

The AVDR Tutorial for Dentists Brings Research-based Provider Education to New Format

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A team of researchers at the University of California San Francisco is offering a brief multimedia tutorial in DVD format that is available for dental instructors and practicing dentists. The tutorial is designed specifically to educate dentists about providing an effective response to domestic violence.

In designing the tutorial, the study's director, Barbara Gerbert, PhD, drew upon her work in simplifying providers' role in responding to domestic violence (Gerbert et al, 2000). Dr. Gerbert's work with victims of domestic violence has identified a four-stage process, known as AVDR, that involves the following: *asking* patients about abuse; providing *validating* messages that acknowledge that battering is wrong while confirming the patient's worth; *documenting* in writing and with photographs the signs, symptoms, and disclosures in the patient's dental record; and *referring* victims to specialists and resources in the community.

The tutorial, originally installed on laptop computers, provides information on how dentists can identify signs of abuse and

then presents different ways the dentist can ask the patient about domestic violence. The tutorial also demonstrates ways to provide validating messages, to document abuse in the dental record, and to refer patients. Two skilled actors appear in the tutorial: one is a real dentist who provides expert advice and the second portrays a dental patient who presents with signs of abuse. Participants select among different questions a dentist could ask the patient. These inputs elicit a variety of reactions from the patient, and the expert dentist offers guidance about the simulated dentist-patient interaction. The tutorial takes just 15 minutes to complete.

The brief tutorial is designed to help dentists overcome their reluctance to identify and treat victims of domestic violence, and to effect positive changes in dentists' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors with respect to caring for patients who have experienced domestic violence. To test the effectiveness of the brief tutorial, Dr. Gerbert worked with a pediatric dentistry resident at UCSF, Nancy Kwon Hsieh, DDS. The team recruited practicing dentists for a randomized, controlled trial. They used a 24-question instrument to assess dentists' knowledge, attitudes, and practice behaviors related to domestic violence. Results of the study have been submitted to a dental research journal.

The UCSF research team previously tested the tutorial with a sample of dental students (Danley et al, 2004), and found that the tutorial significantly improved

knowledge and intended behaviors about domestic violence. The tutorial appears effective across demographic variables such as age, gender, and race.

Advances in technology have made the dissemination of multimedia educational programs highly efficient, and computer-assisted instruction has been shown to be an effective method of dental education. Project Manager Dale Danley, MPH and other team members at UCSF's Center for Health Improvement and Prevention Studies worked with multimedia programmers to convert the tutorial from a program installed on laptop computers to a DVD. With this new format, the program can be viewed on a computer with a DVD drive, or a DVD player connected to a television set. The DVD also includes a DVD-ROM folder with useful documents: a lesson plan, a role-playing exercise, and a sample documentation form. The DVD format should make the program accessible to practicing dentists and instructors at dental schools. To request a copy, please contact us at (415) 502-7283 or send an email to chips@ucsf.edu.

Gerbert, B; Salber, P; Feldman, M; Moe, J; Herzig, K; Bronstone, A; Caspers, N. Simplifying physicians' response to domestic violence. *Western Journal of Medicine*. 2000;172:329-331.

Danley, D; Gansky, SA; Chow, D; Gerbert, B. Preparing dental students to recognize and respond to domestic violence: the impact of a brief tutorial. *Journal of the American Dental Association*. 2004;5:67-73.