

March 26-27, 2018
Edinburgh, Scotland

H Olson et al., J Den Craniofac Res 2018, Volume: 3
DOI: 10.21767/2576-392X-C1-002

EXPLORING NEW ZEALAND AND SWEDISH DENTAL HYGIENISTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR CHOSEN PROFESSION

H Olson, A Meldrum and L Smith

Sir John Walsh Research Institute, New Zealand

The aim of the study was to document a group of New Zealand (NZ) and Swedish oral health professionals' perceptions of their professional work. During March and April 2016, 643 practising dental hygienists from NZ and Sweden completed a survey focusing on their work practices and job satisfaction. This paper reports responses of 61 participants who answered the open-ended question asking the participants to document anything that they deemed to be of interest regarding their chosen career. A general inductive analysis of the data was undertaken. Four themes emerged in the participants' responses, which included: (i) Work satisfaction, (ii) Professional relationship, (iii) Continuing professional development and (iv) Areas of interests. Feeling appreciated and respected in their work was important for the participants to gain a sense of work satisfaction. Many participants were interested in continued professional development focusing on their clinical practice and participation in postgraduate courses, while others were interested in furthering their knowledge of integrative approaches to public health initiatives. However, participants reported that a number of barriers exist which hindered their desires for continued professional development and postgraduate study. In order to enhance their career satisfaction, dental hygienists need to feel valued and have the opportunity for continuing professional development and postgraduate education. This presentation will report key findings and directions for further research focusing on better support for dental hygienists and their practice.

Biography

H Olson has a Master's Degree in Integrative Health Science from the University of Kristianstad, Sweden. In 2015, she joined the University of Otago Faculty of Dentistry: New Zealand's National Centre for Dentistry, as a Lecturer in the Department of Oral Sciences. She is now Head of Discipline for Dental Hygiene. She has 15 years of clinical work experience as a Dental Hygienist in Scandinavia, providing care for patients of all ages in different settings including private practice, the Community Dental Service, Specialist Dentistry within the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Clinic and Hospital Dentistry. She has first-hand experience in Outreach Oral Health Care and Health Promotion, which are her core areas of teaching. Some of her interests are multi-professional team work, international collaboration, health care supervision and research on oral health education.

hanna.olson@otago.ac.nz