

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Advancing Equity Through Behavioral and Implementation Science in Oral Health

Alexandria, VA, USA – A symposium aiming to reduce inequalities in oral health outcomes was presented at the 104th General Session of the IADR, which was held in conjunction with the 55th Annual Meeting of the American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research and the 50th Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association for Dental Research on March 25-28, 2026 in San Diego, CA, USA.

This symposium brought together international experts to present innovative research that advances understanding of mechanisms of action in behavioral interventions, implementation and evaluation processes in programs for vulnerable populations, and practical evidence of structural and policy-level interventions in shaping oral health outcomes and reducing inequalities.

The opening talk examined how intervention mapping and validated measurement tools can clarify mechanisms of action in behavioral interventions, presenting evidence from the development and validation of bilingual oral health behavior social support scales among Mexican-American adults in the United States. The second presentation shared insights and lessons learned from the implementation and evaluation process of an oral health behavioral program for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in home care in Belgium. The third presentation highlighted how implementation science frameworks, such as Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research and Proctor's implementation outcomes, can inform policy strategies to advance oral health equity, drawing on Brazil's experience with universal water fluoridation. The final presentation explored cross-national evidence in tooth loss, demonstrating how welfare state regimes reduce both prevalence and inequalities, underscoring the role of social policies in addressing edentulism.

By bridging the research-to-practice gap through interventions at the individual, family, community, and policy levels, this symposium contributed new empirical evidence and conceptual insights into advancing equity in oral health.

Organized by Tracy Finlayson, San Diego State University, CA, USA and Andreia Morales Cascaes, Federal University of Santa Catarina, Florianópolis, Brazil, the symposium, "Advancing Equity Through Behavioral and Implementation Science in Oral Health" took place on Wednesday, March 25 at 3:15 p.m. PDT (UTC-7).

About IADR/AADOOCR

The International Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research (IADR) is a nonprofit organization with a mission to drive dental, oral, and craniofacial research for health and well-being worldwide. IADR represents the individual scientists, clinician-scientists, dental professionals, and

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students based in academic, government, non-profit, and private-sector institutions who share our mission. The American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research (AADOCR) is the largest division of IADR. Learn more at www.iadr.org.