AWDC 2011: FDI programmes a session on NCDS

A special two-hour session on noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) will take place on the final day of this year’s FDI Annual World Dental Congress in Mexico, chaired by Denis Bourgeois, Chairman of the World Dental Development and Health Promotion Committee.

The NCD session, from 11:30 to 13:30 on 17 September and co-hosted by the Norwegian Dental Association, comprises three presentations. In the first, ‘The role of dental practitioners as advocates promoting health by integrating general and oral health promotion’, Harry-Sam Selikowitz (Norway) will provide an outline of strategies for dentists to play a significant role in promoting health by integrating oral and general health promotion using the common risk factor approach. Dr Selikowitz has consulted with the WHO and United Nations agencies on oral health in several developing countries and was an advisor both to the WHO Executive Director of Non-Communicable Diseases and to the WHO Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health.

In his presentation, ‘The role of oral health care professionals in overall health’, Dr Rodrigo Fernandez (Mexico), a medical doctor working at WHO who will highlight the important role dentists may play in screening patients for medical conditions that they may not be aware of. In his presentation ‘Risk management in collaborative practice’, Dr Ward van Dijk will outline emerging challenges for dental practice and present techniques and new tools that will enable dentists to effectively manage both their practice business and improve health of patients. Dr van Dijk is a practicing dentist in Holland and a member of FDI’s Dental Practice Committee.

On 15 September, NCDs will also be covered during the session ‘Knowledge exchange and oral health’, organized by the Joint World Dental Development & Health Promotion Committee – Public Health Session Forum.

Saskia Estupinan-Day (Ecuador) will deliver a presentation entitled ‘Incorporating Oral Health within the current International Non-Communicable Disease Agenda’. Dr Estupinan-Day, a public health dentist with worldwide experience in the Americas, Africa, Asia, and Europe in the development of oral health strategies, implementation of national programmes, management of international technical cooperation and research projects and budgets, will highlight the need to integrate oral health within NCD strategies.

FDI, oral health and the fight against NCDs

The AWDC sessions reinforce the crucial role that oral health will be called upon to play in the fight against NCDs and underscore FDI efforts to have oral diseases specifically referred to in the outcomes document (Declaration) upcoming United Nations Summit on NCDs to be held in New York on 19 and 20 September of this year. In July, it encouraged its members to write to their Ministers of Health in support of this position and followed up this request in August with a letter to UNGA Resolution to fight NCDs, which was jointed by the following organizations: Deiss and Sir George Alleyne, UN General Assembly Head Joseph Deiss and Sir George Alleyne, Chairman of the Summit outcomes document (Declaration), containing specific recommendations on how oral diseases might be integrated into the final text.

FDI is also reinforcing its actions through the World Health Professionals Alliance WHPA, fronting their NCD campaign during a Civil Society Hearing on NCDs on 16 June. It has also prepared on the Alliance’s behalf a Toolkit for NCD prevention with information for professionals, patients and public, and a scorecard to be used to make individual risk assessments.

How oral health, the most common NCD, will fit into post-summit strategies will also be a point of focus of the International Association of Periodontology Symposium, also on 15 September. During the symposium, ‘Fighting the non-communicable disease (NCD) epidemic: the link between diabetes and oral disease’, George Taylor and Pamela Alweiss (both USA) and Martin R. Gillis (Canada) will set the stage for meaningful discussion with the purpose of framing future action based on the context of oral health’s role in the broader scope of NCDs.

Pamela Alweiss is an Endocrinologist who works with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Martin R. Gillis is a Professor at Dalhousie University.

WHO patient safety curriculum: The impact on dental education globally

The World Health Organization (WHO) Patient Safety Curriculum will be the subject of a presentation by A. Enrique Acosta Gio (Mexico) on 14 September. The first day of the FDI’s Annual World Dental Congress.

WHO published the Patient Safety Curriculum Guide for Medical Students in 2009 to encourage and facilitate the teaching of patient safety topics to medical students. It has just followed this up with the WHO Patient Safety Curriculum Guide: Multi-professional Edition. This was developed by an Expert Working Group comprising experts from the six WHO regions as well as World Health Professions Alliance members FDI, the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM), International Council of Nurses (ICN), International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), International Pharmaceutical Students Federation (IPSF) and the World Medical Association (WMA).

The Multi-professional edition widens the scope of the 2009 Curriculum Guide to include all health professionals including dentistry.

FDI President Roberto Vianna provided the foreword. He writes that the concept of patient safety as a ‘core’ attitude to be introduced early on in dental training is one that FDI has long championed. He notes that it also usefully integrates dentistry into the other health professions, highlighting the common principles that govern their approach to patient safety.

Dr Acosta Gio is the principal investigator of a grant to improve education, compliance, and monitoring of infection control at the dental clinics of the University of California San Diego, a faculty member of FDI’s Expert Committee on Patient Safety. His research focuses on relationships between oral and systemic health, particularly periodontitis and diabetes. Martin R. Gillis is an assistant professor at the Faculty of Dentistry, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia. He serves on the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) as a member of the Consultantative Section on Diabetes Education and leads IDF in advancing its oral health—diabetes agenda.

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FDI: “Contact your Minister of Health and Chief Dental Officer”

FDI has made a direct request to its members asking them to contact their Minister of Health and Chief Dental Officer. In a 3 July communiqué, President Dr Roberto Vianna, President Dr Orlando Monteiro da Silva and Executive Dr Jean-Luc Eiselé jointly requested this exceptional move due to indications that oral health is unlikely to be specifically mentioned in the Declaration to the United Nations Summit on non-communicable diseases, due to be held in New York on 19 September.

FDI believes that oral health should be mentioned at various points in the Summit Declaration and we have carried out some advocacy activities within the UN and the World Health Organization (WHO) to support its view.

In its communiqué to members, FDI noted that: “The NCD Summit has the potential to secure commitment from Heads of Government for a co-ordinated global response to the NCD epidemic and substantially increase the allocation of financial resources to NCDs. It further has the potential to fix measurable targets and commitments for actions by governments, with regular reporting to monitor and hold them accountable.

We think the current focus on four NCDs—cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular and respiratory diseases—is too restrictive: oral diseases share common risk factors with the four NCS mentioned, in particular unhealthy diets (particularly high sugar consumption), tobacco, and harmful alcohol use. We therefore believe that oral health professionals should be an integral part of the solution for prevention, early diagnosis and treatment of NCDs.”

More at www.fdiworldental.org/content/write-your-minister.

FDI president: Young dentists share FDI ideals

Young dentists “come to dentistry very much with the same ideals embodied in the FDI vision of leading the world to optimal oral health,” FDI President Roberto Vianna told participants at the 58th Annual World Congress 2011 of the International Association of Dental Students (IADS) and Young Dentists Worldwide (YDWD).

Delivering a Congress keynote address in New Delhi on 28 July, Dr Vianna continued: “This vision acknowledges that oral health is a fundamental part of general health and well-being. It is enacted through worldwide activism to promote policies in favour of oral health and access to oral health, practical delivery of excellence in oral care; and continuing education for dentists to stay abreast of the latest thinking and developments.”

He thanked Dr Chandresh Shukla, President of the Dental Student Association of India, for hosting the Congress for the first time in India, and congratulated the IADS “for 60 years of activities and achievements” as well as YDWD, now in its 20th year of existence.

FDI president praises growing reputation of SLDA

At a late July event in Sri Lanka, FDI President Dr Roberto Vianna highlighted the growing reputation of the Sri Lanka Dental Association (SLDA), mirroring, he said, “the growth of dentistry in the country. It is now one of the most important professional societies in Sri Lanka and highly esteemed at both national and international level for its immense contribution to the development of national dentistry and national oral health.”

Dr Vianna was speaking at the induction ceremony of Dr Eshani Fernando as 80th President of the SLDA, and for which he had written a foreword.

“The concept of patient safety as a ‘core’ attitude to be introduced early on in dental training is one that FDI has long championed,” said Dr Vianna.

Dr Eshani Fernando, 80th President of the SLDA

Dr Mahesh Varma, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Mr Rajeer Shukla, Honorary Secretary General Dr Ashok Dhoble and FDI President of Dental council of India Dr Mahendri Farma.

Young dentists share FDI ideals

Front row, from left to right: Lt Gen. Paramjit Singh, FDI President Dr Roberto Vianna, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Mr Rajeer Shukla, Honorary Secretary General Dr Ashok Dhoble and FDI President of Dental council of India Dr Mahendri Farma.

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