

Introduction

Disproportionate impact of oral health diseases on people with disabilities.^{1,4}

Barriers to accessing dental care include physical barriers (e.g., wheelchair accessibility) & nonphysical barriers (e.g., limited education/experience related to treating people with disabilities).²

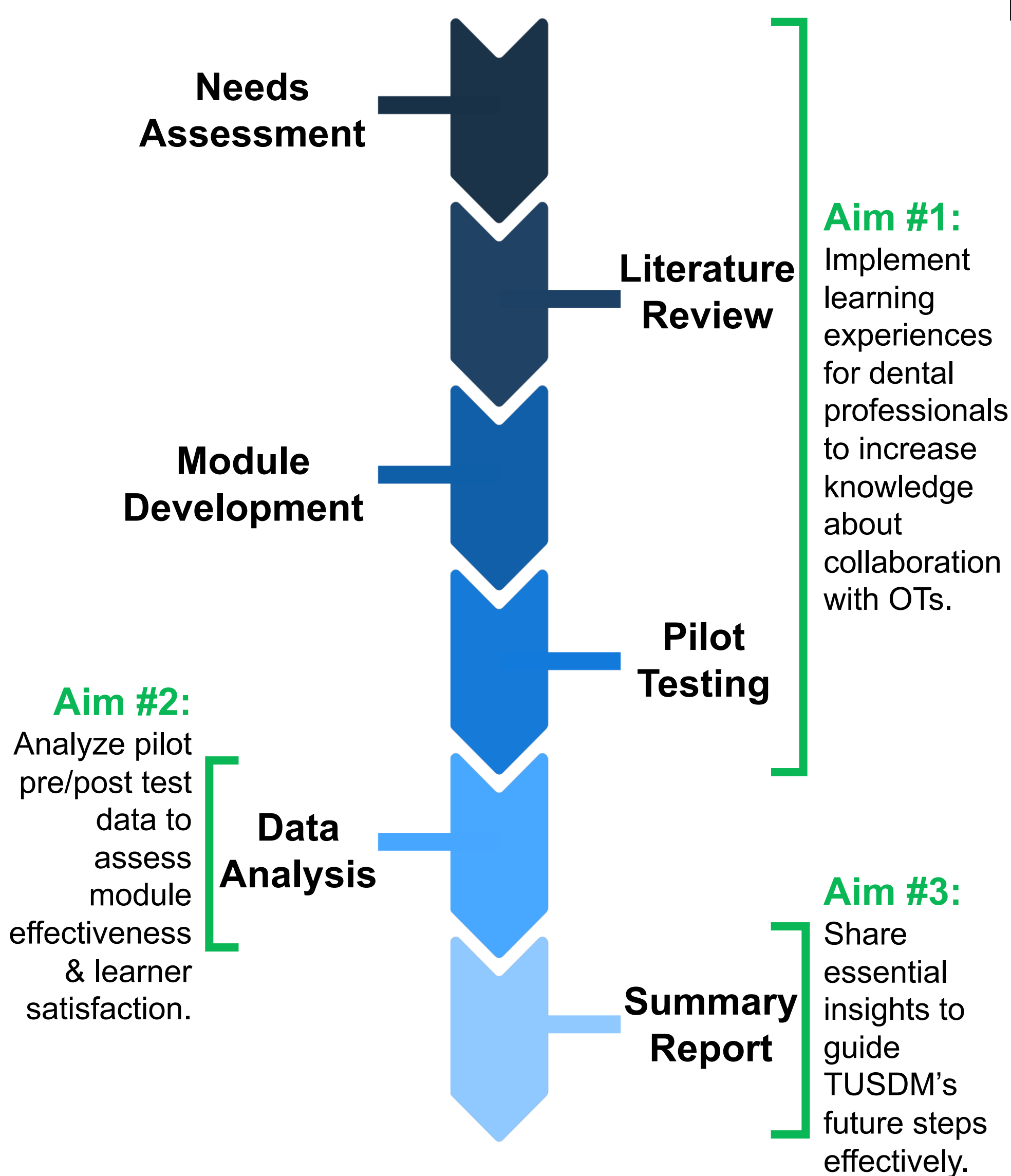
The Medically Complex Patient (MCP) Clinic at Tufts University School of Dental Medicine (TUSDM) provides care to individuals with complex medical conditions, including cardiovascular & central nervous system conditions, cancer, uncontrolled diabetes, kidney disease, etc.³

Currently, OTs are not a part of the interdisciplinary team at TUSDM.

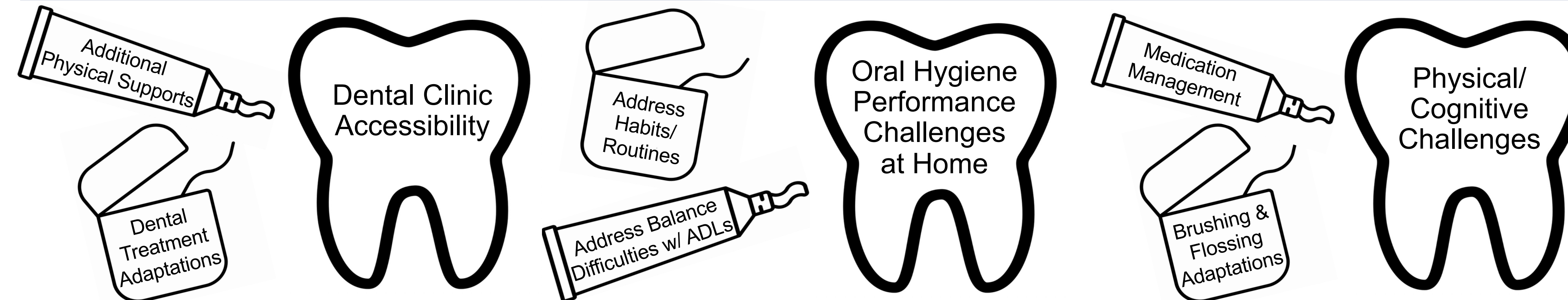
Purpose

Enhance interprofessional collaboration & communication between dental professionals & occupational therapists (OTs) to improve oral hygiene practices.

Aims & Methods



Needs Assessment

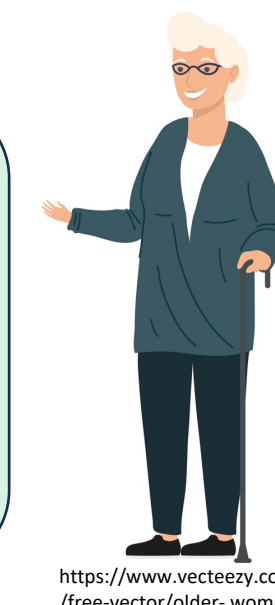


Interprofessional Learning Module

- Interactive, asynchronous learning module created with EasyGenerator platform specifically designed for dental faculty.
- Video lecture components, interactive knowledge checks, & case scenario integrated throughout.

Case Scenario:

- Jan, a 75 y.o. with rheumatoid arthritis currently experiencing increased stiffness, pain, & decreased dexterity.
- Presenting to dental visit with increased tooth sensitivity.
- Observed having difficulty unzipping jacket & lifting bag.



Learning Content

- What is OT?
 - What are occupations?
 - What is the role of an OT?
 - Where do OTs work?
- How OTs & Dental Professionals Can Collaborate
 - OTs Role in the Dental Setting
 - Relevant Research
 - Collaboration Opportunities
- When/How to Refer to OT Services
- Case Scenario Review

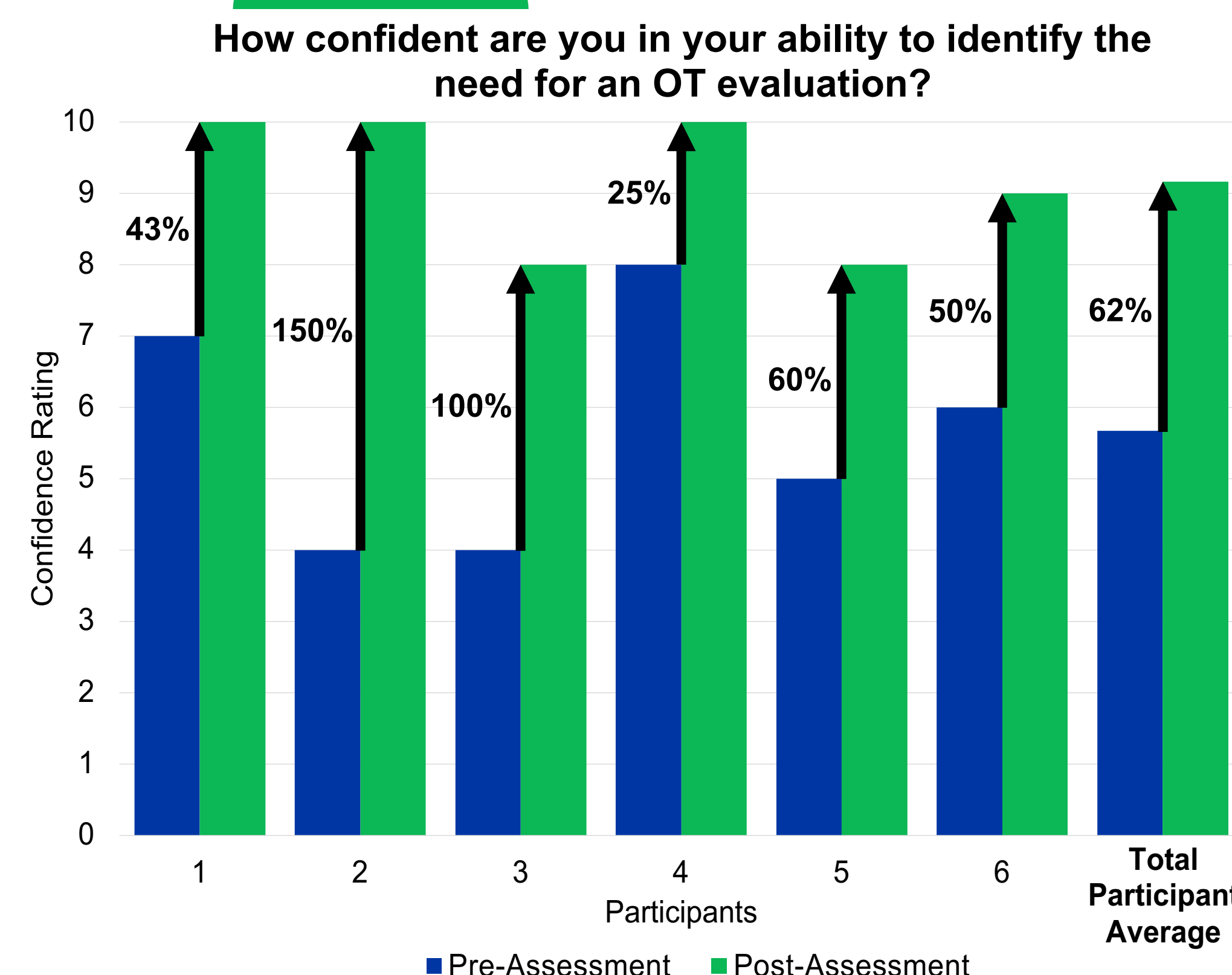
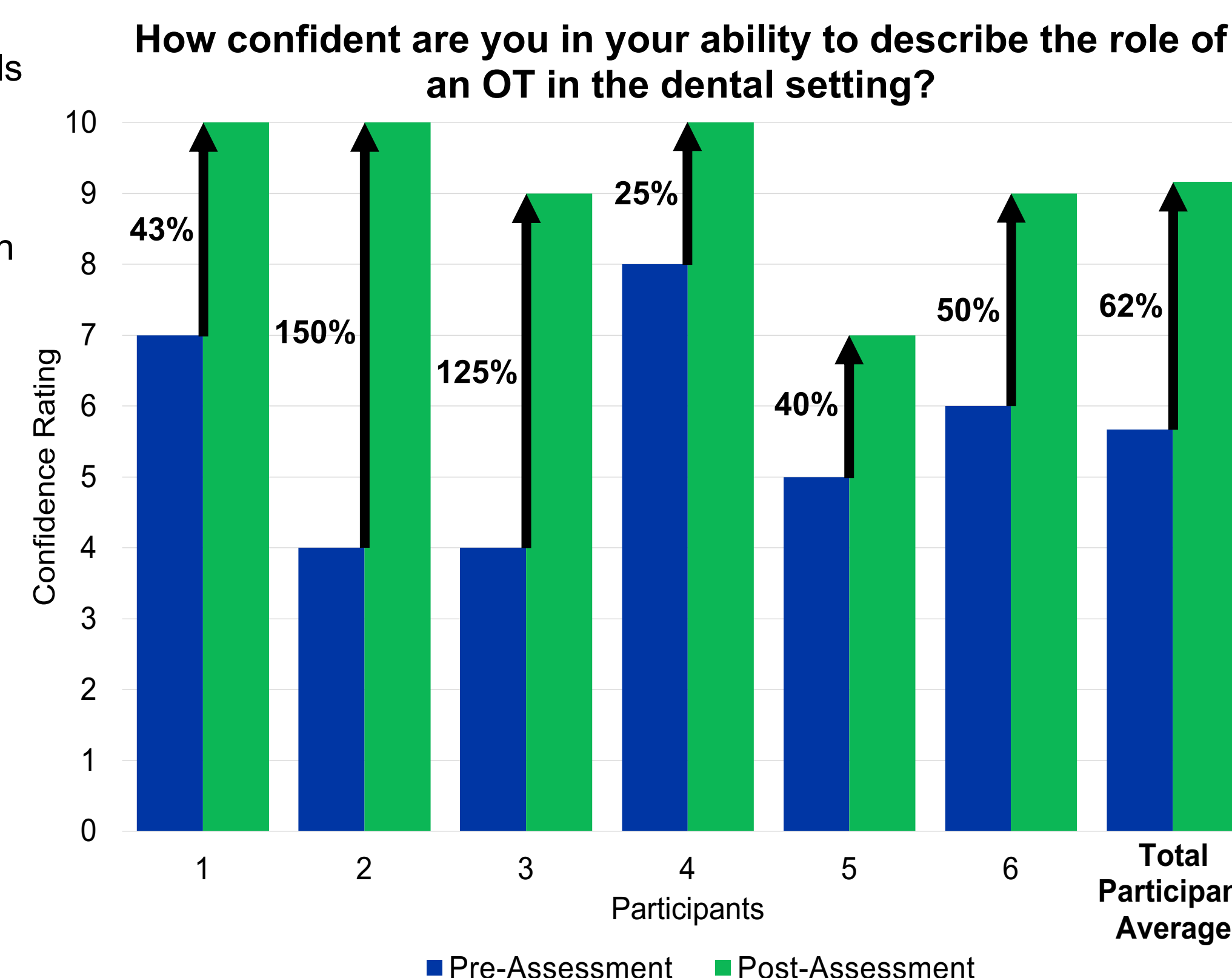
Results

Pilot Study

- N=6
- Sample population: Dental faculty at TUSDM
- Pre-test/Post-test design
- 100% response rate
- 100% of participants showed increased confidence after completing learning module.

"I am eager to explore the possibility of incorporating this module in my curriculum."
- Faculty Participant

"All aspects of the presentation were excellent, very comprehensive, well organized, clear, and effective use of patient case."
- Faculty Participant



Discussion

- Needs assessment identified gaps in caring for medically complex patients in the dental setting & patient challenges with performing oral hygiene at home.
- Learning module effectively influenced learners' abilities to describe OTs role in dental settings, identify the need for OT evaluation & refer dental patients to OT services. Case study was identified as the most effective aspect of the learning module.
- Summary report described recommendations for addressing gaps & implications for future collaboration, education & research.
- Additional outcomes of interprofessional collaboration:
 - Created 15-minute asynchronous video lecture for Introduction to the Dental Patient course for first-year dental students about interprofessional collaboration between OTs & dentists.
 - Provided OT perspective in TUSDM's Geriatric Rotation: Simulated Aging & Disability Exercise.
 - Presented *Building Bridges Between Dentistry and OT* at Faculty Development Series.
 - Ongoing collaborations between TUSDM & Tufts Department of Occupational Therapy.

Conclusion

Project identified various gaps in dental care that could be addressed by an OT. The Interprofessional Learning Module effectively educated dental professionals about what OT is & opportunities for future collaboration.

Recommendations

- Implement learning module with all dental faculty & students.
- Add questions to dental intake assessment to prompt OT referral.
- Integrate OT in dental practice settings.

Acknowledgments

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References & Supplementals



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