



European Regional Organisation of
the Fédération dentaire internationale



ERO - Plenary session
30th August 2012
Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre

08h30 – 13h10

Minutes

A Welcome / opening of the session

The president welcomes the participants and opens the session.

B Agenda of the business meeting

B.1 Roll call – Verification of the quorum

Anna Lella is doing the roll call. 56 delegates are present; the quorum is achieved.
Gerhard Seeberger excuses Michael Frank, which - for personal reasons – is not present.

B.2 Approval of the agenda

To change point 4 of the agenda into “4a Reports of the Board” and “4b Role of the Dental Technicians” is accepted.

B.3 Approval of the minutes of Prague

No comments and amendments regarding the minutes of the Prague session. They are unanimously approved.

B.4a Reports of the Board

Gerhard Seeberger thanks all those that have been active in ERO. FDI Executive director, Dr Jean-Luc Eiselé might have observed during his visit in Prague that the ERO Plenary session is a very political meeting and that the delegates are very engaged. He welcomes as well the President of the CED, Dr Wolfgang Doneus.

The President has been visiting some of our member associations in the last months. He takes this occasion to thank them for the invitations. Gerhard Seeberger has been chosen as the FDI speaker at the World Health Professionals Alliance conference in May this year. It is a special honour that a European had been chosen for this event, where nurses, physiotherapists, pharmacists, physicians and dentists meet to exchange ideas and to develop activities in regard of collaborative practice. He has been very keen to present that dentistry has not been inactive on a wide range of topics and pointed out in his speech that our profession has taken into consideration the positive effect of prevention very early, mentioning fluoridation as its most successful campaign not only in dentistry but in entire medicine.

Philippe Rusca welcomes the delegates. With a hint to the Mexican session he is very happy to have once again a pleasant meeting room. During the FDI congress it is always difficult to get rooms for WG meetings; FDI working groups have priority. He apologizes for eventual inconveniences that might have occurred. New is, that ERO - for its session during the FDI congress - has to pay for room rents, technical equipment and interpretation.



In Potsdam will start a new mandate. Being a chair or a member of a WG or the Board is not an honorary office; there is work to be done. Candidates for either position are requested to present themselves.

Anna Lella thanks the Czech colleagues again for their hospitality during the spring plenary session. She informs that in order to make up for the initial malfunctioning of the technical equipment in Prague, the CDA managed to get a reduction on the rental charges. The documents of the plenary session were shortly after the meeting ready on the website; the minutes followed a bit later.

Next she came back to previously announced plans to change website. The board decided to renew the website. Anna Lella remarks that the Women's Worldwide Forum is taking place at the same time as this Plenary session and that there are some very interesting topics on their agenda. She further thanks the working group chairpersons for their collaboration and presents the recently elaborated paper "rules of procedure of ERO working groups" which is a follow-up to the recent discussion about the organization of activities of ERO WG's, like attendance at WG meetings and responsibilities of WG Chairmen. The paper is intended to facilitate the WG's work, to regulate the member- and chairmanship of the groups as well as the organization of meetings and financial matters. The ERO Board adopted a document by in accordance with art. 3.8 of the ERO Constitution. It will be sent to all national dental associations in order to be distributed to its delegates and it is to be found on the website (working groups – working documents).

Finally Anan Lella remained her proposal – draft of statement "Dental technicians" and her letter which explains the reason and background.

We should be not at the margin of WHO activities, we should be at the heart, remarks Bedros Yavru-Sakuk. Health is very important and dentistry is very important for overall health and for that we have to fight. We have to protect the position of the dentist and should therefore unify our efforts. The dentist should be at the head of the dental team.

Monika Lang presented proposal of redesign erodental.org proposed by Swiss webmaster 'innoweb'.

B.4b Role of Dental Technicians

The Annual General Meeting of the European and International Federation of Dental Technician Laboratory Owners (FEPPD) on the 5th of May 2012 in Nice called for provisions in order to broaden the use of the expert skills of dental technicians in the more general framework of oral care delivery as well as provisions to enhance market transparency and product safety for the patients.

Next the report of FEPPD was submitted to the annual CEN TC55 meeting in Brussels on 10 July 2012.

Never any dental technician (this is mentioned in the third bullet point, presented by Gerhard Seeberger and adopted by the GA of FDI's World Dental Parliament in 2007 in Dubai, of the FDI position paper on Dental Laboratory Technicians) shall become a health professional and shall by no means be educated in a university faculty of medicine or dentistry. The President does not consider the technicians' move an intrusion in order to become an "under dentist", this is simply the attempt to be somebody different, he says. From their point of view it is an upgrade, from our point of view it is an intrusion. He reminds that in several universities in Europe there is the opportunity exists to become an engineer of dental technology.

It should be made clear to the state administrators that they have to stop actions that are only oriented on commercial interests. Patients need and deserve to have dental / medical assistance and adequate dental / medical treatment.



Here follows a resume of the discussion. Thanks go to the Board for the excellent preparation of this topic. Everybody agrees that a dental technician – with or without the supervision of the dentist – is not allowed and does not have the ability to work in the mouth of the patient. This must absolutely be defended. In Singapore a resolution with exactly this statement had been adopted. Hans Schrangl suggests mentioning that the patient has the right to be treated by an academically trained dentist and that it is for the patient's safety if the dentist remains the head of the dental team. He therefore would like to have the “or” between “... dentist's supervision ...” and “... following the dentist's direction ...” deleted. Whereas Gerhard Seeberger wants to introduce the sentence “Dental Technicians manufacture custom-made devices strictly according to the dentist's prescription.”

It seems that in many countries there is a trend to delegate parts of dental treatment to midlevel providers or even to substitute the dentists by less expensive care providers. Saving on patient's safety might come back as a boomerang. We must absolutely stand against it. Wolfgang Doneus offers a close cooperation between CED and ERO in this matter (an offer which Gerhard Seeberger accepts with pleasure) but refrains from co-signing the paper.

Further amendments are requested by Roland L'Herron who wants to delete the word “direct” in the last line of paragraph two. So it reads “provide care” instead of “provide direct care”; “thoroughly planned” is inserted before “dental treatment” and “that requires correct diagnosis which the dental technician is not qualified to make” follows right after this.

The question whether the dental technician is part of the dental team or not, is discussed. In the end “including the dental technicians” is deleted and the sentence in the middle of the second paragraph reads: “The members of the dental team have to work under the dentist's supervision following the dentist's directions and specifications.”

This “statement on the role of dental technicians in provision of dental care” with the previous mentioned amendment is adopted unanimously.

B.5 Working groups

1. Prevention

Denis Bourgeois is involved in other activities, so Philippe Rusca takes over to give some information. The project the WG is dealing with right now is very promising. Questionnaires have been sent to the national dental association in order to be handed over for response to the cardiologists' and diabetologists' associations. The feedback has not been overwhelming at the beginning. The WG would like to have as much answers as possible and Philippe Rusca hopes that the delegates will press their associations to answer and send back the documents. The topic is very important and should be handled with care. The implications of oral health on the general health are well known and he thinks that we have a pioneer role to play in this particular field. We do not want to be simple technicians in dentistry and this is the chance together with our colleagues to make us stand out in the medical world. Once all answers will have arrived, a conference with all competent people will be organized in order to work out some kind of guidelines or criteria applicable in the dental practice.

To our knowledge this is the first questionnaire that involves dentists together with other medical specialists, remarks Gerhard Seeberger, and this is kind of a bridging action. We want to be an active part of medicine and not to forget: we are the pioneering profession in prevention in health care having approximately four decades of experience and this is something wonderful.

2. Education

Alex Mersel is very glad to be back. For health problems he was not able to attend the Mexico and the Prague meeting. In his presentation he gives a short survey of the WG's activities and a short overlook on its next schedule. Before gathering his group he needs an agreement on the agenda of the next year. It is necessary to do a rationale about the WG tasks and therefore he is grateful to see



that the Board has established a new project. It is very important to provide safe, high-quality, evidence-based and ethical oral health care to all members of the society – under any circumstances. He explains the targets (see presentation on website). They want to help the NDAs to establish educational programs. He presents the results of a survey they did in 34 countries. The goal was to find out the evolution of continuing education. A report was sent and an article redacted. The next step was a questionnaire about equivalency. He shows the results. It needs time to conduct such surveys and it needs continuity in the group. They also checked on the satisfaction of the lectures. To finish the work about equivalency, edit an article on evolution and finish the pilot study in Georgia is what he wants to do next. He thanks for the collaboration.

3. Relation between dental practitioners and university

Nermin Yamalik presents the results of the 2nd phase of the WG's project "Analysis of The Nature and The Extent of The Collaboration Between Dental Faculties and National Dental Associations". It is a dental faculty perspective. The first attempt showed not many responses. A reminder has been sent and this improved the number of responses (see presentation of the results on the website). Now they have 63 answers. She wants to know whether the delegates would like to continue the WG in trying to increase the response rate. Or would you like us to edit the second draft of article and move to the Forum? The Forum participants should give an answer to the question: how can we close the gap in theory and practice? She thanks the members of the WG for their collaboration.

4. Liberal Dental Practice in Europe

There were only two more answers to the questionnaire regarding the fee schedules since the Prague meeting, informs Ernst-Jürgen Otterbach. Even though the feedback was scarce they could elaborate a few important trends. In 13 of 17 countries fee schedules exist, 4 countries do not have a fee schedule at all. 6 countries have two kinds of fee schedule (a governmental and a private scale with possibility to conclude contracts with private insurance companies). In 10 countries the fee schedules are negotiated with the national dental association. Of those 10 countries only 7 answered to the question if the dentist's opinion was taken into consideration. In conclusion it can be said, that in 12 countries there is no consent regarding the existing fee schedules. This leaves us with the question, if it makes sense to draw up a statement that underlines the importance of a fee schedule which is negotiated under well-balanced conditions between dentists and governmental institutions. It will be the task of the WG to find an answer to this question for the next plenary session.

Ernst-Jürgen Otterbach moves on to the next "hot" topic: FDI Vision 2020.

According to the updated literature only 60% of the world population has access to dental care. The absence of dental care concerns mostly poor and vulnerable population groups. This requires a change from more curative to prevention-oriented treatment concepts under the aspect that oral health must be an integral part of general health. Consequently Prof. Michael Glick and his team request that oral health being an essential part of good general health should be considered a basic human right. Of course FDI must be the leader in recognizing new challenges for the benefit of our patients and our profession.

It seems that a complete change of our occupational profile and practice as well as our professional philosophy worldwide is needed to reach those requirements. This almost leads to the conclusion that many of our decisions taken over the last years have been wrong. Moreover, it almost looks like a revolution in dentistry. Based on the consideration that the current educational models did not sufficiently take into account the differences in oral health worldwide, this FDI paper asks for new educational models focussing on public health skills and the introduction of new health specialists. The role of the dentist is to be changed as a result of the need for alternative healthcare workers. In this document we are invited to support initiatives that allow the introduction of non-traditional oral healthcare providers in regions where there is need for those. This leads on the other hand to the conclusion that in countries where we have a great density of dentists and a population with good oral health there would be no need for such an extensive change. Therefore it seems highly



questionable if it makes sense to request on FDI level such an extensive change in dentistry only to provide a steering tool to enhance oral health in underdeveloped regions. In countries with good structures of care it would bare the danger of unnecessarily changing the profile of a liberal and self-responsible profession. Implementing this new concept could lead to the idea of reducing the health expenditures to a lower level with the side effect that this could cause deterioration of the basic conditions and subsequently of the oral health in parts where so far a high standard of oral health had been achieved.

To sum it up it can be said that this FDI document Vision 2020 can show underdeveloped regions a way how to improve oral health. To propagate it as a global concept in dentistry would be a paradigm change. In other regions it bears the danger of abandoning the well-established principle of “delegation” instead of “substitution” and accepting a possible division of the profession. For this reason the WG Liberal Dental Profession in Europe pleads for recommending this document only to poor and underdeveloped regions and not to endanger in more developed regions a liberal and self-responsible profession. Ernst-Jürgen Otterbach closes his speech by judging the way this paper has been distributed as highly insufficient and unacceptable.

The following speakers agree in most parts with the speech of the WG chairman. No one is against improvements in oral health care in the lesser developed parts of the world. But this does not mean that an extensive change of the dentist’s profile has to be made in Europe for instance. The Vision 2020 document is not utterly bad, it has its quality and is supported in most parts, but there should have been given the possibility to discuss it before printing it in the present luxury manner. The most important concern is that getting into the wrong hands in our countries; it could lead governments to favouring the delegation of dental care which so far and for good reasons has been reserved for the dentist to auxiliaries, just because of economic reasons. This would not be in the patient’s interest in the long run.

Gerhard Seeberger remarks that the FDI president and he himself had exactly had the same thoughts as they were mentioned before and that he had brought them up in the discussion of the task team as well. But FDI has to think globally and then back in the home-countries act locally. If there is no need for the paper in a country, one can leave it unconsidered. It is not binding. But it might be positive for those in need. It is important to have this Vision 2020 paper in order to help to have an organized dentistry and to develop a leadership for the dental profession where this is not the case yet and not for any auxiliary or a member of the dental team. In rural areas of limited access to oral health care, we observe the phenomenon that auxiliary health care providers are starting to fill in the gap. This happens when there is no leadership in dentistry and this paper is important in order to be aware of these needs.

Gerhard Seeberger agrees that the way the paper has been presented has not been adequate. In ERO we have a different understanding of democracy. He finally advises to look at this paper as a possibility to give those a chance, who do not have organized leadership in the dental profession. It is not binding for everybody, it is a proposal, an instrument one is free to use.

It would be wrong to refuse this paper in its entirety, remarks Peter Engel. In regard of the auxiliaries it speaks of a smooth transition from delegation to substitution. This is the „sore point“. Here we need to set precise boundaries. The President presents five valuable reasons why this FDI paper has been of utmost need in order to give FDI the opportunity to develop global action. Contemporarily he responds to questions raised by some delegates. In conclusion of this point of the agenda the German delegation appoints the ERO-president to take care that this concern will be mentioned in the resolution. The President accepts the delegation and promises to present the motion of ERO, especially the principle of “delegation yes – substitution no”, at FDI Council B. (An internal FDI document states that Gerhard Seeberger has carried out the motion.)



5. Integration

Elena Ivanova presents the results of the work of the last year. It started by changing the name of the WG from “Enlargement” to “Integration”. New members as well from the Western countries of Europe could be welcomed. In June 2011 in Moscow the creation of the Eastern European Dental Association was prepared with the purpose of intensifying the work in and with ERO and to get closer to Central Europe. In October 2011 in Antalya this association met for the first time. 7 countries signed the foundation document. She thanks Nermin Yamalik for her contribution to this meeting. In 2012 in Prague Prof. Vagner and Michele Aerden suggested starting the integration activity with the topic of dental professional education. The next meeting of the WG Integration dedicated to professional dental education in European countries will be in November in Moscow. Elena Ivanova informs about yesterday’s meeting and thanks the members of the WG for their contributions.

She is very pleased to report that they established very good relation between all Eastern European countries. This is very important. In the November meeting in Moscow they will be able to bring together all presidents of Eastern European Countries and start integration with an educational topic and a prophylaxis program.

6. Women in dentistry

Vesna Barac-Furtinger is involved in the “women in dentistry forum”, which is taking place at the same time as the ERO plenary session. There is no presentation of this WG.

7. Quality

There were no more answers to the questionnaire since the last plenary session and therefore there is not much to report. Maybe the questions were too complicated. Roland L’Herron will nevertheless try to persuade his colleagues to take some interest in this topic and the work of his group.

8. Dental Team

Edoardo Cavallé reports about a WG meeting in July in Brussels. Its task has been to define the position of dental auxiliaries in Europe. It was considered that every profession should be under the dentist’s supervision, a higher qualified figure beside the DCA should be found and they finally agreed on the dental prevention assistant. The professional profile and the tasks of the dental preventive assistant were defined (see presentation on the ERO website). The WG reached the first main parts of a resolution. The final draft will be ready for the next meeting. Edoardo Cavallé thanks his team for the good collaboration.

B.6 Information on FDI matters

Gerhard Seeberger once again emphasises that in the discussion about the „Vision 2020“ paper he strongly supported the European idea and points out that the word “auxiliary” does not exist in the English version because he was strictly against it.

FDI wants to be transparent and he invites everybody to take the opportunity to participate in the fora.

B.7 Plenary session 2013 - Potsdam, Germany

The next plenary session will take place on April 19/20, 2013 in Potsdam (near Berlin). The German Dental Association is taking care of the organisation. A presentation has been shown in Prague; further information will follow in due time.

Roland L’Herron confirms the candidature of France for the spring plenary session 2014.

Georgia which has shown interest in organising a plenary session could be candidate for 2015.



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B.8 Miscellaneous

The European candidates for a position in FDI committees have the floor.

C Close of the meeting – adjournment

Gerhard Seeberger thanks the delegates, the board members and the interpreters for the collaboration and adjourns the session at 1:30 p.m.

Dr. Gerhard Seeberger
President

Monika Lang
Minutes