

Rena N. D'Souza, DDS, MS, PhD

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Dr. Rena D'Souza is the ninth Director of the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, National Institutes of Health. She is deeply committed to the organization's mission which is to advance fundamental knowledge about dental, oral, and craniofacial health and disease and translate these findings into prevention, early detection, and treatment strategies that improve overall health for all individuals and communities across the lifespan.

As the director of NIDCR, Dr. D'Souza oversees the institute's annual budget of over \$520 million, supporting basic, translational, and clinical research in areas of oral cancer, orofacial pain, tooth decay, periodontal disease, salivary gland dysfunction, craniofacial development and the oral complications of systemic diseases. She has overseen the launch of key nationwide 75th anniversary collaboratives, including: Practice-Based Research Integrating Multidisciplinary Experiences in Dental Schools (PRIMED), Advancement of Head and Neck Cancer Early Detection Research (AHEAD), TMD Collaborative for Improving Patient-Centered Translational Research (TMD IMPACT).

Prior to becoming NIDCR's director, Dr. D'Souza served at the University of Utah as Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and Education for the Health Sciences. She held the Ole and Marty Jensen endowed chair in the School of Dentistry that she led as inaugural dean. As a clinician-scientist, D'Souza has been strongly committed to education, discovery and mentoring throughout her academic career. She is past president of the American Association for Dental and Oral Craniofacial Research (AADOCR) and the International Association for Dental Research (IADR).

Dr. D'Souza is an internationally recognized researcher and has authored over 150 publications and book chapters in the areas of craniofacial development, matrix biology and tissue regeneration for over 30 years. She is a Fellow of AAAS and also of AADOCR. She was inducted into the German National Academy of Sciences in 2012 and the Columbia University College of Dental Medicine's awarded Dr. D'Souza the Birnberg Research Medal in 2016. She received the Irwin D. Mandel Distinguished National Mentoring Award in 2017, the Shils Fund Innovation Award in 2022 and was the inaugural recipient of the Alumni Lifetime Achievement Award from UTHealth Houston School of Dentistry in 2022.

Dr. D'Souza is active on several trans-NIH committees and maintains an active research laboratory in the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), NIH.