

## FDI Global Caries Initiative phase 2: preparing the profession for change

The Global Caries Initiative (GCI), was launched by FDI World Dental Federation in 2009, setting out an ambitious worldwide agenda together with a profession-led call to action, whose goal is ‘to improve oral health through the implementation of a new paradigm for managing dental caries and its consequences, one that is based on our current knowledge of the disease process and its prevention, so as to deliver optimal oral and thus general health and well being to all peoples by 2020’<sup>1</sup>.

FDI and its membership acknowledge that they have a singular role and responsibility in terms of caries management and leadership in any process of change. Together, they are working to reduce the burden of caries in the population worldwide. Their actions take place in the sphere of political advocacy, professional and public education, risk assessment, oral health assessment, evidence-based disease management and programmes for caries prevention, private practice and public health, as well as volunteer programmes. FDI membership has, through the Global Caries Initiative, reaffirmed the federation’s role as the global representative body of Dental Medicine and Oral Health.

The priority areas identified in 2009 were:

- The eradication of early childhood caries in children under 3 years of age
- The primary and secondary prevention of caries and health promotion activities
- The definition of a common language in cariology.

FDI recognised that, for the Global Caries Initiative to achieve its goals, it would need to coordinate activities among multiple stakeholder groups and establish a broad alliance of key influencers and decision-makers from research, education, clinical practice, public health, government, business and industry and the public. There would also need to be a business case to demonstrate the benefits of expanding value around preventive dentistry and the development of an appropriate and sustainable business model.

### FIRST STAGE: DEVELOPMENT OF A CARIES CLASSIFICATION MATRIX

A potential barrier could be the lack of a common, up-to-date language for caries. Probably the most sig-

nificant achievement of GCI phase 1 was the development of the FDI Caries Matrix<sup>2</sup>, which aims to facilitate the dialogue between all stakeholders. The Caries Matrix acts as a bridge between WHO Basic Methods (DMFT)<sup>3</sup> and new approaches to caries management, for example the International Caries Detection Assessment System (ICDAS)<sup>4</sup>, creating a ‘middle ground’ which is workable for the current clinical practice environment.

This middle ground is critical since it engages clinical dental practice, which has historically been reluctant to move away from the curative/restorative model. It recognises ‘enamel caries’ or white spots and ‘non cavitated dentine lesions’, which were not included within the traditional model, but can now be managed, through the Caries Matrix, by preventive measures and tools.

### SECOND STAGE: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

In March 2012 the FDI Council established the GCI Task Team with a mandate to ensure the GCI achieves its extremely ambitious goals. This Task Team will, under the leadership of three FDI Council members and comprising representatives of all FDI Standing committees and a group of international experts, guide GCI into its second phase and prepare the wider dental profession for the GCI paradigm shift through FDI national member dental associations.

### CREATION OF A DEDICATED WEBSITE: WWW.GLOBALCARIESINITIATIVE.ORG

To enable and support phase 2, FDI has been working with Dental Tribune International to deliver a professional communication and education platform ([www.globalcariesinitiative.org](http://www.globalcariesinitiative.org)) to facilitate activities at a global level and support the implementation of GCI at a national level by FDI member dental associations.

The GCI Website provides national dental associations and dental professionals in both private practice and public health with practical programmes aimed at

reducing caries. It will offer global access to emerging knowledge on oral health and content targeting national dental associations, the dental profession, and the general public.

In addition, FDI plans to enhance this unique educational platform with specific ADA CERP C.E. content, starting with a curriculum of 16 webinars. These will cover the various aspects of Health Promotion, Risk Assessment, Disease Prevention, Preventive Disease Management and result in GCI certification for dentists willing to take the lead in this professional challenge.

Furthermore, the GCI website is set to become a hub for content sharing and knowledge transfer through hosting or linking to external material provided by NDAs, other professional organisations and corporate partners. [www.globalcariesinitiative.org](http://www.globalcariesinitiative.org) should be viewed as a resource for education, inspiration and progressive action for oral health and as an open and freely shared conduit for the latest information among all stakeholder – the dental profession as leaders in oral health and the global public for their well-being and optimal oral health.

Access to information should be possible everywhere – even though the geographic distribution of dentists is not yet equal throughout the world. Future plans include a more definitive programme for easy access in resource-poor areas so that health promotion, including common risk factors with other major diseases and appropriate healthy habits, is available to all.

#### **A MULTIPLE PARTNERSHIP AT WORLD LEVEL**

FDI recognises and acknowledges the support of the founding partners of the Global Caries Initiative: Procter & Gamble, Colgate, Unilever, GlaxoSmithKline, and Wrigley. This vital step for the profession could not have been undertaken without the support of colleagues in the founding partner companies, who have contributed not only at company level, but also

as dentists. FDI wishes to acknowledge both the organisational and personal nature of this commitment.

#### **THIRD STAGE: OPTIMISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH STRATEGIES**

FDI now wishes to implement collective and individual dental health promotion activities that will help combat tooth decay at all stages of life through its worldwide network. This will only be possible by informing and mobilising all stakeholders and partners, notably civil society, schools, teachers, educators and the parents. With this broad perspective, the GCI initiative will develop further and move closer to its ultimate goal.

It is also the strong wish of the GCI Task Team that corporate partners will once again join GCI and demonstrate support for to this outstanding opportunity to work as a team and achieve our common goal of ‘Leading the world to optimal oral health’.

*Orlando Monteiro da Silva (FDI President) and Jean-Luc Eiselé (FDI Executive Director) on behalf of the FDI Global Caries Initiative Task Team*

#### **REFERENCES**

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