



FDI DRAFT POLICY STATEMENT

Lifelong Oral Health

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

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2 **CONTEXT**

3 People are living longer worldwide. Maintaining lifelong oral health¹ contributes to an
4 improved quality of life and well-being². Globalization, urbanization and changing social
5 norms, and technological developments are influencing health behaviours³. The public
6 health response should be to take these major changes into consideration in order to
7 frame policies.

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9 **SCOPE**

10 Oral health must be integrated into a healthy-life approach that spans all stages of life.
11 This approach will require an adaptation of health systems, as well as the development
12 of comprehensive systems of long-term care, which includes a coordinated response
13 from other sectors and at various levels of government⁴.

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15 **DEFINITION**

16 **Lifelong oral health aims to** maintain good oral health and an optimal quality of life²
17 through oral health promotion, risk assessment, disease prevention, early diagnosis and
18 intervention at all stages of life. The goal of reaching as advanced an age as possible
19 with a full set of teeth is feasible, if preventive measures and oral healthcare are
20 available through life⁵.

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22 **PRINCIPLES**

23 This policy statement calls for an integrated health approach at each stage of life⁶ and
24 in all oral health training at institutional levels, workplaces and living environments.

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26 **POLICY**

27 FDI advocates educating, promoting and raising awareness of oral health and its impact
28 on general health and well-being through all stages of life. FDI also supports all political,
29 legislative, and decision-making processes related to improving oral health promotion
30 and care throughout life. The risk of caries development and/or periodontal disease and
31 oral cancer in adulthood is not only determined by prevailing risk factors, but also by
32 factors in the prenatal period, childhood or adolescence.

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34 Governments, non-governmental organizations, National Dental Associations,
35 communities and individuals should create supportive environments for advancing oral
36 health and well-being through all stages of life, for example by:
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- Considering health in all public policies – i.e. nutrition, smoking, and sugar policy
 - Strengthening prevention of chronic diseases and oral diseases by integrating oral health into general health promotion activities.
 - Using the common risk factors approach in combating non-communicable diseases (NCDs).
 - Encouraging the development of a lifelong preventive approach to good oral health in main community settings such as nursing homes, schools, workplaces, senior homes, nursing homes.
 - Requesting that national insurance services/companies or any non-governmental fundings support regular access to care (as determined by risk assessment research) for all age groups.
 - Targeting people with special healthcare needs through specific interventions including preserving or reestablishing occlusal support e.g. by providing training and education for caregivers (professionals and family) who support with daily oral hygiene routines.
 - Ensuring that appropriate measures for providing oral care are integrated into a primary oral care model which encourages multi-disciplinary collaborative approaches adapted to national environments.
 - Advocating recognition of the fundamental leading role of dentists in promoting and providing oral care to achieve optimal lifelong oral health among all stakeholders and competent authorities.

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60 **KEYWORDS**

61 Lifelong oral health, health promotion, health integration

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63 **DISCLAIMER**

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

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68 **REFERENCES**

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