

CADR – National Student Research Group

Dr. Zeeshan Sheikh, President of CADR and NSRG

What is the CADR and the NSRG?

- The Canadian Association for Dental Research [CADR] is a division of the International Association of Dental Research whose primary mission is to advance research and increase knowledge for the improvement of oral health in Canada and worldwide.
- Currently there are more than 250 members of the CADR across all ten dental schools in Canada.
- The CADR also supports and represents the Canadian oral health research community in communicating clinical findings.
- The National Student Research Group [NSRG] is a new initiative which supports the needs of student members across the CADR and facilitates students in becoming the next generation of oral health researchers in Canada.
- NSRG has three major goals:
 - Motivate students in the field of oral health research.
 - Engage students across the country in activities which create a network of oral health research.
 - Facilitate communication by hosting seminars and workshops by senior and established researchers and connect them with young upcoming researchers and students. This will facilitate leadership training for CADR student members and ensure an easy flow of knowledge between the established faculty and the younger generation.

Given the cancellation of meetings and conferences, how is the CADR staying engaged with students during COVID?

- Being unable to meet face to face with peers and colleagues has opened up other opportunities. For example, the **Five Live** initiative online with Dr. John O’Keefe from CDA Oasis.
- There is an opportunity to build networks online. The online space has not only brought people together, but it has also allowed young students and researchers to showcase their talents.
- This is a time to take advantage of the technology that is available.

What is your role and what are your responsibilities as President of the group?

- To provide effective leadership in achieving the purposes and the goals of the NSRG.
- To preside over the annual NSRG business meetings.
- To serve as the NSRG's official representative to other organizations that we are going to be collaborating with.
- To serve as a voting member of the CADR executive and to attend every officer meeting that we have.
- But the NSRG is not a one-man show. We have the NSRG executive committee, which is modelled on the CADR executive committee model.

Examples of research and initiatives

- The CADR and the NSRG do not perform research on their own.
- The main objective is to facilitate and encourage others to do research and to link them together.
- There will be a local student research group formed for each dental school in Canada, which in turn will be connected to the CADR/NSRG. This will provide the opportunity for back-and-forth dialogue, insight and inspiration.
- Another initiative is to spotlight certain inspirational people. Not only students but also recent hires who have now graduated and started their careers. It is important to showcase people who can work as role models in terms of students seeing the next logical steps for them.
- We are in the process of developing a survey to collect the concerns of dental students across Canada, with the objective of writing a white paper and publishing it through the CADR. This will provide a blueprint in terms of the student concerns and what they feel needs to be done to encourage them in the future.
- In the absence of face to face meetings, we plan to develop online workshops which will foster an environment of education, interaction and networking.