



**International College of Prosthodontists**  
**19<sup>th</sup> Biennial Scientific Session - VIRTUAL - September 22 – 25, 2021**

**Program Speaker – Uvoh Onoriobe**

**Title**

Learning Communities of the Future

**Abstract**

There exists a significant knowledge and expertise gap in dental education between developed and developing countries. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic presented an opportunity to expand the world of dental education and expertise to regions of the world with limited resources. As COVID-19 swept across the world, many schools in Africa and the Middle East could not transition student populations to online platforms immediately as they did not have the infrastructure to do so. Not all students possessed a laptop and those who had one could not afford data to participate in the courses being taught.

In an attempt to close the gap, we facilitated a webinar series designed to keep the audience abreast of current practice and to foster cohesion during the time of social isolation amongst the dental community in developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa. An online portal was created that was accessed by over 1500 participants from 40 countries in a space of nine months. We adopted well-known platforms such as Google® educational tools, Facebook®, Instagram®, YouTube®, WhatsApp®, and Telegram® to keep the audience engaged. A pilot survey showed that Nigerian dental educators were, and continue to be, willing to adopt an integrated dental implant curriculum.

Given the birth of new opportunities for new modes of learning, I envisage a future where all African dental schools can share didactic materials and lectures via a secure online platform. I foresee with the rapid advancements in artificial intelligence, virtual and augmented reality, it will be possible for dentists from around the world to assess and certify knowledge, skills and attitudes instantaneously. We are on the verge of a revolution in global dental education.

**Biography**

Dr. Uvoh Onoriobe completed his Bachelor of Dental Surgery degree at the University of Benin, Nigeria. He obtained a Master's in Public Health degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2011. He also completed a residency in Dental Public Health in North Carolina Oral Health Section in 2012. He went to complete the Advanced Standing program for Internationally Trained Dentists and obtained a DMD degree from the University of Illinois at Chicago in 2016.

He is honored to be a part of the Graduate Prosthodontics Program at the University of Michigan. He is the Executive Director, Healing Hands Health Society, a non-profit that seeks to address health disparities

amongst low-income families around the world. He is the facilitator of Dental Webinar Series, providing continuing education via video conferencing to dental students and dental practitioners in Africa and the Middle East.