

WHO Executive Board 146 (EB146)

FDI statement on Item 17 Decade of Healthy Ageing (EB146/23)

I am speaking on behalf of FDI World Dental Federation (FDI) the official representative body of over one million dentists.

We support the proposal for a *Decade of Healthy Ageing 2020-2030* and request that oral health is specifically included in the action plan's progress indicators.

The draft action plan recognizes that "... many health systems [are] set up to address individual acute health conditions rather than conditions of older age [including oral health] ...". There is an urgent need to address this in order to meet the increasing oral health needs of ageing populations worldwide.

Epidemiological studies show that older persons are particularly affected by poor oral health, with negative consequences on their general health. Diseases such as dental caries (tooth decay), periodontal disease (gum disease), tooth loss, dry mouth or oral cancer affect their chewing function and nutritional intake, as well as their ability to interact socially, thus leading to a drastic decrease in quality of life or even death.

In 2015, FDI launched its Oral Health for an Ageing Population (OHAP) project to ensure that people not only live longer lives but healthier ones too, free of oral diseases, to secure their overall health and well-being. The OHAP project has developed a number of practical resources available on our website. In particular, we invite Member States to consult the *OHAP Roadmap for Healthy Ageing*, which proposes a range of strategies and actions that various stakeholders can implement, globally, nationally or locally, to meet the oral health needs of older adults.

This 20 March is World Oral Health Day - under the campaign theme *Say Ahh: Unite for Mouth Health*, we encourage Member States to make a pledge on oral health for ageing populations. To learn how to make a pledge, please visit www.worldoralhealthday.org.