



FDI POLICY STATEMENT

Advertising in Dentistry

Submitted for adoption by the FDI General Assembly:
August 2017, Madrid, Spain

CONTEXT

Policies and regulations relating to Dental Advertising (DA) vary greatly among countries. DA is prohibited in some countries, while in other countries DA regulations range from strict to very lenient. In the absence of consistent DA regulations, the public risks being misled by false and spurious advertising claims. This is of particular concern today, as DA messages can be freely communicated to the public via websites, mass emailing, and various forms of social media.

DA has the potential to impact on all dentists, and patients' perception of dentistry as a profession. The dental profession enjoys a special position of trust and respect within society. In return, the profession makes a commitment to adhere to high ethical standards. In this respect, ethical DA means providing the patient with accurate information, placing patient's interests first and promoting reciprocal respect among members of the dental profession.

DEFINITIONS

Dental Advertising: any information and/or material related to the promotion of dental services of a dental practice or individual involved in the delivery of care. DA includes: , flyers, websites, social media postings, blogs, advertorials, newsletters, business cards, stationery, logos, signage, announcements or other information related to the dentist/dental practice, regardless of the form of distribution.

PRINCIPLES

The basic principles of regulations on DA should:

- Protect the health and welfare of the public.
- Ensure that any claims communicated are supported by sound science. Patients are entitled to protection from misleading advertising.
- Uphold the dignity and integrity of the profession.
- Be in full compliance with the professional code of ethics.
- Comply with appropriate laws and regulations.

POLICY

Dental Advertising must:

(a) be accurate; (b) be factual, i.e. supported by facts rather than personal feelings, beliefs, opinions or interpretations; (c) portray a professional image of the dentist and the dental profession; (d) be balanced with respect to the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed treatment.

Dental Advertising must not:

43 (a) be false, unclear, exaggerated, misleading, fraudulent, (b) be comparative with or
44 disparage other dentists; (c) solicit or canvass for patients; (d) seek to persuade or embellish;
45 (e) use superlative or comparative terms, to suggest higher quality in relation to services,
46 equipment, technology used, or products or persons providing the services; (f) arouse
47 unnecessary concern or distress; (g) generate unrealistic expectations.

48
49

50 **NDA's are encouraged to establish their own rules and regulations on advertising**

51

52 **Keywords:** Dental Advertising, Dental Care, Public interest

53

54 **Disclaimer**

55 The information in this Policy Statement was based on the best scientific evidence available
56 at the time. It may be interpreted to reflect prevailing cultural sensitivities and socio-economic
57 constraints.

58

59 **REFERENCES**

- 60 1. Code of Professional Discipline for the Guidance of Dental of Dental Council of Hong Kong. The Dental
61 Council of Hong Kong. Revised in July 2008.
- 62 2. Principles of Ethics & Code of Professional Conduct. American Dental Association. With official advisory
63 opinions revised to September 2016.
- 64 3. Roucka T M, Donate-Bartfield E, Zarkowski P. In social media age, watch what you say.[J]. General
65 Dentistry, 2014, 62(1):19-21.
- 66 4. World of advertising changes with new technology yet provincial advertising regulations still applicable
67 today. Originally published in the February/March 2013 issue of Dispatch.
- 68 5. Guidance on the Use of Social Media. Practice Advisory. [http://www.rcdso.org/save.aspx?id=4ea7eacd-](http://www.rcdso.org/save.aspx?id=4ea7eacd-abfe-4fcb-be3d-abf45b3484fe)
69 [abfe-4fcb-be3d-abf45b3484fe](http://www.rcdso.org/save.aspx?id=4ea7eacd-abfe-4fcb-be3d-abf45b3484fe).November 2015
- 70 6. Professional Advertising. Practice Advisory.
- 71 7. http://www.rcdso.org/Assets/DOCUMENTS/Professional_Practice/Practice_Advisory/RCDSO_Practice
72 [_Advisory_Professional_Advertising.pdf](http://www.rcdso.org/Assets/DOCUMENTS/Professional_Practice/Practice_Advisory/RCDSO_Practice). November 2012