



Szeged, 26th of August 2015,

The European Dental Students' Association (EDSA) has had a long standing interest in the rise of dental practice networks within Europe. These practice networks are one of a new multitude of clinical organisation structures spreading across Europe. Practice sharing and practice partnership brings advantages to both the dentists and patients. Typically, dentists can offer treatments with modern equipment without the need for large, personal investment. Furthermore, in the 21st century there has been a rise in the number of dentists interested in employment bringing flexible working contracts and less commitment than sole practice ownership.

The rise of practice networks is relatively new, with the largest changes appearing within the last decade. Career options available for dentists following graduation has been ideal - those interested in leading an independent clinic are able to, but likewise those looking to join a practice network also have opportunities. This is liberal dental practice.

The rate practice networks are growing poses the most concern to dental students. With novel franchise models being adopted and dental public limited companies floating on stock markets, practice chains now exist with ownership in excess of 500 dental practices. In the near future, the possibility of rivaling a practice network with an independent practice may no longer be an option for dentists in Europe. Additionally, EDSA acknowledges the risk that scaling companies to this size and obtaining funding from external investors may lead to practice management styles not permitting the dentist to put the patient's interests first.

The EDSA would like to remind that patient care has to be driven by evidence based facts, with treatment plans chosen by the healthcare workforce.

**This has been an area of concern to our member students as they will be directly affected by these consequences during their working life.**

The European Regional Organization (ERO) of the Federation Dentaire Internationale (FDI) represent the same area as covered by EDSA. The concerns are therefore common to both organisations. The working paper written by the ERO FDI titled, "*Liberal dental practice in practice partnerships, practice networks and medical care units*" has come to the attention of EDSA.

The EDSA as an organisation has viewed this paper and would like to formally release its support for the items mentioned.

The president of EDSA, Luka Banjsak.