Public Health at the Faculty of Dentistry HKU, who was also at the conference to present on "Oral Health Promotion in Reducing Mutans Streptococci Acquisition in Infants".

Our team's participation and presentation at the conference proved to be a valuable academic experience. The conference is a world-renowned event where world-class researchers and experts in the dental field gather around to share most up-to-date academic or clinical findings, as well as state-of-the-art technologies. For example, a team of academics from Korea presented their findings rebutting the validity of using serum CTX levels to predict the risk of Medication Related Osteonecrosis of the Jaw (MRONJ), and proposed new biomarkers in lieu of CTX. There was also a sharing session on the accuracy of certain intraoral scanning systems for scanning cross-arch edentulous ridges for implants. These presentations broadened our horizons and helped us to acquire new knowledge concerning dental research that we would not otherwise learn at University.

Apart from presentations on latest research developments, there were also review seminars focusing on fundamental clinical topics in dentistry, which served to refresh our knowledge acquired at dental school. For instance, there was a seminar on the association between diabetes mellitus and periodontal disease, including the pathophysiological changes in the periodontium under the hyperglycemic state and the potential effect of the interleukin-17 mediated dysbiosis of the subgingival microbiota in hyperglycemic patients. There was also a seminar on the diagnosis and management of orofacial pain, hosted by a reputable speaker from King's College London. We learnt to demystify orofacial disorders that may be commonly confused with toothache by conducting a thorough pain history with the patient and to understand the need for common blood tests and imaging tests to identify ongoing systemic diseases associated with headache and orofacial pain. The speaker also took us through the basic principles of orofacial pain management via medications or surgical intervention. By attending these seminars, we not only refreshed our knowledge on some important topics in clinical dentistry (which are also frequently encountered topics in our dental school examinations); we were also academically inspired to hear experts in their fields speak so passionately and vigorously about their research interests.



Professor Tara Renton (specialist in Oral Surgery) from King's College London presenting on the differential diagnosis of non-odontogenic pain mimicking toothache.

As undergraduate students we were honoured to have the opportunity to present our original research on an international stage. Our team delivered a 10-minute oral presentation on the topic “Ain’t Misbehavin’: Dental Students’ Behaviours On Social Media” during the Behavioural, Epidemiologic and Health Services Research symposium, which meant that we were to convey our research findings to an audience filled with world-class researchers and experts in the Dental Public Health field. Our large-scale cross-sectional study in 2019 aimed to investigate the attitudes of Hong Kong dental students towards social media and their behaviours online; and our research findings conclude that an official guideline on social media use should be formulated for dental students to follow, so that professionalism can be upheld outside of dental school.



HKU IADR Team to present original research on Hong Kong dental student's behaviours and attitudes on social media in order to understand the phenomenon of e-professionalism among dental students. The research project was supervised by Professor Colman McGrath, Clinical Professor at the Faculty of Dentistry, HKU.

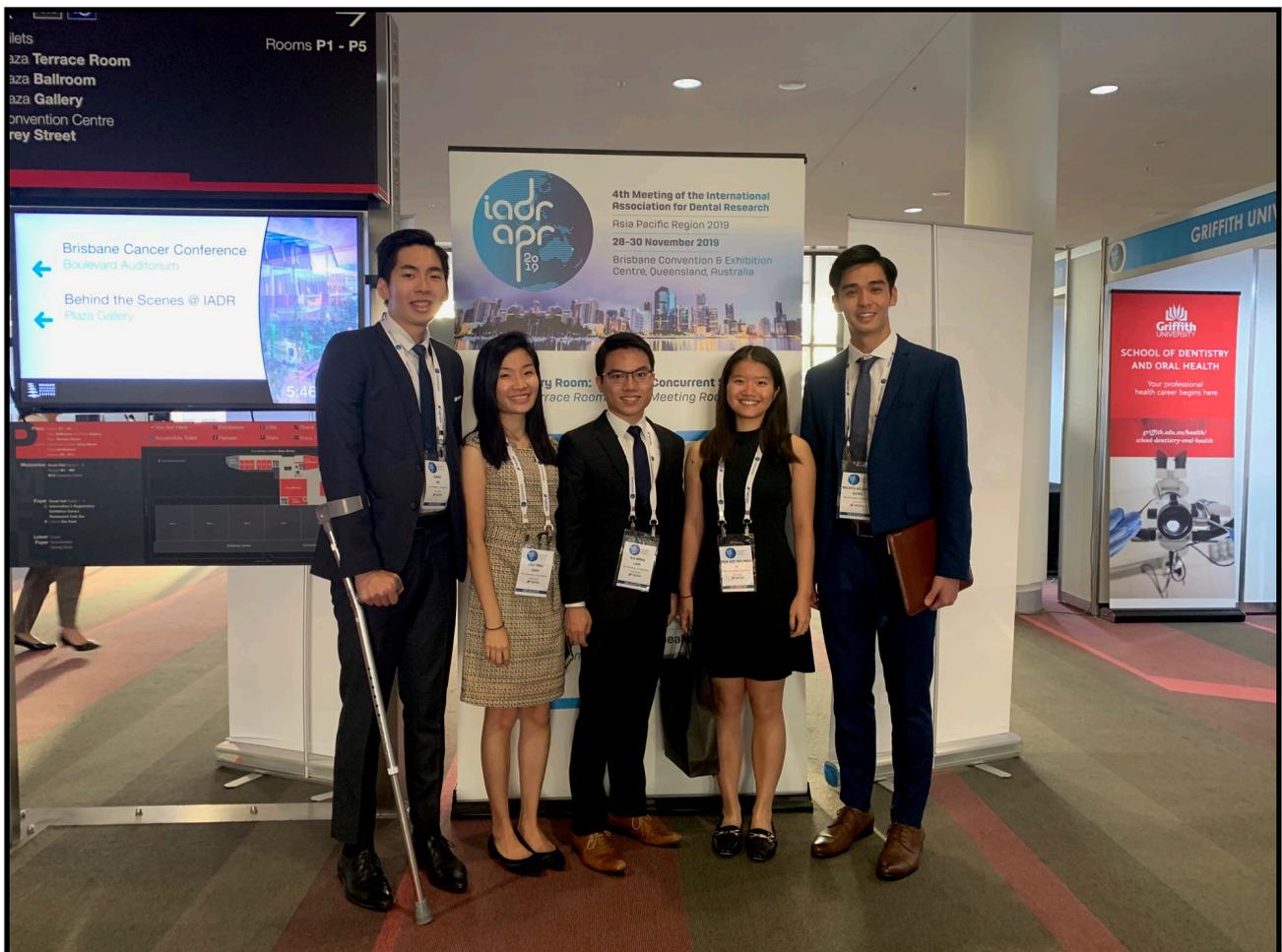


A student representative of the HKU IADR Team delivering a 10-minute oral presentation of the team's research findings on stage, during the Behavioural, Epidemiologic and Health Services Research symposium. The subsequent Q&A session allowed for the team to exchange ideas and learn from various Dental Public Health experts in the audience.

Although members of the audience were all experienced researchers, they were amiable to offer us advice on what further research we could pursue based on our project during the Q&A session. The audience recommended that we extend our research to the Greater Bay area so that we can compare how undergraduate students from dental institutes in this region behaved either similarly or differently on social media, so as to identify the influence of socio-cultural environments on professionalism. Another suggestion raised by the audience is to devise a detailed guideline with suggested “dos” and “don’ts” regarding the use of social media by dental students and practitioners. The existing professionalism guidelines published by the Dental Council of Hong Kong in 2003 focus more on the use of websites on dental practices; information on the management of personal accounts on social media is not included. As social media is emerging as the most popular communication tool in our generation, there is certainly a need to develop a guideline solely for social media use. It was a pleasure to learn from these Dental Public Health experts and we emerged from the session having gained a better understanding towards the potential significance our study could have on the dental field.

Our team enjoyed attending the 4th Meeting of the IADR-APR 2019 as we not only had the opportunity to receive (i.e. to learn about developments in dental research and to enjoy seminars on key clinical dentistry topics); we also had the chance to present our original research on an international stage — to investigate and discuss the concept of “e-professionalism” in dental education in Hong Kong (which is unprecedented in current available literature in Asia) — and to therefore make a contributive impact on propelling Dental Public Health research. At the conference we were inspired by the enthusiasm the speakers possessed for their respective fields of interest; and through presenting our own research to an academic audience we also gained insight into how a career in academia is like. Our team returns to our final year studies at HKU more motivated and uplifted by our overseas conference experience in Brisbane, Australia.

We are very grateful for the support of the Chui’s Student Excellence Scheme: Ho King Chun Leadership Fund. We express our sincerest gratitude to the donor who supports and recognises our endeavour to present original research at an overseas conference. We hope to carry the momentum from our successful experience and not only embody a lifelong attitude towards learning and excelling, but to also make an impact in the local Hong Kong community through our future careers as dental practitioners.



HKU IADR Team is thankful to be awardees of the Chui’s Student Excellence Scheme: Ho King Chun Leadership Fund. We thank the donor for supporting our research presentation overseas at the 4th Meeting of the IADR-APR 2019.