



Message from the President

Dra. Ninoska Abreu-Placeres

It is with great enthusiasm that we share with you the IX newsletter of the Caribbean Oral Health Initiative (COHI). Throughout this year we focus on strengthening and supporting oral health education initiatives for both the population and health and research professionals. We have joined forces with

various Caribbean and Latin American entities and organizations, pursuing the ideal of promoting a healthy community and a better quality of life for our population.

As in previous years, we supported Gum Health Week in collaboration with the Latin American Oral Health Association (LAOHA), where various infographics and educational videos were generated under the motto: Healthy Mouth = Healthy Body. In addition, we supported a consensus initiative on oral health content for pediatric residents that has been carried out in the Dominican Republic, with the help of various institutions and led by the Universidad Iberoamericana.

Over the course of 2023, we have collaborated closely with the LAOHA Cariology Group in the continuation of the Consensus in Cariology for Latin American countries. Likewise, the LAOHA Periodontics Group has been supported in obtaining a consensus regarding important issues for the region. On the other hand, COHI participated in the "IADR/LAR General Session and Exhibition of 2023 with the 12th World Congress of Preventive Dentistry" in Bogotá, Colombia, together with LAOHA, where the results of the projects we have supported were presented.

A notorious milestone in this edition of the newsletter has been the Dental Research Program for Faculty Members, thanks to which 30 teachers from the Dominican Republic received training given by distinguished international experts to improve academic research at dental universities in the Caribbean.

Within COHI's goals, we continue to be committed to improving the oral health of our population through projects and initiatives that promote health, education and research. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the members of the Executive Committee and the entire COHI team for their tireless work and passion in the pursuit of better oral health in the Caribbean. We will continue to work constantly to improve everyone's oral health.

Executive Committee 2021 - 2023



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Annual Meeting of the Caribbean Oral Health Initiative



With the objective of planning COHI's annual agenda and the next steps to take as an organization, during the first week of March 2023, an in-person meeting of the Board of Directors was held. This meeting was held at the facilities of the Universidad Iberoamericana in the Dominican Republic. The members of the Board of Directors and collaborators of COHI attended it.

During this meeting, the Board of Directors focused on developing the strategic plan that will guide the organization's actions in the next 5 years. This plan includes actions within the different pillars, goals, mission and vision of COHI.

For the area of cariology, Dr. Ninoska Abreu was appointed as coordinator, in periodontics, Dr. Paula Yunes, in public health, Dr. Ramón González, in research, Dr. Augusto Elías, and in research training, Dr. Cláudio Mendes Pannuti. In this sense, we have considered strengthening alliances with the organizations with which we have collaborated, as well as with dental schools. It has also been stipulated to work in other countries in the region with which we hope to start collaborative campaigns.

Consensus on Oral Health Contents in Infants for Pediatric Residents



Taking into account that oral health education by pediatricians to parents of children from a very early age is very important, in the Dominican Republic (DR) it has been decided to work on a project so that pediatricians receive proper training in oral health. For this, different organizations in this country have come together, led by the Biomaterials and Dentistry Research Center (CIBO) of the Universidad Iberoamericana.

In March, the Caribbean Oral Health Initiative (COHI) supported a meeting that was held to achieve consensus on oral health content for pediatric residents. This activity was attended by representatives of the different hospitals with pediatric residencies in the DR and the Schools of Dentistry and Medicine from different universities in the country.



There was also representation from the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance, the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology and the Dominican Society of Pediatrics (SDP). During this meeting, work was done on the infant oral health program and its pilot implementation has currently begun in 4 hospitals in this country.

The idea is that this consensus can be disseminated and replicated in other countries in the region and that with this it will be achieved that graduates of pediatric residencies can have the necessary skills to guide the parents of their patients in oral health.



Conversation: Oral Health as an Integral Component of Systemic Health



On April 20th, the Universidad Iberoamericana hosted an enriching meeting organized by the Latin American Oral Health Association (LAOHA), the Caribbean Oral Health Initiative (COHI), Colgate Palmolive and the Biomaterials and Dentistry Research Center (CIBO Unibe).

Dr. Paula Yunes, a CIBO researcher, took on the role of moderator during the event. She was accompanied by Dr. James Collins, periodontist and representative of the Dominican Society of Periodontics and Dental Implants (SODOPERIO), as well as the Dominican College of Dentists. In addition, Dr. Deysi Hernández, a nutritionist and diabetologist from the National Institute of Diabetes, Endocrinology and Nutrition (INDEN), participated.

This valuable conversation is available on YouTube and was widely disseminated by various dental societies in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Gum Health Week

For the second consecutive year, the Caribbean Oral Health Initiative (COHI), together with the Periodontics Group of the Latin American Oral Health Association (LAOHA) and Colgate-Palmolive, led the campaign "Take care of your gums: healthy mouth, healthy body". In this manner, activities were carried out to commemorate Gum Health Day on May 12th.

Throughout the month of May, 43 societies from Latin America and the Caribbean shared various materials on their social networks, with the aim of echoing the same message in the region. Prevention, early detection and the relationship of oral health to systemic well-being were again the focus of this initiative.

The developed content was presented in the format of videos, infographics and designs for publication as a carousel, and can be downloaded in Spanish, English and Portuguese. It should be noted that part of these materials had the support of the Latin American Diabetes Association (ALAD).

The topics addressed were:

- Habits that make a difference
- Recognition of early signs
- Oral health and well-being
- Oral health during pregnancy
- Diabetes and oral health

Likewise, a talk for patients of the National Institute of Diabetes, Endocrinology, and Nutrition of the Dominican Republic (INDEN) was supported this week, conducted by the Dominican Society of Periodontology and Dental Implants (SODOPERIO). Additionally, the attending doctors received a QR code through which they could access materials developed regarding the relationship between oral health and systemic health.





5K Walk for Oral Health

Continuing with the activities supported by the Caribbean Oral Health Initiative (COHI) within the framework of the "Gum Health Week," the "5K Walk for Oral Health" stands out. This activity took place on Sunday, May 21st, at Mirador Sur Park in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

Among the purposes of this walk was to promote awareness and highlight the relevance of periodontal health among the population. The initiative was promoted by the Dominican Society of Periodontology and Dental Implants (SODOPERIO), in collaboration with other enthusiastic collaborators, including Colgate-Palmolive and other notable participants.



COHI Participation in the “IADR/LAR General Session and Exhibition of 2023 with the World Congress of Preventive Dentistry”



The 100th edition of the General Session of the International Association for Dental, Oral and Craniofacial Research (IADR) was held in conjunction with the 9th IADR Latin American Region Meeting and the 12th World Congress of Preventive Dentistry.

This year the venue of the event was in Bogotá, Colombia, being an excellent opportunity for researchers from the entire Caribbean region and Latin America to meet at such an important academic event. During it, a symposium titled: “Consensus on Dental Caries and Periodontal Disease in Latin America: Combined Strategies” was held.

This event had the participation of important researchers from the region who were presenting the consensus that the Latin American Oral Health Association (LAOHA) has worked on. Both consensus had the participation of researchers from the Caribbean region and the support of COHI.



COHI supports the Humanitarian Dental Care Outreach Program of the University of Puerto Rico

In July of this year, students from the School of Dental Medicine of the University of Puerto Rico visited the Raúl González School of Stomatology, in Havana, Cuba, with the aim of carrying out oral health promotion and prevention activities. For these purposes, it was sponsored by the Oral Health Initiative (COHI).

During their stay in Havana, the students offered informative talks and assisted doctors in the pediatric dentistry clinic. Likewise, they had the opportunity to work on cases of patients with severe dental caries lesions, dental trauma and preventive procedures. In addition, they received training in oral health prevention from Cuban dentists.



Virtual/In-Person Dentistry Research Program for Faculty Members



Taking into account the importance of research in the area of health and in our case in dentistry, as an organization, COHI understands that it is relevant that universities and their teachers have the proper training to carry out quality research projects. In that sense, and as a contribution to the region, COHI has designed and developed a Virtual/In-Person Dental Research Program for Faculty Members. The first in-person version of this training was carried out during the month of October at the facilities of the Universidad Iberoamericana in the Dominican Republic.

This event had the participation of 30 teachers previously selected from different Dentistry Schools in the Dominican Republic. In addition, it featured presentations by prominent teachers/researchers in the virtual modules, with the facilitators of the in-person module being doctors Cristina Cunha Villar, Cláudio Mendes Pannuti and Cassiano Kuchenbecker Rösing.

To translate knowledge into practice, participants had the opportunity to design a research project, taking into account all the guidelines of the scientific method. We hope to have a next cohort of this program in another of our COHI member countries.





Call for Action (3rd edition) Regional Consensus on Dental Caries

The Cariology Group of the Latin American Oral Health Association (LAOHA) celebrated the 3rd edition of its "Call for Action" in October.

As in previous years, governmental and academic institutions from various Caribbean countries participated in this event, along with dentists, researchers, and educators from the region. The Alliance for a Cavity-Free Future was one of the organizations that also provided support for the activity.

During this symposium, distinguished researchers from LAOHA's Cariology Group served as speakers for important conferences. The objective was to present the results of the different ongoing actions.

Below are the guest lecturers with their respective conferences.

Programming:

Advances in action #1: Situational diagnosis of Latin American and Caribbean policies on sugar consumption and fluoride use, Dr. Saul Paiva, Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG, Brazil).

Advances action #2: Latin American consensus on teaching dental schools in Spanish, Dr. Stefania Martignon, UNICA, Universidad El Bosque (Colombia).

Advances action #3: Development of a consensus for the teaching of dental caries in Brazilian dental

Program

Chair:
Dr. Nigel Pitts
King's College London

Advances Action 1:
Dr. Saul Paiva
Federal University of Minas Gerais - UFMG, Brazil
Title: Situational Diagnosis of Latin American and Caribbean Policies on Sugar Consumption and Use of Fluoride.

Advances Action 2:
Dr. Stefania Martignon
UNICA - Universidad El Bosque, Colombia.
Title: Latin American Teaching Consensus for Dental Schools in Spanish Language.

Advances Action 3:
Dr. Fabio Sampaio
Federal University of Paraiba - UFPB, Brazil.
Title: Developing a Consensus for Teaching Dental Caries in Brazilian Dental Faculties.



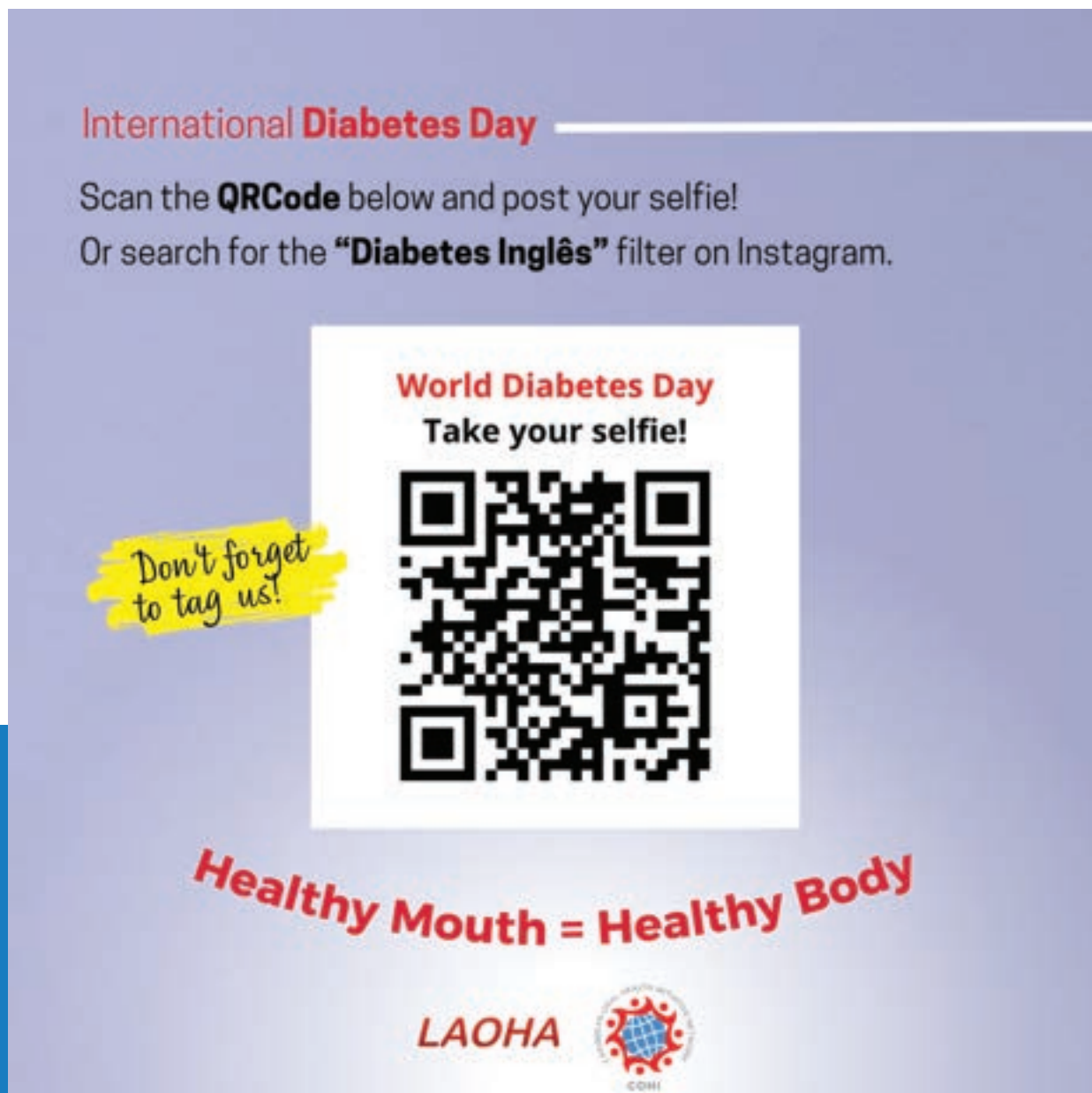
World Diabetes Day



On November 14th, COHI once again supported the commemorative campaign for International Gum Health Day, which has been led for several years in conjunction with the LAOHA Periodontics Group and Colgate-Palmolive.

On this occasion, great emphasis was placed on the dissemination of a decorative filter for taking selfie-type photos, available in Spanish, English and Portuguese. In this way, people from different countries in Latin America and the Caribbean joined us on social networks with their photos.

Likewise, educational materials in video format and infographics were made available to different dental societies in the region, which could be disseminated by dentists, doctors and any interested person. It should be noted that these materials have the support of the Latin American Diabetes Association (ALAD), the National Institute of Diabetes, Endocrinology and Nutrition of the Dominican Republic (INDEN), the Ibero-Pan American Federation of Periodontics (FIPP) and the Latin American Dental Federation (FOLA).





Jamaica College of Medical Sciences Annual Research Conference

Dr. James Collins, with the support of COHI, participated as a lecturer at the 29th Annual Research Conference of the Jamaica College of Medical Sciences. This activity took place from November 22 to 24. The topic addressed by the teacher and researcher from the Dominican Republic was periodontal diseases and their relevance to medical/systemic conditions. This topic is of great interest to the community and it is of great importance that its discussion continues to be promoted in these spaces.

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Publications of 2023:

-Bönecker M, Paiva SM, Martignon S, Abreu-Placeres N, Sampaio FC, Stewart B, Malheiros Z. Towards a new perspective on oral health, Cariology Education and Public Health in Latin America and the Caribbean. Braz Oral Res. 2023;37(suppl 1):e122. doi: 10.1590/1807-3107BOR-2023.vol37.0122.

-Martignon S, Cortes A, Avila V, Velasco K, Abreu-Placeres N, Aranguiz V, Bullen M, Giacaman R, Malheiros Z, Pozos-Guillén A, Sampaio F, Fernández CE, García M, González-Montero M, Gudiño-Fernandez S, Hugo FN, Pardo-Silva MI, Salazar L, Squassi A, Zarta OL, Stewart B, Jácome-Liévano S. Core Cariology Curriculum Framework in Spanish for Latin American dental schools: development and consensus. Braz Oral Res. 2023;37(suppl 1):e119. doi: 10.1590/1807-3107bor-2023.vol37.0119.

- Sampaio FC, Bönecker M, Paiva SM, Arthur RA, Cohen-Carneiro F, Ditterich R, Pires FS, Wang L, Cavalcante LM, Gatti-Reis L, Spínola VB, Martignon S, Malheiros Z, Stewart B, Carcereri DL, Scavuzzi AI, Fontanella V. Consensus for teaching dental caries in the Portuguese Language at Brazilian dental schools. Braz Oral Res. 2023;37(suppl 1):e120. doi: 10.1590/1807-3107bor-2023.vol37.0120.

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