



## **FDI POLICY STATEMENT**

### **Improving Access to Oral Care**

**Original version adopted by the General Assembly in October 1998, Barcelona  
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The FDI, as the authoritative, professional worldwide organisation for dentistry, supports the principle that all communities and people should have access to the best possible oral health care to achieve optimum oral health.

The dental profession recognises that the key to the achievement of this objective is improving access to oral health care, in particular to deprived, underprivileged communities and people.

Some factors that influence access include financial and social infrastructure, severity and prevalence of oral diseases, changing disease patterns, quality of care, birth rate and ageing populations.

Barriers to improving oral health care may arise from individuals, society in general, governments, resistance to change and outdated professional philosophies. Lack of perceived need, inadequate resources, uneven distribution of manpower, low prioritisation and lack of political will also be barriers to care.

The FDI affirms that the barriers must be overcome with strategies based on the following principles:

1. Oral health is an integral part of general health and must be prioritised.
2. Most oral disease is preventable. Co-operation between individuals, the profession, government, non-governmental organisation and the media is essential in oral health education.
3. The adoption of positive attitudes by society and dissemination of accurate information will support initiatives to improve access.
4. A close collaboration between the profession, auxiliaries, allied health professions, appropriate non-dental personnel (e.g. Primary Health Care Workers) and health education personnel locally, regionally and at global levels will enhance access to appropriate and affordable oral health care.
5. Involvement of the community in all levels of planning and provision for their oral health care needs.