



COMITATO DI BIOETICA

Parere n. 124/2023  
Seduta del 26 gennaio 2023

Richiesta di parere n. 124/2023

**Titolo della ricerca:**

“Prevalenza dell'uso di tabacco/nicotina e conoscenze, atteggiamenti e percezioni della prevenzione e del controllo del tabacco/nicotina tra studenti e docenti in una scuola di odontoiatria del sud Italia”.

“Tobacco/nicotine use prevalence and knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of tobacco/nicotine prevention and control among students and faculty members in an Italian southern dental school”.

**Ricercatore Proponente:** Prof.ssa Di Fede Olga

**Ruolo:** Professore ordinario

e-mail: olga.difede@unipa.it

**Area di ricerca:** 06 Scienze mediche

**SSD:** MED 28

Dipartimento di Discipline Chirurgiche, Oncologiche e Stomatologiche - Di.Chir.On.S

**ORGANIZZAZIONE RESPONSABILE / CAPOFILE**

Houston School of Public Health (UTHealth SPH) - University of Texas Health Science Center (USA).

**Ricercatori partecipanti**

**a. Ricercatori dell'Università di Palermo:**

Prof.ssa Campisi Giuseppina, professore ordinario,  
Prof. Pizzo Giuseppe, professore ordinario,  
Dott.ssa Panzarella Vera, ricercatore RTDB  
Dott. La Mantia Gaetano, dottorando di ricerca,  
del Dipartimento di Discipline Chirurgiche, Oncologiche e Stomatologiche - Di.Chir.On.S.

Prof.ssa Matranga Domenica, professore ordinario,  
del Dipartimento Promozione della Salute, Materno-Infantile, di Medicina Interna e Specialistica di Eccellenza “G. D'Alessandro” - PROMISE

**b. Ricercatori Italiani:**

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**c. Ricercatori di altre Nazioni:**

Prof.ssa Tami-Maury Irene, assistent professor, Samuel Tundealao, MPH student, della University of Texas Health Science Center (USA).



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**Principale obiettivo della ricerca:**

Gli obiettivi specifici sono:

Obiettivo 1: Valutare l'incidenza del consumo di tabacco/nicotina e la conoscenza, il comportamento e la percezione relative alla prevenzione e al controllo del consumo tra gli studenti iscritti al Corso di Laurea in Odontoiatria e Protesi Dentaria o di Igiene Dentale presso l'Università degli Studi di Palermo, Italia.

Obiettivo 2: Valutare l'incidenza del consumo di tabacco/nicotina e la conoscenza, il comportamento e la percezione relative alla prevenzione e al controllo del consumo tra i membri del corpo accademico del Corso di Laurea in Odontoiatria e Protesi Dentaria di Palermo, Italia.

Per quanto riguarda i risultati attesi, il progetto proposto fornirà i dati di base per l'avvio di un programma completo, continuo, sistematico e coordinato di disassuefazione da tabacco/nicotina per gli studenti dei suddetti corsi di studi dell'Università degli Studi di Palermo (Unipa). Inoltre, i risultati dello studio saranno utili per inserire la prevenzione e la disassuefazione da tabacco/nicotina nei programmi di studio del Corso di Laurea in Odontoiatria e Protesi Dentaria di Palermo, in modo che i futuri professionisti del settore odontoiatrico abbiano le conoscenze e le competenze necessarie per aiutare i pazienti a liberarsi dalla dipendenza. Questo studio pilota potrebbe essere replicato in altri Corsi di Laurea in Odontoiatria d'Italia.

**Metodologia della ricerca:**

**PARTECIPANTI**

Studenti di Odontoiatria - Possono partecipare allo studio gli studenti di età superiore a 18 anni iscritti al Corso di Laurea di Odontoiatria e Protesi Dentaria o di Igiene Dentale dell'Università degli Studi di Palermo.

Membri del corpo accademico del Corso di Laurea di Odontoiatria e Protesi Dentaria - Sono inclusi i docenti del Corso di Laurea di Odontoiatria e Protesi Dentaria dell'Università degli Studi di Palermo che hanno incarico di insegnamento clinico e interazione diretta con gli studenti iscritti a questa Università.

Studenti: in base al numero totale di 150 studenti iscritti al Corso di Laurea di Odontoiatria e Protesi Dentaria e di Igiene Dentale presso l'Università degli Studi di Palermo e all'incidenza del consumo di tabacco/nicotina del 17,8% tra gli operatori sanitari italiani, sarà necessaria una dimensione del campione di almeno 91 studenti per valutare la diffusione del consumo di tabacco/nicotina tra gli studenti di



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Odontoiatria. Saranno compiuti tutti gli sforzi possibili per reclutare il numero necessario per il campione previsto.

Docenti: in base al numero totale di 35 docenti dell'Università degli Studi di Palermo di qualsiasi grado che hanno incarico di insegnamento clinico e interazione diretta con gli studenti e all'incidenza del consumo di tabacco/nicotina del 17,8% tra gli operatori sanitari italiani, sarà necessaria una dimensione del campione di almeno 31 docenti per valutare la diffusione del consumo di tabacco/nicotina. Saranno compiuti tutti gli sforzi possibili per reclutare il numero necessario per il campione previsto.

### RECLUTAMENTO

Metodi di reclutamento: Verranno forniti dei flyers elettronici (uno per gli studenti e uno per i docenti) con i link e i codici QR per accedere ai sondaggi online. I flyers potranno essere distribuiti via e-mail. Un'altra opzione potrebbe essere quella di stampare questi flyers in formato poster in modo da affiggerli all'interno dei locali dei Corsi di Laurea.

I potenziali intervistati potrebbero usare i loro smartphone per scansionare i codici QR e completare il sondaggio.

### STRUMENTI

Due sondaggi online autosomministrati - uno per gli studenti (Appendice A) e un altro per i docenti (Appendice B) - saranno distribuiti presso il Corso di Laurea di Odontoiatria e Protesi Dentaria dell'Università di Palermo attraverso la piattaforma elettronica UHealth Qualtrics. Poiché entrambi i sondaggi online sono anonimi, verranno raccolti solo dati de-identificati.

### PROCEDURA

In collaborazione con i ricercatori dell'Università degli Studi di Palermo, il team di ricerca UHealth SPH svilupperà due sondaggi online. I sondaggi online saranno adattati dal Global Health Professions Students Survey (GHPSS) sviluppato dall'OMS, dai Centri Statunitensi per il Controllo e la Prevenzione delle Malattie e dall'Associazione Canadese per la Salute Pubblica. I sondaggi raccoglieranno dati demografici, sul consumo del tabacco, sull'uso di dispositivi elettronici di somministrazione, sull'esposizione al fumo passivo e al vape, sull'intenzione di smettere, nonché sui comportamenti e le percezioni riguardo al consumo di tabacco/nicotina e ai programmi di disassuefazione. I colleghi dell'Università degli Studi di Palermo si assicureranno che i sondaggi siano culturalmente adattati ai contesti socio-economici e culturali esistenti a Palermo, Italia.



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Una volta che i sondaggi online sono stati pre-testati e i progetti sono stati finalizzati, i link e i codici QR per accedere ai sondaggi online saranno forniti ai ricercatori dell'Università degli Studi di Palermo, che li distribuiranno tramite e-mail, poster e flyers tra gli studenti e i docenti.

Questa ricerca comporta rischi minimi per i partecipanti. I partecipanti allo studio potrebbero provare disagio nel rispondere alle domande inerenti al loro consumo di tabacco/nicotina o sulla loro attività relativa alla prevenzione e alla disassuefazione dal tabacco/nicotina per i pazienti. Per ridurre al minimo questo potenziale disagio, i partecipanti saranno informati della possibilità di saltare o selezionare l'opzione "Non desidero rispondere" per qualsiasi domanda. Il rischio principale e il potenziale problema sarebbero la violazione della riservatezza.

Tuttavia, i sondaggi online non raccoglieranno alcun elemento di identificazione.

**Fogli informativi e Moduli consenso** per le persone che parteciperanno alla ricerca:

- a. Il foglio informativo per la partecipazione alla ricerca e il modulo di espressione di consenso alla partecipazione alla ricerca sono stati presentati e sono stati giudicati chiari e completi.
- b. L'informativa per il trattamento dei dati personali e il modulo di espressione di consenso al trattamento dei dati personali sono stati presentati e sono stati giudicati chiari e completi.

**Osservazioni:** nessuna.

**Componenti del Comitato di Bioetica presenti alla seduta:**

Prof. Vito Di Marco, Prof.ssa Marianna Alesi, Prof. Pietro Perconti.

**Parere del Comitato**

Il Comitato di Bioetica, dopo attento esame delle informazioni fornite dal proponente, esprime parere positivo riguardante gli aspetti bioetici della ricerca.

The project has been approved by the Bioethics Committee of the University of Palermo.

Il Presidente del Comitato

Prof. Vito Di Marco

## COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH AGREEMENT

This collaborative research agreement ("Agreement") between The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston - UTHealth ("University"), located at 7000 Fannin Street, UCT 1006, Houston, TX 77030, a member institution of The University of Texas System ("System") and Department of Surgical, Oncological and Oral Sciences - Di.Chir.On.S., University of Palermo, located at Via del Vespro 129, Palermo- Italy ("Collaborator"). For purposes of this Agreement, the University and the Collaborator shall be referred to individually as a "Party" and collectively as the "Parties". This Agreement is entered into as of date of first signature ("Effective Date").

WHEREAS UTHealth is conducting a project titled, "Tobacco/Nicotine Use Prevalence and Knowledge, Attitudes, and Perceptions of Tobacco/Nicotine Prevention and Control Among Students and Faculty Members in an Italian Southern Dental School." ("Research Program").

WHEREAS the Parties desire to collaborate on the Research Program.

NOW, therefore, the Parties agree as follows:

### 1. RESEARCH PROGRAM

The Parties will conduct the Research Program as described in the statement of work, attached and incorporated into this agreement as Appendix A. If any change to the statement of work is necessary, the parties shall make the change by written notice.

Each of the Parties will use its own facilities and reasonable efforts to conduct the Research Program.

Each Party will be responsible for providing its deliverables as listed in Appendix A.

The title of the Research Program shall be used on all documents, publications and reports arising from the Research Program.

### 2. KEY PERSONNEL

All work required under the Research Program will be supervised by Irene M. Tami-Maury, ("Principal Investigator"), who is an employee of UTHealth and shall be responsible for the overall scientific and technical conduct of the Research Program. All work done by Collaborator will be supervised by Prof Olga Di Fede, ("Collaborating Investigator") who is an employed of Di.Chir.On.S., University of Palermo.

### 3. FINANCIAL OBLIGATION

The Parties shall maintain their individual funding throughout this Agreement.

Each Party may determine at its own discretion, the amount of resources, personnel, materials or funds it will devote to the work under this Agreement.

Except as outlined in Appendix A, the Parties shall each be individually responsible for expenses incurred by their respective researchers.

Neither Party shall be liable or obligated to any third party contractual agreement undertaken by the other Party.

### 4. DATA RIGHTS

All data from the Research Program arising from the UTHEALTH sites belongs to UTHEALTH.

All data from the Research Program arising from the Collaborator and specifically related to will be owned by Collaborator.

Both Parties will make the data arising from the Research Program ("Data") freely available to the other parties participating in the Research Program, and each party may use the Data for internal non-profit research and educational purposes or in reports to their funding source.

#### 5. PUBLICATION

Results of the study will be published first in a single report authored jointly by the Parties. Each Party shall be free to publish its results of the Research Program without consultation of the other except as set out herein.

Each Party will acknowledge the support and contribution of the other party in all such publications and shall name authors as is scientifically appropriate.

All presentations and publications from the Research Program will acknowledge sponsors and funding for the study, if applicable.

Each party will provide to the other a copy of any proposed manuscript thirty (30) days prior to submission for review and comment.

#### 6. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Collaborating Investigator shall provide technical progress reports as requested by Principal Investigator. The Principal Investigator and the Collaborating Investigator shall correspond at regular intervals during the duration of the Research Program to discuss scientific results and progress.

#### 7. CONFIDENTIALITY

The Parties may wish to disclose confidential information to each other in connection with work contemplated by this Agreement ("Confidential Information"). Each Party will use reasonable efforts to prevent the disclosure of the other party's Confidential Information to third parties for a period of three (3) years from receipt, provided that the recipient Party's obligation shall not apply to information that:

1. is not disclosed in writing or reduced to writing and marked with an appropriate confidentiality legend within thirty (30) days after disclosure;
2. is already in the recipient Party's possession at the time of disclosure;
3. is or later becomes part of the public domain through no fault of the recipient Party;
4. is received from a third party having no obligations of confidentiality to the disclosing Party;
5. is independently developed by the recipient Party;
6. is required by law or regulation to be disclosed, or
7. is disclosed for the safety of a study subject.

#### 8. TERMINATION

The Research Program will be carried out beginning on the Effective Date and continuing through and including September 24, 2024 ("Termination Date").

Either Party may terminate performance under this Agreement upon thirty (30) days' prior written notice to the other Party. Termination of this Agreement shall not affect the rights and obligations of the Parties accrued prior to termination.

#### 9. INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

For the purposes of this Agreement, the Parties are independent contractors and not agents or employees of the other Party. Neither Party shall have authority to make any statements, representations, or commitments of any kind, or to take any action which shall be binding on the other Party, except as expressly provided herein or authorized in writing.

Each Party shall be responsible for its negligent acts and omissions and the negligent acts or omissions of its employees, officers, or directors to the extent allowed by applicable law.

#### 10. DISPUTE SETTLEMENT

Each Party shall use its best reasonable endeavors to settle amicably any dispute which may arise with the other Party in relation to the construction, performance or termination of this Agreement but if no such settlement is made within a reasonable timeframe after the date on which the dispute first arises, the Parties may seek any other avenues of recourse.

#### 11. ITALIAN LAW ABOUT REGISTRATION FEES AND STAMP DUTY

In compliance with Italian law, this agreement is subject to registration only in case of use pursuant to articles 5, 6, 39 of the Presidential Decree 26/04/1986, n. 131.  
All costs for any registration will be borne by the party requesting it.

This agreement is drawn up in a single original in digital format and is subject to stamp duty paid through the use of n.2 tokens of € 16 each bearing the numbers 0121092324-4887 (date 09/09/2022).and 0121092324-4876 (date 09/09/2022). The costs of stamp duty are borne by Department of Surgical, Oncological and Oral Sciences - Di.Chir.On.S., University of Palermo.

#### 12. ITALIAN LAW ABOUT PERSONAL DATA

In compliance with Italian law, Di.Chir.On.S. provides for the processing, dissemination and communication of personal data relating to this Memorandum of Understanding as part of the pursuit of its institutional purposes and the provisions of the European Regulation 2016/679 and subsequent amendments. and ii ..

Di.Chir.On.S., pursuant to and for the purposes of EU Regulation 2016/679 of 27 April 2016 concerning the processing of personal data, informs that the data provided by the UTHEALTH will be processed exclusively for the related purposes. to the relationship covered by this Agreement.

#### 13. PUBLICITY

Each Party represents and warrants that it will not use logos or images of the other Party without the written consent of the other Party.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have caused this Agreement to be executed by their duly authorized representatives.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HEALTH  
SCIENCE CENTER AT HOUSTON

UNIVERSITY OF PALERMO

Firmato digitalmente da: Giorgio Stassi  
Organizzazione: UNIVERSITA' DEGLI STUDI DI PALERMO/80023730825  
Motivo: Agreement con Texas University  
Luogo: Palermo  
Data: 19/12/2022 11:25:56

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Name: Valerie Bomben, Ph.D.  
Title: Director, Sponsored Contracts  
Date:

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Name: Giorgio Stassi  
Title: Director DiChirOns  
Date:

## APPENDIX A

### Statement of Work

Tobacco use is considered one of the largest epidemics of a preventable threat to public health worldwide, killing nearly eight million people each year. Previous studies have reported that tobacco use among healthcare providers has a negative impact on their beliefs and attitudes towards tobacco control measures. However, little is known about Italian dental students' and faculty members' tobacco use prevalence, knowledge, and practices on this topic. Therefore, the objective of this study is to examine the association between tobacco/nicotine-related risk factors (e.g., knowledge and attitudes) and tobacco/nicotine use among dental faculty members and students at a Southern University in Italy.

This is a collaborative research effort between the University of Palermo Dental School (UPDS) and The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Public Health (UTHealth SPH). The research is designed as a cross-sectional study with a convenience sample for assessing tobacco/nicotine use prevalence and knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of tobacco/nicotine prevention and control among dental students and faculty members in Palermo, Italy.

In collaboration with UPDS co-investigators, the UTHealth SPH research team will develop two online self-administered online survey – one for Dental Students (DS) and another one for Dental Faculty Members (DFM) – will be distributed at the Dental School of the University of Palermo through the UTHealth Qualtrics electronic platform. Both online surveys are anonymous, and only de-identified data will be collected. Once the online surveys are pretested and the designs are finalized, links and QR codes to access the online surveys will be provided to UPDS co-investigators, who will distribute them via email, posters, and flyers among DS and DFM.

The surveys will collect data on demographics, tobacco use, use of electronic delivery systems (ENDS), secondhand smoke exposure and ENDS vape exposure, intention to quit, as well as attitudes and perceptions about tobacco/nicotine use and cessation technique training.

Data collected through the Qualtrics online surveys will be analyzed by UTHealth SPH co-investigators. Tables resulting from data analysis will be presented to UPDS co-investigators. Both UPDS and UTHealth SPH teams will be responsible for results interpretation and manuscript writing. An outcome paper will be submitted to a relevant scientific journal in the field with UPDS and UTHealth SPH co-investigators as authors.



Protocol: Tobacco/nicotine use prevalence and knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of tobacco/nicotine prevention and control among students and faculty members in an Italian southern dental school.

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## 1.0 Objectives

The **specific aims** are:

**Aim 1: To assess tobacco/nicotine use prevalence and knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of tobacco/nicotine prevention and control among students enrolled in the dental or dental hygienist program at the University of Palermo, Italy.**

**Aim 2: To assess tobacco/nicotine use prevalence and knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of tobacco/nicotine prevention and control among dental faculty members in Palermo, Italy.**

With respect to expected outcomes, the proposed project will provide the baseline data for launching a comprehensive, ongoing, systematic, and coordinated tobacco/nicotine cessation program for students at the University of Palermo Dental School (UPDS). Additionally, study findings will be instrumental for incorporating tobacco/nicotine prevention and cessation training in the curricula of dental programs at University of Palermo Dental School so future dental professionals have the knowledge and the skills for assisting patients with quitting their addiction. This pilot study could have the potential to be replicated at other dental schools in Italy.

## 2.0 Rationale

Tobacco use is considered one of the largest epidemics of a preventable threat to public health worldwide, killing nearly eight million people each year. Besides being the main cause of lung cancer, it is also a cause of other types of cancers, including oral, esophageal, laryngeal, and pancreatic cancers, and is a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease, aortic aneurysm, peripheral arterial disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and stroke. Tobacco use is also associated with oral leukoplakia, oral erythroplakia, tobacco-related pigmentation of the mucosa or dental restorations, periodontal disease, halitosis, and failure of dental implants and bone regeneration.

Overall, 20% of Italians are considered current cigarette smokers. This rate is considered significantly higher to the one observed in the United States among the adult population (14%).

Additionally, electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) devices, also known as electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), vapes, vape pens, mods, vaporizers, hookah pens, among others, have gained an alarming popularity in the European Union. A cross-sectional study conducted in Italy revealed a marked increase in ENDS use amongst youth.

Healthcare providers are positioned to offer unique and efficient tobacco/nicotine prevention and treatment.<sup>25</sup> In particular, dentists have an important role in the battle against the tobacco/nicotine epidemic since most of the early signs of tobacco/nicotine use can be observed in the oral cavity.

Furthermore, scientific evidence has shown that behavioral interventions, in addition to oral examinations in dental settings, increase the abstinence rate among patients who are current tobacco users. However,

the lack of sufficient opportunities for tobacco/nicotine prevention and cessation training in many dental schools is hampering the opportunities for dental professionals to become fully committed in the fight against the tobacco/nicotine epidemic.

Previous studies have reported that tobacco use among healthcare providers has a negative impact on their beliefs and attitudes towards tobacco control measures. However, little is known about Italian dental students' and faculty members' tobacco use prevalence, knowledge, and practices on this topic.

Therefore, the objective of this study is to examine the association between tobacco/nicotine-related risk factors (e.g., knowledge and attitudes) and tobacco/nicotine use among dental faculty members and students at a Southern university in Italy.

### 3.0 Eligibility Criteria

**Dental Students (DS).** ≥18 year old students enrolled in the dental or dental hygienist program at the University of Palermo, Italy who currently provide dental care to patients will be eligible to participate in the study.

**Dental Faculty Members (DFM).** This includes faculty members at any rank who are appointed at the University of Palermo Dental School and who have clinical teaching responsibilities and direct interaction with students enrolled at this institution.

### 4.0 Research Plan and Methods

This is a collaborative research effort between the University of Palermo Dental School (UPDS) and The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston School of Public Health (UTHealth SPH). The research is designed as a cross-sectional study with a convenience sample for assessing tobacco/nicotine use prevalence and knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of tobacco/nicotine prevention and control among dental students and faculty members in Palermo, Italy. Two self-administered online surveys - one for DS (Appendix A) and another one for DFM (Appendix B)- will be distributed at the Dental School of the University of Palermo through the UTHealth Qualtrics electronic platform. As both online surveys are anonymous, only de-identified data will be collected.

In collaboration with UPDS co-investigators, the UTHealth SPH research team will develop two online surveys. The online surveys will be adapted from the Global Health Professions Students Survey (GHPSS) developed by the WHO, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Canadian Public Health Association. The surveys will collect data on demographics, tobacco use, use of electronic delivery systems (ENDS), secondhand smoke exposure and ENDS vape exposure, intention to quit, as well as attitudes and perceptions about tobacco/nicotine use and cessation technique training. Colleagues at UPDS will make sure that the surveys are culturally adapted to the existing socio-economic and cultural contexts of Palermo, Italy.

Once the online surveys are pretested and their designs are final, links and QR codes to access the online surveys will be provided to UPDS co-investigators who will distribute them via email, posters and

flyers among DS and DFM.

This research involves minimal risk to the subjects. Study participants may experience discomfort when answering questions about their tobacco/nicotine use or their practice about providing tobacco/nicotine prevention and cessation services to patients. To minimize potential discomfort, participants will be advised that they can skip or select a “Do not wish to answer” option for any questions they do not wish to answer. The primary risk and potential harm involved would be a breach of confidentiality. However, no de-identifier will be collected through the online surveys.

## 5.0 Statistics and Justification of Sample Size

### *Sample size calculation for DS*

DS: Based on the total number of 150 students enrolled in the dental or dental hygienist program at UPDS who currently provide dental care to patients and a tobacco/nicotine use prevalence of 15.0% among the general population in Italy [11], a sample size of XXX students will be necessary to assess the tobacco/nicotine use prevalence among DS. We will add an additional 20% of participants to account for incomplete surveys, thus we will recruit XX DS into the study.

DFM: Based on the total number of 35 UPDS faculty members at any rank who have clinical teaching responsibilities and direct interaction with students and a tobacco/nicotine use prevalence of 15.0% among the general population in Italy [11], a sample size of XXX DFM will be necessary to assess the tobacco/nicotine prevalence among DS. We will add an additional 20% of participants to account for incomplete surveys, thus we will recruit XX DFM into the study.

## 6.0 Request for Waiver of Informed Consent

The online surveys will be anonymous. Therefore, signing of informed consent will not be necessary. A cover statement explaining the objective of the study will be included in the online surveys. The last sentence in the cover statement will ask if the individual is willing to participate in the study. Only those clicking on "I DO ACCEPT" will have access to the online survey.

For the PLWH survey, informed consent will be obtained by the clinic staff at WHRA before any survey is administered to the patient. The staff member will go over an informed consent form approved by the IRB at the University of Alabama Birmingham and UAB research personnel will only proceed with the survey if the participant provides their signature.

For the HCP survey, UAB research personnel will go over an informed consent form approved by the IRB at the University of Alabama Birmingham with providers. They will only proceed with the survey if they receive the participant's signature.

## 7.0 Data Analysis and Report of Findings

Data collected through the Qualtrics online surveys will be analyzed by UTHealth SPH co-investigators. Tables resulting from data analysis will be presented to UPDS co-investigators. Both teams at UPDS and UTHealth SPH will be responsible for results interpretation and manuscript writing. An outcome paper will be submitted to a relevant scientific journal in the field with UPDS and UTHealth SPH co-investigators as authors.

Any further utilization of the dataset associated to this study requires the approval from Dr. Irene Tami at UTHealth School of Public Health and Dr. at the University of Palermo School of Dentistry

## 8.0 References