

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Antimicrobial Risks in Oral Health and Dental Care

Alexandria, VA, USA – Two symposia outlining the role of antibiotics and antiseptics in the development of Antimicrobial Resistance were 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.

The first symposium explored how inappropriate antibiotic prescribing contributes to antimicrobial resistance, adverse drug reactions, and increased healthcare costs. Presenters then synthesized current clinical guidelines and research to define evidence-based indications for antibiotic prescribing in dentistry. Attendees were introduced to a practical decision tree/flowchart designed to guide appropriate prescribing in diverse dental care settings. They were then shown how this decision framework can be translated into a computer algorithm for automated analysis of electronic health record (EHR) data to assess evidence-concordant prescribing in a multi-site analysis across more than 70 dental clinics in two large U.S. dental organizations. Finally, the session explored qualitative insights from interviews with dentists and patients, examining factors influencing prescribing behaviors and identifying the potential gaps that will inform interventions to reduce antibiotic prescribing.

The second symposium showed why it is so important to only utilize antimicrobials in oral health and dental care when strictly necessary to keep patients safe. It also addressed how common practices in oral health care, such as reliance on antibiotics and antiseptics, can contribute to a range of public health and patient safety risks. The founder of the Peggy Lillis Foundation explained why he set up the charity to help ensure other families avoid the tragedy of *Clostridioides difficile* infections which is associated with antibiotic use. With growing data on adverse drug reactions and growing resistance patterns, the symposium showcased research about the broader risks of antimicrobials on the oral resistome and how common practices, such as reliance on antiseptics, may contribute to broader public health risks.

The first symposium, “Right Intent, Wrong Decision: Data-Driven Ways to Improve Antibiotic Prescribing” was presented by Muhammad Walji, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, USA and took place on Friday, March 27 at 2 p.m. PDT. The second symposium, “Beyond Resistance: Antimicrobial Risks in Oral Health and Dental Care” was organized by Wendy Thompson, University of Manchester, UK and Leanne Teoh, University of Melbourne, Australia and took place on Saturday, March 28 at 2 p.m. PDT.

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About IADR/AADOCR

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 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.