



European Regional Organisation of
the Fédération dentaire internationale



ERO-FDI WG Quality in Dentistry Report 2007-2010

WG Members:

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The ERO-FDI Working Group “Quality in Dentistry” has been chaired by Gerhard Konrad Seeberger. He continued the work of former WG chairman Francisco Rodriguez Lozano.

All delegates agreed that quality in dentistry is important and has to be part of the work in ERO-FDI.

The plan to organize an ERO Consensus conference on quality issues has not been realized. The first topic to be discussed has been pain management. An ERO statement on “Pain Management” has been drafted by ERO Liaison Officer to CEN, Philippe Calfon, discussed and adopted during the 2008 Plenary Session in Istanbul.

Quality in healthcare has been a largely discussed topic during the last three years in EU and non-EU countries. In some states quality is already a legal issue, in others it is about to be imposed by the law and in many of them it is liberal to pay attention to it. The WG has analyzed several data from different publications of activities and research dealing with quality in dentistry from EU- and other countries. It has been evidenced that a clear definition of quality does not even exist in the EU member states nor are quality strategies equal in their entity and quality assurance is different from country to country. Even though some guidelines and recommendations on quality of structure, process and outcome do already exist in some ERO-FDI countries it has been clearly stated that the definition of guidelines is not realistic for the Organization. The approach to adapt quality models coming from the industry to medicine and dentistry, like the Toyota model, have been definitely abandoned.

A questionnaire on quality issues delivered to all member associations has been considered by more than half of the ERO-FDI member states. While most of the members wanted to focus on quality of procedure and improvement of dental practice others wanted to draw the attention on legal issues and their application. Almost all participants declared that much has to be done to implement quality management, quality assurance and quality maintenance, but a clear definition of these terms remains mandatory.

Rewarding for the application of quality strategies has been discussed considering the global economic and financial crisis. Quality makes a difference even in difficult times and could save money. The latter aspect has to be verified, however. Data collection and exchange is of need and shall help to keep the quality issue within the profession. A standard of quality of outcome cannot be realized in any field of medicine and dentistry although it is requested from third parties. The profession shall also pay much attention to acts dividing the profession and to the quality of behavior of the professionals.



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A quality model on a legal basis applied in the UK has been presented and discussed. "Quality is not an option, it is a necessity" is the final statement of the author. Quality measures shall be carefully analyzed in order to avoid external regulations. Professional expertise of the dentist is the only key to the development of quality in dental care.

All citizens of the ERO-FDI area shall have the possibility to maintain and improve their health status. Quality in dental care is one of the essential prerequisites to reach this goal and finds its realization in effective treatment options in safe conditions for the patient and the dental team and corresponding to the patients needs and wishes.

Quality in the dental profession, its implementation and improving of dental practice will always depend on education as well as technical and communicational skills together with the capacity of critical thinking and behavioral quality of the individual professional. Quality in public services will depend on the awareness of the Governments that the delivery of quality is furthermore based on time, adequate financial and sufficient human resources.

The definition of dental quality and the adoptable entity of quality measures together with the evaluation of data and experiences with quality models remain the commitments for the future of the ERO-FDI WG Quality in Dentistry.

To all who served in the WG in the name of quality in dentistry, to all who participated in the questionnaire and the discussions in the last three years I would like to express my sincere gratitude.

Cagliari, March 2010

Dr. Gerhard Konrad Seeberger
WG Chairman

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