

Oral Health America has an historic commitment to promoting open dialogues on the critical relationship between oral health and total health. We have advocated for necessary collaboration between dental and medical professionals to improve the health of all Americans...especially those most vulnerable.

Building on our relationship with Columbia University College of Dental Medicine, OHA is honored to be a Silver Supporter of the upcoming Symposium, "*Diabetes and Oral Disease: Implications for Health Professionals.*" The symposium presented in concert with Columbia's College of Physicians and Surgeons and the New York Academy of Sciences will be held on Wednesday, May 4, 2011.

Beth Truett, OHA's President and CEO, recently interviewed Dr. David Albert, Columbia U College of Dental Medicine -- a member of the Scientific Organizing Committee:

Truett: Dr. Albert, you've worked hard to assemble a prestigious panel of experts, including a keynote address from Dr. William Knowler* of the NIH. Why is it important for our readers to attend the symposium?

Albert: This is the third in a series of symposia focused on medical and dental professionals grasping the importance of dealing effectively with one another. While the association between periodontal disease and diabetes is accepted, our expert presenters will provide current information about the bi-directional relationship between oral disease and diabetes and the need for interprofessional patient management. For healthcare professionals to operate in a silo doesn't make sense. The symposium will also provide opportunities for networking with colleagues from a broad range of backgrounds.

Truett: What do you see as one important practical outcome of this third symposium?

Albert: Attendees will learn about our efforts to shape the future of treating the diabetic patient by establishing patient-centered "medical homes," which will include a mandatory dental check-up and appropriate referral for follow-up care. One of the outcomes we anticipate is the development of a comprehensive check list for dental practices, which will provide guidance in diagnosing and treating persons with diabetes.

Truett: For our readers that may not be able to attend the May 4th event...and for those that will, what are your follow-up plans for the Symposium?

Albert: We are working with our NYAS colleagues to publish the proceedings in the *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*. The publication will include a consensus statement emerging from the conference. At this point we expect that the proceedings will be available in segments or in total and will be available for a fee through the academy – www.nyas.org.