

## **WesternU's Western Diabetes Institute and Temple University Kornberg School of Dentistry in Philadelphia sign collaborative agreement**

WesternU's Western Diabetes Institute and Temple University Kornberg School of Dentistry in Philadelphia sign collaborative agreement to explore joint research opportunities in integrated medical and dental care models. Both institutions share a common interest in establishing bilateral relations to promote academic collaboration and scholarly exchange between their respective faculty and students, which include academic conferences and innovative pilots focusing on 'whole-person' diabetes care delivery.

Temple Kornberg's Dean Amid Ismail and WDI's founder and executive director, Professor Andrew Pumerantz, met last month in London at the annual meeting of the International Consortium for Health Outcomes Measurement.

"WDI's integrated care model and its global collaboration in the area of management of periodontal diseases in diabetic patients is exciting for us," said Ismail "especially as we plan for a similar program at Temple." Earlier this month Temple Kornberg and Greater Philadelphia Health Action (GPHA) launched a transformative new partnership that established a medical health center within the dental school. "To be a true health care home," added Dean Ismail, "we must be able to offer patients integrated, comprehensive treatment for their complex health needs."

Pumerantz agrees. "The crucible of 'whole-person' diabetes care," he said, "is the interrelationship between periodontal and systemic health. Identifying active periodontitis is as important to whole-person diabetes care as is structured screening for retinopathy, peripheral neuropathy, foot disease, and nephropathy. Yet in the absence of integrated periodontal screening programs for people with diabetes, periodontitis often goes undetected and therefore untreated. Strategic integration of screening for common multimorbidity in people with diabetes allows for early disease intervention and health recovery and serves to powerfully couple oral hygiene and self-care with other important lifestyle and behavioral changes, including nutrition, exercise, and cessation of tobacco use."

"Amid has put together a watershed disruptive innovation in integrated dental and medical care in urban Philadelphia through an unprecedented collaboration with GPHA and his dental school with support from the Temple University Health System and a major managed Medicaid health Plan, Keystone Mercy," Pumerantz said. Both he and Ismail see inner-city Philadelphia as an ideal setting within which to scale their innovative models for integrated 'whole-person' care.