

# Regional European Organization of the FDI

## ***NATIONAL REPORT***

Paris (France), April 2014

**COUNTRY: SPAIN**

**ASSOCIATION: SPANISH DENTAL ASSOCIACION**  
*(Consejo General de Colegios Oficiales  
de Odontólogos y Estomatólogos de España).*

**VENUE: Madrid, Spain**

**YEAR: 2013**

### **1. CHANGES IN THE ASSOCIATION AND ITS ORGANISATION:**

There have been no major changes in the Association this year.

Elections for the renewal of positions on the Executive Committee shall be held the upcoming 13<sup>th</sup> of June.

### **2. TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS:**

#### **2.1. In professional politics:**

**2.1.1. Unauthorized practice of the profession:** The State Organization of dental technicians (High Technicians of Vocational Training), continues its pretensions to be freely chosen by the patients after obtaining the prescription of the prosthesis by the dentist. Their fallacies continue about the prosthetic prescription being equal to a medical prescription, comparing it with going to a pharmacy with a doctor's prescription to buy medicine.

They persist with their campaigns of misinformation to citizens, which our Organization attempts to counteract each time.

Lately, they have opened a new path in their claims, denouncing the use of CAD / CAM (CEREC) systems in dental clinics.

In the legal field, the appeal of our Association in the ordinary Courts of Justice against the penalty imposed on us by the National Competition Commission remains unresolved. Meanwhile, this Commission has initiated disciplinary proceedings to several of our Regional Colleges, (Murcia, Extremadura, Andalusia), and imposed a heavy financial penalty on the College of Tenerife.

We continue to obtain favorable sentences for the unauthorized practice of the profession, mainly against some dental technicians who usurp functions typical of dentists. We carry on our harassment policy of these activities with administrative complaints before the security bodies of the State; with lawsuits; investigations with private detectives, etc.

**2.1.2. A plethora of professionals.** With a number of professionals already exceeding the figure of 30,000, we still cannot get neither the Health nor the Educational Regional Governments, (who have assumed responsibilities in this area) to restrict the number of students admitted to the Faculties of Dentistry and establish a numerus clausus. Besides, we have noted the presence of a high number of students from various EU countries (mainly Italy, but also from other nationalities) in the Faculties of Dentistry of the Spanish private universities.

The labor market studies conducted by our Association, show alarming figures on unemployment and underemployment in the sector ... The most recent study details that unemployment reaches 29% among the professionals graduated in the past five years.

**2.1.3. Advertising.** It is possible to detect more and more advertising campaigns made by macro-clinics and franchises, (but also by professionals urged by the economic crisis), which touch, at least, deception and falseness, with comparative services, techniques and prices that are, indeed, contrary to ethical and professional standards. Besides, there is an increase in advertisements promoting tooth whitening treatments in cosmetic centers, hair salons, spas, etc., without apparent supervision of a qualified health professional. Several Colleges have made official complaints about this type of advertising and opened files, where necessary, to the professionals using such marketing practices.

On the other hand, the lawsuit for protection against honor presented by Vitaldent against the President of our Association, Dr. Villa Vigil, for his statements about the advertising made by this franchise against the image of the traditional dentist, has been dismissed by the Courts of Justice.

**2.1.4. Specialties.** While waiting that the Health Administration decides to implement the dental specialties in our country, we continue the proceedings for the development of our non-official Own Title of Specialist Dentist, in an attempt to demonstrate that it is feasible the carrying out of specialties under a residence model similar to our prestigious MIR for medical specialties (Internal Resident Doctor). Despite the opposition by some academics and by some Scientific Societies, who seem to see in danger their "business" of teaching

graduate courses, the project goes ahead. Thirty Schools, which will provide about fifty places for residents, have already been authorized by the specific Committees of each specialty. The call for the admission tests will be published shortly. Additionally, an agreement with the Open University of Madrid (where subjects like Marketing, General Accounting, Finance, Business Management, etc., shall be followed) has been signed, the figure of intern being considered.

**2.1.5. Professional Career Development.** The Regulatory Regulations of the Professional Dentist Career, which will regulate the continued professional development of dentists, has been approved with minor modifications.

**2.1.6. Budgets.** The closing of accounts for 2012 and the financial budget of 2014 were both approved by qualified majorities in the General Assemblies of the year, without significant variations from previous years and in an atmosphere of austerity according to the economic recession of these last years.

**2.1.7. Associationism.** We are acting to support logistically the self-business associationism (ANDA, National Association of Self-employed Dentists) and the union defense (SED, Spanish Union of Dentists). Identically, we have held negotiations with various groups (ADECLIDEMA, Business Association of Dental Clinics of Madrid / APDENT, Professional Association of Dentists ...) expecting to create a federation of these Associations to coordinate their actions and improve their results. We are also developing the contract, for these Associations, of Payment Protection Insurances and Hedging.

## **2.2. In health politics:**

**2.2.1. Portfolio of Public Dental Services.** Against our permanent request of progressively increasing oral health benefits in the State's portfolio of public health services, the last years economic recession in our country is causing cuts in certain State and Regional health services. As an example, the cancellations of certain benefits and reductions in the age cohorts of the Children Dental Care Plans of some Autonomous Regions.

**2.2.2. Health Legislation.** The new Law of Professional Colleges and Services has not yet been published. Through the Draft provided (in successive and contradictory versions), it seems that College registration will remain mandatory in the legal and healthcare sectors (at least for those who maintain direct relationships with patients / clients). But the Draft has alarming parts about possible government intervention in College autonomy, even with power to

suspend the Boards in case of negative reports to the required Annual Reports, and placing limits on admission fees (which are practically removed) and periodical fees (which are drastically reduced) paid by the registered dentists, which endangers the sustainability of many existing professional Corporations.

**2.2.3. Private Medical Prescription.** With the entry into force earlier this year of the Royal Decree on Medical Prescription and Dispensing Orders, the platform created by our Association together with the other professional prescribers Associations and the Pharmacy Board, reliably ensures the safety and traceability in the issuing and printing of prescriptions on paper or by computer. The functioning of this sophisticated and pioneering model is, at present, beyond reproach once the first difficulties inherent to its implementation have been overcome. Recently, a new Royal Decree on Prescription Drugs has also been developed for its immediate implementation.

**2.2.4. Law of Guarantees and Rational Use of Medicines and Health Products.** This Law has also recently undergone some changes in its content and application.

### **2.3. In educational politics:**

**2.3.1. Continuing Education Program.** During 2013, more than one hundred in-person classes have been taught to update knowledge and skills, with special emphasis on practical application courses. This way, we arrive at all territories of our country, in our policy to bring closer the compulsory continuing education to all Spanish professional dentists considering the difficulties for resource limitation of the small or more isolated Colleges. At the same time, we continue enhancing the online and blended learning activities and the accreditation through questionnaires of the scientific articles published in our Journals.

#### **2.3.2. Special topic courses concluded:**

- \* Course of Dental Damage Expertise
- \* Course of Mediation and Arbitration for the Colleges Commission members of Professional Ethics and Patient Care.

### **3. FURTHER INFORMATION (activities, concerns):**

#### **3.1. Publications**

**3.1.1.** We continue the editing of our Journals: "RCOE", with a purely scientific content, and "Dentistas", with general and informative subjects addressed to professionals and the general public. Both in quarterly edition.

**3.1.2.** Publication of the Charter of Rights and Obligations for Patients and Dentists in their mutual relations.

**3.1.3.** The following studies have been published:

- \* "Practices, habits and prices in the dental clinics"
- \* "Relationship between metabolism and the functional state of the prosthesis"
- \* "Effect of the economic crisis in the dental care demand"

The study stratified by gender, age, socioeconomic status and academic training range on "Perception and social knowledge of the powers, functions and training of dental technicians" has also been completed and is ready for publication.

#### **3.2. Studies.**

With regard to our professionals' job placement, the final phases of the study "Current status of the dental profession in Spain: employment quality and professional future of new graduates" have been tackled.

#### **3.3. Performances**

**3.3.1. International presence.** Several delegations representing our Association have attended various international events: FDI Congress (Istanbul, August); ERO Annual Meeting (Potsdam, April); ERO Dental Team Working Group (Paris, March); FEDCAR (Malta and Paris); various meetings of the Council of European Dentists; Congress of the Portuguese Orden dos Médicos Dentistas (Porto, September); ...

The President, Dr. Villa Vigil, and the Vice President, Dr. López Calvo, expressly invited by the Organization, attended the Summit Leaders of the Latin-Portuguese American Dentistry sponsored by the Argentinian Dental Association (Buenos Aires, November), participating in the opening session and the professional thematic roundtables.

**3.3.2.** Congress of the Spanish Dental Association: The XXXIV National and XIV International editions of our Congress were held in Madrid at the end of December, with a program containing mainly professional matters and an interesting scientific complement. Unfortunately, the dates in which the Congress was celebrated (very close to Xmas holidays) and the economic situation of the professionals and the dental industry, made that, this time, attendance was not as large as expected.

**3.3.3.** Professional Directory of Dentists. This directory of professionals and clinics, collecting public data of members and their business addresses, has now been concluded. It also includes a geosearcher, for quick searches of professionals according to the proximity of their location.

**3.3.4.** Advisory Council of the Ministry of Health and Social Services. The incorporation of the President of this Association to that Advisory Board, primarily to the Human Resources and Assessment of Damage Committees, has facilitated to ministerial authorities specific updated data on the excess of professionals in our sector. Additionally, work is being done to have officially established our Scale of Damages caused in the professional practice of Dentistry.

**3.3.5.** Creation of the "Academy of Dental Science" Association, with the appointment by the Management Committee of its first academic members in ten of its sections, among three prestigious professionals provided by the Scientific Societies attached to our Association.

**3.3.6.** Participation in the Congress of the Spanish Association of Health Law, organizing and moderating workshops and roundtables on professional liability (October).

**3.3.7.** Monitoring activities and various studies and events organized by the Centre of Dental Patient Safety.

**3.3.8.** Organizing smoking cessation programs for registered dentists, and action programs against smoking in dental clinics, in collaboration with the National Committee to Prevent Smoking.

**3.3.9.** Digitized file of all official documentation of our Association, with special reference to the creation of a database that includes all judgments regarding issues of interest in our sector.

**3.3.10.** Creation of a new website for our Association, with different sections to inform Colleges, members and the general public, which is constantly updated.

**3.3.11.** Development of the Dentists Pro Program: commercial application software for members' mobile terminals. It gives access to a variety of information: newsletters, agenda, notifications and alerts, interenquiries, ...

#### **3.4. Other business**

**3.4.1.** Changes in the Basis of the Scientific Awards and the Best Article published in the Journals of our Association.

**3.4.2.** Creation of the Form of Prosthetics Prescription and its computer application.

**3.4.3.** Development of the E-Invoices: computer application for a breakdown of the invoices for professional services, according to current legislation

**3.4.4.** Installation of a new voting system for the meetings of our Association (General Assemblies and Inter-autonomous Councils), which will allow the collection and computer record of the weighting of voting contemplated in our Articles.

Madrid, March 2014