

Guest Editorial

Oral diseases have succeeded to be rated as one of the major public health problems, which have spread across both developing and developed nations. This is mainly due to their high prevalence and greatest burden of diseases that are on disadvantaged and socially marginalized populations.

FDI World Dental Federation serves as the principal representative body for more than one million dentists worldwide, developing health policy and continuing education programs, speaking as a unified voice for dentistry in international advocacy and supporting member associations in oral health promotion activities worldwide.

With every year the fact that the strategies for oral disease prevention and the promotion need to be integrated with chronic disease prevention and general health promotion is growing stronger. The efforts have been pragmatic and have been able to show results, but it is too early to assess.

There is a need for universal coverage, the concept that is respected, a reasonable goal, and if done in a timely fashion can achieve a lot, but truly is a challenging goal.

There is a tremendous need to realign and provide an overarching vision to carry forward the efforts into the future with professionalism and an approach to address the problem holistically.

Among the few areas that are of concern are oral health access and inequalities, integration with noncommunicable diseases and certain contemporary issues. These can be seen as a threat to profession or a prospect to attain future goals and integrate them into the existing health systems. The various pertinent issues are environmental impact of dentistry, ageing society and its needs, gender issues in dentistry, promotion of chair-side preventive dentistry, reorienting dental education, to nurture and promote fundamental research, national and local professional leadership initiatives and partnerships with nongovernment organizations. Moreover, it should target the concept of 'Health in all sectors' and promote networking of partner institutions and associations for providing platform for future collaborations.

FDI should provide and assist in developing locally relevant strategies and being in the forefront of critical issues, encourage active participation and co-operation through consultation through a democratic process. This whole effort would allow exchange of knowledge and experiences in all aspects of oral healthcare.

Being the professional voice of dentistry, it would lead the efforts from front with a mission to lead the world to optimal oral.

The upcoming FDI-Annual World Dental Congress 2014 is special in many ways as it will allow us to share knowledge and experience with our peers worldwide, challenge our preconceived ideas and widen our perceptions. This is even more essential today with the worldwide migrations of dentists and patients.

A cutting-edge scientific program designed by Indian Dental Association in tune with FDI's social responsibility of leading the world to optimal oral health, will provide a broader platform for both the associations to pursue their visions with even more ardor and vehemence.

The vision of AWDC-2014 is as follows:

1. Satisfy the curiosity of the participants by dwelling on subjects that are of growing importance to the profession.
2. It endeavors to offer a unique opportunity to share knowledge with colleagues from around the world while discovering the professional landscape of a different region.
3. The program will provide a unique platform for dentistry and oral health with the association of renowned speakers of erudition and scholarship from diverse specialties of contemporary dentistry across the globe.
4. The collaborative efforts of IDA and FDI through the 2014 FDI AWDC will give a boost to the IDA's plan of 'Oral Health for all by 2020' pressing on public issues like dental caries and oral cancers; addressing the persistent disparities in health status and carrying out the health promotion and outreach efforts needed to improve oral health besides formulating strategies to alleviate the burden of oral diseases.
5. To provide an opportunity to acquaint with the top personalities of the international and national trade and industry.

It is a great opportunity to explore the newer horizons with its fusion of education, technology and exchange of cultural heritage.

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