

## ***Regional European Organisation of the FDI***

### ***National Report***

***Country: Poland***

***Association: Polish Chamber of Physicians and Dentists***

***Venue: Istanbul***

***Year: 2023***

*Please classify your national report by following subjects:*

#### ***Changes in the association and its organisation***

The Polish National Committee for ERO FDI is formed by the Polish Chamber of Physicians and Dentists and the Polish Dental Society.

The Polish Chamber of Physicians and Dentists is the main professional organization in Poland. It is the organizational body of the professional self-government of physicians and dental practitioners who are associated in the chambers with equal status. Membership is mandatory. Every physician and every dental practitioner who holds the right to practice the profession in Poland is a member of the chamber by virtue of the law. There are 23 Regional Chambers and a separate chamber of military physicians and dentists. The Polish Supreme Chamber of Physicians and Dentists coordinates the work of regional chambers.

In May 2022 the XV General Medical Assembly took place with elections at the level of the Supreme Chamber for the next 4-years term of office - dr Łukasz Jankowski was elected as the President of the Supreme Medical Council.

In June 2022 the Supreme Medical Council elected its Board and Chairpersons of its committees. There 3 dental practitioners at the Board of the Supreme Medical Council – dr Paweł Barucha, (Vice-President), prof. Halina Borgiel-Marek and dr Dariusz Samborski.

In May 2022 we were deeply saddened by the news of the death of dr Kazimierz Bryndal, former president of the Regional Medical Chamber in Toruń (1997-2001), who was representing the Chamber at international level, incl. at ERO, for many years.

### *Trends and developments:*

2020 and 2021 were overshadowed by the COVID pandemic and 2022 was very much overshadowed by the brutal war at our neighbouring country Ukraine.

Since the first days of the Russian aggression, Polish dentists, like all other parts of the Polish society, provided help and support to Ukrainians – especially Ukrainian healthcare professionals. We were very happy to receive a letter in April from prof. Iryna Mazur, president of the Ukrainian Dental Association, entitled “Letter of gratitude to our Polish colleagues”, and later on in December to welcome prof. Mazur and dr Iryna Skrypyk in Warsaw at the meeting of the Supreme Medical Council.

#### *in professional politics*

The Chamber is advocating adoption of new laws which would introduce the no-fault compensation system within the Polish healthcare system.

On 31 August 2022 the Minister of Health set up a Council on dentistry as an advisory body for the Minister. The tasks of the Council include proposing solutions regarding a wide range of issues related to dentistry, in particular:

- under- and postgraduate training of dentists and other dental care professionals;
- principles of exercising dental profession;
- the scope and pricing of dental services financed from public funds

The establishment of the Council was one of the demands of the professional self-government, in order to strengthen the voice of dentists when planning and organizing the dental care system in Poland. The first chairman of this council is the vice-president of the Supreme Medical Council dr Paweł Barucha who pointed out that dentistry is an area to which the Ministry of Health should devote more attention: “Problems faced by dentistry, which is currently almost entirely outside public health care, should be solved in close cooperation with representatives of dentists who know the realities from the inside. Dentistry has to face many challenges, so a direct dialogue between the organizers of the system and its participants is extremely important.”

#### *in educational politics*

No major changes in the reporting period.

E-learning became the most common form of postgraduate learning. Many of them were available free of charge.

#### *in health and social politics*

The costs of running dental practice have risen, due to inflation, rise of energy costs, additional costs related to PPE, new system of taxation and social security contributions applicable to entrepreneurs since 1 January 2022.

#### *in the insurance system*

*(incl. the public health insurance and private insurance schemes)*

No major changes in the reporting period.

For dental care the National Health Fund (the single public payer) gradually allocates less and less of its whole budget: in 2008 it was 4,4 %, for 2023 it is planned to be just 1,87 %.

Still, many dentists are renouncing their contracts (for provision of dental services covered by the statutory health insurance) with the National Health Fund – increase of prices paid by the Fund does not correspond to real increase of costs.

Public expenditure on dental care constitutes appr. 15 % of all dental care expenditure.

An illustrative example regarding the level of public financing of oral care refers to emergency dental care. It is available at those dental offices who have a specific contract with the Fund - patients are seen in emergency cases during the on-call dental duty (on weekdays between 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.; on Saturday, Sunday and public holidays - 24 hours a day).

According to information from media (July 2022), there are just 41 places throughout Poland providing dental emergency services as part of on-call system on the basis of a contract with the Fund.

Majority of dentists in Poland operate exclusively on the private market, outside the general insurance scheme.

### ***Corporate Dentistry:***

#### *position of NDA towards dental chains*

The Chamber has not taken any official position towards dental chains.

The Chamber is of the opinion that an amendment in Polish law should be introduced whereby in every healthcare facility, regardless of who is its legal owner, the chief executive officer should be a medical professional (medical doctor or dentist) who is bound to act in accordance with the principles of medical and dental ethics not only when providing treatment himself but also within the managerial activities.

#### *problems with dental chains and possible solutions*

In Poland there are healthcare chains like LUX MED, Enel-Med, Medicover which include growing number of dental offices. Also other chains are entering the market.

It is visible that there is a growing interest in investing into setting up dental care facilities by commercial entities - both industry investors and private equity funds. We have signals from individual dentists that they receive offers to join such chains and some of them decide to do so.

#### *Changes in fees:*

Due to COVID-19 pandemic and other factors inflation in Poland – similarly to many other European countries – was visibly higher than before. In consequence the costs of dental services in Poland have risen in the last period.

#### *Information regarding promotion of the World Oral Health Day:*

WOHD was promoted in Poland in media.

Webinars, social media campaigns, materials in the Chamber's monthly "Gazeta Lekarska" were addressed not only to dentists, but to all medical doctors and healthcare managers.