School of Dentistry
Strategic Plan

“A transformational change”
There are many changes on the horizon for the University of Alberta’s School of Dentistry, and with change, comes opportunity. Up until 1958, we were the only dental school in Western Canada. In 1996, the Faculty of Dentistry merged with the Faculty of Medicine to become the Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry.

The next few years will be transformational for the School of Dentistry as we move into a new, state-of-the-art building that includes new clinical, academic and research space—a plan that has been 30 years in the making.

Our strategic plan, which has three pillars to support the school’s vision — education, research and community outreach — will guide us as we reach for new heights during our transformational change to become recognized as a top-tier school. Each pillar encompasses a focus on strategic and operational goals. The success of this plan will be dependent upon academic and support units responding to these goals and objectives within their division-level planning.

Acknowledgement goes to the university and the provincial government, which have demonstrated their commitment to this transformation through secure financial support. Our success is their success.

The following provides a high level summary of our strategic plan.
Mission:
Student-focused learning that promotes patient-centred care and community outreach through research, scholarship and partnership in an environment of trust, respect and integrity.

Vision
To become one of the top-tier schools within Canada and beyond

Core Values:

Leadership
Visible and engaged leaders at every level, who are committed to success. “Modelling, inspiring and mobilizing”

Collaboration
Everyone working together toward a common purpose with excellence as the desired outcome.

Innovation
Creativity, willingness to take calculated risks.

Reflection
Using fact and outcomes to guide continuous improvement.

Humanitarianism
All persons treated with integrity, dignity and respect regardless of the circumstances.

Accountability
Everyone can make a difference and their contribution is valued and essential to long-term success.

Stewardship
Responsible use and management of resources.

Evidence-based Foundation
Use of best evidence to guide clinical practice and education.

Scientific Discovery
A culture that embraces and advances research, discovery, dissemination. Translation of information into clinical practice, education.
Cultural Attributes:

Our core values define our cultural attributes, characterizing our desired behaviours. The following elements are fundamental in defining our culture and will support us in reaching our vision.

- Pride: We act as role models and ambassadors
- Professionalism: We lead by example and demonstrate competence
- Caring: We support our co-workers
- Accountability: We take responsibility for our actions
- Empowerment: We make decisions within our scope of work
- Appreciation: We feel valued for our contributions through recognition
- Respect: We treat others as we wish to be treated
- Attentive: We focus on fulfilling the needs of our students, patients and key stakeholders
- Attitude: We promote the school positively and contribute to the goals and objectives

Pillars That Support the Vision

The School of Dentistry serves the well-being of society through pursuit of truth and knowledge (research), transmission of knowledge (education) and public service (community outreach).

I. Education

The delivery of undergraduate, postgraduate and graduate oral health education prepares students to meet the challenges of rapid knowledge and technology advancements, changing demographics, shifting oral health priorities and globalization.

Theme 1: Student-Focused Learning

Strategic Initiatives:
- Enhance and implement a strong curriculum program.
- Provide diverse learning opportunities.

Theme 2: Patient-Centred Care

To continue to provide care in our dental school, hospital-based clinics and through other advanced education programs for the under-served and disadvantaged communities. The School of Dentistry provides low-cost, comprehensive care in a setting that offers the benefits of a large interdisciplinary group of generalists, specialists and dental hygienists in an active education program with a research component.

Pillar I: Education

“We are responsible for providing meaningful and motivating learning experiences that encourage discovery and citizenship.”
Strategic Initiatives:

- Recruit an associate chair of clinical operations and patient services.
- Implement the Comprehensive Care Patient Delivery System for all undergraduate clinics.
- Optimize utilization of support staff.
- Integrate patient care offered in undergraduate clinics with postgraduate and graduate clinical programs, to provide a full spectrum of general and specialty oral health care.
- Design and implement a comprehensive instructor calibration program based on the best available scientific evidence.

Theme 3: Teaching Scholarship

To promote scholarship in teaching and education through active programs of research on the teaching/learning and knowledge translation process, including conducting both qualitative and quantitative studies that examine the impact of our various educational programs on student attainment of outcomes.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Evaluate teaching scholarship (for annual FEC evaluation, tenure and promotion).
- Encourage and support graduate degrees for clinical faculty.
- Provide faculty development and mentorship.
- Conduct peer evaluations.

Theme 4: Development of New Graduate/Postgraduate Programs

To increase capacity for basic science and clinical graduate/postgraduate students that can drive our research productivity. Graduate students provide an excellent role model for undergraduate students in their discovery learning and value of research.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Plan and develop graduate programs in Dental Hygiene.
- Plan and develop a specialty graduate program in Prosthodontics.
- Plan and develop a specialty program in Periodontics.
- Plan and develop a specialty program in Pediatric Dentistry.
- Plan and develop a specialty program in Oral Medicine, building on the framework of the existing TMD/Orofacial Pain program.
II. Research

The generation, translation and utilization of research are essential to advance our profession, to develop the critical thinking skills needed for long-term professional success, and to increase our knowledge in the areas of treatment and health-care delivery.

The 2010 Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry Research Assessment Exercise Report provided specific recommendations for the School of Dentistry to reach a level of research quality that is recognized internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigor. These recommendations included:

- Recruitment of new tenure stream faculty should be directed toward research and newly recruited researchers should have research time vigorously protected (minimum of 30 per cent research time and 75 per cent for young investigators).

- Recruitment of new positions in “discovery science” to be cross-appointed with other FoMD departments or schools. These should focus on areas that will create centres of excellence in oral biology/health in context of the research strengths and priorities of FoMD.

- Establishment of a research advisory committee consisting of two external advisers who are internationally recognized researchers in dentistry, the FoMD vice-dean of research, two FoMD school leads or associate research deans, research lead for School of Dentistry and lead of School of Dentistry.

- Integration of the two ADA&C Endowed Chairs (Geriatric Dentistry and Clinical Dental Research) with the FoMD faculty in aging/geriatrics and community health.

- Access to emerging faculty-wide initiatives, to develop an array of core facilities and research supports, including a rigorous grant review program.

- Reorganization of the delivery of current graduate student training to enhance interdisciplinary research initiatives.

The overall research focus for the School of Dentistry will be the “Study of inflammatory oral diseases (e.g. periodontitis) and their links with other systemic diseases (cardiovascular conditions and diabetes).” The objective is to build research capacity that spans all four CHIR health research pillars as listed below:

- Pillar 1: Biomedical Research
- Pillar 2: Applied Clinical Research
- Pillar 3: Health Systems and Services Research
- Pillar 4: Social, Cultural, Environmental Factors

Pillar II: Research

“We incorporate research into all of our programs. It is fundamental to our profession and helps increase our knowledge in areas of treatment and health-care delivery.”
**Theme 1: Knowledge Resource**

To provide relevant, evidence-based knowledge transfer to government policy-makers, professional regulatory authorities, professional organizations, the general public, and industry and health-care professionals.

**Strategic Initiatives:**

- Increase Continuing Dental Education (CDE) course offerings/courses.
- Develop an information network for the profession.
- Inform oral health policy decision-makers.
- Educate public on oral health issues.

**III. Community Outreach**

Beyond the responsibilities for education and research, the School of Dentistry recognizes and embraces its role in enriching the professional dental community and improving the overall health and well-being of Albertans.

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**Theme 2: Provision of Care to Underserviced Populations**

To serve as a partner with the private-practice community, community health centres and hospital clinics to address the problem of some groups having less access to care – including those with specific health-care needs, low-income groups, under-represented minorities and those who live in underserviced rural and urban communities.
Strategic Initiatives:

- Develop partnership with Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital (GRH).
- Investigate partnership with ADA&C with mobile dental clinics.
- Strengthen and develop collaborative relationships with Alberta Health and Wellness.
- Provide support through dental services for underserviced populations.
- Continue partnership with Alberta Health and Wellness to provide oral health care in satellite clinics in rural settings (Mclennan, High Level and La Crete).
- Increase partnerships with long-term care facilities based on Dental Hygiene program 2011 pilot project.

Theme 3: Global Oral Health Care

To promote and be an advocate for global oral health, with a focus on providing educational assistance in developing nations.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Investigate development of a partnership with dental faculty in a developing nation (equipping the teaching facility and providing faculty development).
- Provide learning opportunities for foreign students so they are equipped to improve oral health in their own countries.

Theme 4: Strong Partnerships With Industry

To foster existing industry relationships and seek new relationships, for the mutual benefit of both the school and its partner organizations.

Strategic Initiatives:

- Develop an external relations team.
- Develop a database of potential corporate partners.
- Define opportunities for corporate partnership.
- Build targeted relationships for corporate partnerships in research and product translation.