



FDI POLICY STATEMENT

Social and commercial determinants of oral health

Revised version adopted by the FDI General Assembly: September 2023,
Sydney, Australia

Original version adopted by the FDI General Assembly: July 2013, Istanbul,
Türkiye

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9

CONTEXT

In the past ten years, further evidence and understanding of the links between social and commercial determinants and oral health has generated an important number of publications and policy statements globally. It is necessary for the FDI World Dental Federation to address these findings in this policy statement to emphasize the wider environmental, socioeconomic and political challenges that affect the oral diseases burden.

SCOPE

This policy statement presents the broader, environmental, and societal risk factors for oral diseases that are generally shared with other noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). It highlights the importance of upstream policy interventions with a common risk factor approach to reduce oral disease prevalence as well as oral health inequities. Furthermore, the policy statement recognizes that several corporate strategies increase the burden of these NCDs, and therefore supports interventions aimed at reducing this negative influence.

18

DEFINITIONS

Social determinants of health: the non-medical factors that influence health outcomes. They are the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live and age, the systems put in place to deal with illness and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life. These forces and systems include economic policies and systems, development agendas, social norms, social policies and political systems.¹

Commercial determinants of oral health: are a key social determinant, and refer to the conditions, actions and omissions by commercial actors that affect health. Commercial determinants arise in the context of the provision of goods or services for payment and include commercial activities, as well as the environment in which commerce takes place. They can have beneficial or detrimental impacts on health.² This is especially significant in oral health with the sugar industry.³

32

Common Risk Factors Approach: addresses risk factors common to many chronic

33

34 conditions within the context of the wider socio-environmental milieu. Oral health is
35 influenced by diet, hygiene, smoking, alcohol use, stress and trauma.⁴

36

37 **PRINCIPLES**

38 This policy statement addresses the challenges presented in the 2022 WHO Global
39 Health Status Report⁵ as well as the FDI's Vision 2030.⁶

40

41 **POLICY**

42 FDI supports:

- 43 • increasing significance of social and commercial determinants of oral health
44 and care-seeking behaviour in whole populations, and especially in the
45 underprivileged;
- 46 • engaging with key stakeholders inside and outside the dental profession to
47 develop an integrated approach to reduce oral health inequities globally and
48 advocate inclusion of oral health in all policies;
- 49 • adopting the Common Risk Factor Approach and building links across general
50 health disciplines to learn from others' experiences and to maximize
51 awareness;
- 52 • adopting targeted, cost-effective, upstream or community-based interventions,
53 such as water fluoridation, that have the widest benefit for the population and
54 reduce health inequities;
- 55 • calling on National Dental Associations to advocate for translation of what is
56 known about health promotion and prevention into practice;
- 57 • adopting oral health interventions that include collaborative enabling policies
58 and research that address some of the main determinants of oral diseases,
59 including excessive limited access to care, intake of sugars, tobacco usage,
60 excessive alcohol consumption, poor oral hygiene, stress and socio-economic
61 disparities;
- 62 • ensuring greater awareness of all oral health professionals in assessing social
63 and commercial determinants of health, comprehensive health planning and
64 behavioural change;
- 65 • evidence-based policy interventions, such as health taxes, that reduce the
66 negative impact of commercial determinants;
- 67 • mapping the level of health literacy in the population, and determining how this
68 influences oral health and the strategies necessary to uphold and improve oral
69 health;
- 70 • ensuring that, within universal health coverage, oral healthcare is accessible and
71 affordable, acceptable, available, accommodating and aware.

72

73

74

75 **KEYWORDS**

76 Social determinants, commercial determinants, FDI policy

77

78 **DISCLAIMER**

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

82

83 **REFERENCES**

- 84 1. World Health Assembly, 62. (2009). Reducing health inequities through action
85 on the social determinants of health. World Health Organization.
- 86 2. World Health Organisation ; Commercial determinants of health
87 [https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/commercial-determinants-of-](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/commercial-determinants-of-health)
88 [health](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/commercial-determinants-of-health)
- 89 3. Kearns CE, Schmidt LA, Glantz SA. Sugar Industry and Coronary Heart Disease
90 Research: A Historical Analysis of Internal Industry Documents. JAMA Intern
91 Med. 2016 Nov 1;176(11):1680-1685. doi: 10.1001/jamainternmed.2016.5394.
92 Erratum in: JAMA Intern Med. 2016 Nov 1;176(11):1729. PMID: 27617709;
93 PMID: PMC5099084.
- 94 4. Sheiham A, Watt RG. The common risk factor approach: a rational basis for
95 promoting oral health. Community Dent Oral Epidemiol. 2000 Dec;28(6):399-
96 406. doi: 10.1034/j.1600-0528.2000.028006399.x. PMID: 11106011.
- 97 5. Global oral health status report: towards universal health coverage for oral
98 health by 2030. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2022. Licence: CC BY-NC-
99 SA 3.0 IGO
- 100 6. FDI Vision 2030 : [https://www.fdiworlddental.org/sites/default/files/2021-](https://www.fdiworlddental.org/sites/default/files/2021-02/Vision-2030-Delivering%20Optimal-Oral-Health-for-All_0.pdf)
101 [02/Vision-2030-Delivering%20Optimal-Oral-Health-for-All_0.pdf](https://www.fdiworlddental.org/sites/default/files/2021-02/Vision-2030-Delivering%20Optimal-Oral-Health-for-All_0.pdf)