



FDI POLICY STATEMENT (revision)

Continuing Dental Education

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2 September 2004, New Delhi, India

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2 CONTEXT

3 Continuing education and professional development are professional obligations for
4 dentists and dental associations, due to advances in science and research, the need to
5 incorporate new knowledge to best manage oral health and diseases, technological
6 developments and innovation affecting dentistry, increasing interaction between other
7 health professions, better understanding of the bilateral relationship between oral health
8 and general health, patient safety, quality of life, standards of care, evidence based
9 dentistry, emerging public health challenges, and the needs, demands and expectations
10 of individual patients and the global population.
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12 SCOPE

13 Continuing dental education (CDE) is a professional and ethical obligation for dentists,
14 oral health care professionals, and National Dental Associations. Dental professionals
15 have a responsibility to continuously learn through education. Every dentist should be
16 informed and involved in the development of dentistry, evaluate new research and the
17 available strongest scientific evidence, apply reflective and critical thinking in ways that
18 best incorporate new techniques into practice, improve care in line with current
19 professional standards, and serve the public. Career-long professional development
20 improves awareness of appropriate care and strengthens the individual's commitment
21 to public health. The dental profession is committed to maintaining high quality,
22 evidence-based, and contemporary education and training standards to serve patients
23 and the public.
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25 DEFINITION

26 Continuing dental education applies to both general dentists and dental specialists, and
27 is the means by which members of the profession maintain, improve and broaden their
28 knowledge, expertise and competence, and develop personal and professional
29 qualities required throughout their careers. CDE is also meant to provide a more public-
30 and patient-focused approach to prevent oral diseases, rather than solely treating
31 existing disease. It aims to include the refinement of existing knowledge and skills, as
32 well as the consideration, appropriate evaluation, and application of new developments
33 and scientific research within the scope of dentistry.

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35 Well-planned CDE and professional development assist dentists in recognizing their
36 individual areas of interest and proficiency, their limitations, new opportunities for
37 improving skills and competencies, and the need to refer patients for advice and/or
38 treatment to appropriate specialists.
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40 **PRINCIPLES**

41 The primary principles of CDE are that the dental profession responds to changing
42 public needs, understands and uses best available practices with new techniques and
43 knowledge, and allows practitioners to provide service for the prevention and successful
44 management of oral diseases.

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46 **POLICY**

47 FDI calls on National Dental Associations to:

- 48 • Regularly update the dental profession's commitment to preventing diseases,
49 providing appropriate treatment of oral diseases, and promoting public oral health.
- 50 • Advocate for the availability of a structured and ongoing educational system for all
51 dentists, within an ethical framework.
- 52 • Suggest the nature, content and amount of CDE that is reasonable and attainable
53 by dentists in their region, including new and innovative models of education and
54 development.
- 55 • Recommend that CDE courses include medical topics, allowing practicing dentists
56 to upgrade their competency in medical knowledge and their understanding of the
57 bilateral relationship between oral health and general health.
- 58 • Assist the appropriate regulatory agencies in advocating the requirements of CDE.
- 59 • Recommend a system capable of regularly evaluating the courses by an audit in
60 terms of quality, content and participation.
- 61 • Support a broadened scope of practice for dentists and an expanded role for
62 improving the well-being of the community.

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64 This statement should be read in conjunction with FDI's policy statement on "Basic Dental
65 Education" and the supportive references.
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67 **KEYWORDS**

68 Continuing dental education, dental education, educational system, education
69 standards, evaluation and adaptation of new technologies
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71 **DISCLAIMER**

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

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76 **REFERENCES**

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