

72nd World Health Assembly (WHA72)

FDI and IADR statement on Item 11.8 Follow-up to the high-level meeting on NCDs (A72/19)

This statement is made by FDI World Dental Federation (FDI) supported by the International Association for Dental Research (IADR). FDI is the official representative body of over one million dentists and IADR represents the world's dental, oral and craniofacial researchers.

FDI is a GCM/NCD participant and looks forward to carrying out the proposed 2020 workplan.

FDI and IADR fully support Annex 2 of the Director-General's report, specifically its recommendation that Member States implement taxation on all sugar-sweetened beverages (SSB), including fruit juices. Sugar is the primary factor for the development of dental caries (tooth decay) – the most widespread and prevalent NCD, which can cause pain, infection and even tooth loss.

We call for Member States to go beyond the scorecard indicators set out in Annex 6 by adopting national policies that reduce sugar consumption. To achieve this, we encourage Member States to implement WHO's guideline on sugars intake for adults and children as well as consult FDI's practical guide on sugars and dental caries. There is solid evidence that keeping intake of free sugars to less than 10% of total energy intake reduces the risk of overweight, obesity and tooth decay.

We urge Member States to integrate oral health into national NCD action plans with time-bound targets. This will help tackle cross-cutting issues, strengthen health systems and ultimately help reduce the burden of oral disease and other NCDs.

While we agree with the production of yearly scorecards for Member States, we are concerned that the comprehensive review of these scorecards is scheduled for 2024, one year before the next UN HLM on NCDs. This is too long to assess countries' progress and commitments to NCDs. FDI and IADR demand that the comprehensive review and HLM take place earlier. There is no time for wait.