



FDI POLICY STATEMENT

Collaboration between oral health professionals and other health professionals

Adopted by the FDI General Assembly: September 2023, Sydney, Australia

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2 **CONTEXT**

3 Integrating oral health into the general health and development agenda is one of
4 FDI Vision 2030's three pillars.¹ By 2030, the goal is that oral and general person-
5 focused healthcare will be integrated, leading to more effective prevention and
6 management of oral diseases and improved general health and well-being.¹

7 Oral health professionals, collaborating with other health and social care
8 professionals, have the largely unexploited potential to be important advocates,
9 enablers and mediators for oral health.¹ Given the common risk factors linking
10 noncommunicable diseases such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease with
11 periodontal disease, improving collaboration has the potential to improve overall
12 health and well-being.² For oral healthcare to be properly integrated with healthcare
13 in general, it is also essential that all oral health professionals understand the
14 importance of the social determinants of oral health and integrate their activities
15 with other health professionals.¹

16 Proactive collaboration between oral health professionals and other health and
17 social care professionals is key to improving person-centered care.

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19 **SCOPE**

20 This policy statement highlights the importance of proactive collaboration between
21 oral health and other health and social care professionals to deliver high quality
22 person-centered care.

23 It does not seek to devise a system to deliver this collaboration nor to cover every
24 oral disease or intervention.

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26 **DEFINITIONS**

27 **Collaboration:** when health and social workers from different professional
28 backgrounds actively contribute together to provide comprehensive services by
29 working with patients, their families, carers and communities to deliver the highest

30 quality of care in different settings.¹

31 **Person centered care:** describes a shift away from a model in which the patient is
32 the passive target of a medical intervention to another model where a more
33 contractual arrangement is made involving the patient as an active part in his or her
34 care and the decision-making process.³

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36 **PRINCIPLES**

37 Collaboration across health care requires action at the level of individual health
38 professionals and healthcare provider organizations and at higher levels across
39 local and national government.

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41 **POLICY**

- 42 ● FDI promotes the importance of interprofessional collaboration and person-
43 centered care to improve patients' oral and general health;
- 44 ● FDI supports educating oral health professionals and health and social care
45 professionals recurrently about the mutual benefits of collaboration and
46 person-centered care, including the management of common risk factors,
47 understanding manifestations of oral and systemic disease and the impact
48 of any treatment provided;
- 49 ● FDI encourages patient participation, where appropriate, in the collaboration
50 between oral health and other health professionals;
- 51 ● FDI highlights the role which health professionals and other organizations
52 can play in supporting oral health and other health professionals to
53 collaborate. This would be greatly facilitated by providing systems for timely
54 and secure interactions between professionals and the use of joint or
55 common health records accessible between services, especially when held
56 electronically;
- 57 ● FDI recommends inclusion of the principle of collaboration at the highest
58 possible level of policy and service design.

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60 **KEYWORDS**

61 collaboration, oral healthcare and health and social care professionals, electronic
62 health record, person-focused care

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64 **DISCLAIMER**

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

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69 **REFERENCES**

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