

European Regional Organisation of the FDI
National Report

National Report for France 2019

*** French Dental Association/Association dentaire française (ADF) ***
ERO Plenary Session, Almaty, 24-25 April 2020

Changes in the association and its organisation

The French Dental Association held its triennial elections in April 2019. Dr Joël Trouillet and Dr Julien Laupie were (re-)appointed to the position of Secretary General, Sophie Dartevelle to the position of Treasurer.

Trends and developments

— **In professional politics**

• **New national agreement**

The new national agreement signed between the dental profession, the national health insurance fund and private insurance companies in May 2018 came into force on 1st April 2019. The new agreement builds a model of dental care more focused on prevention and improves the financial coverage of care and prostheses but, in return, restricts practitioners' fees for several prosthetic procedures.

Starting from 1st April 2019, a first series of dental treatment charges were revalued, mainly fillings in conservative dentistry and various treatments in paediatric dentistry. Several treatment costs have also been newly added to those covered by the national health insurance fund, including fluoride varnish for children aged 6 to 10 with a high risk of caries, pulp capping, and periodontal assessment in diabetic patients. Free preventive oral health check-ups have been extended to include 3-year-old children.

• **Europe**

With regard partial access, the dental unions *Les Chirurgiens-dentistes de France* (Les CDF) et *l'Union dentaire* (UD) – both ADF members – had requested the Council of State to refer to the European Court of Justice the question of the compatibility of French legislation with EU regulations. As the Council of State accepted the request, the EU Court of Justice will have to say whether partial access to healthcare professions based on automatic recognition – something that we stand against – is or is not contrary to European law.

• **Dental team**

Following the official recognition of the profession of Dental Assistant in the French Code of Public Health, dental assistants have the obligation to register with the French regional health agency (*Agence régionale de Santé* – ARS) of their place of practice and have a new initial training curriculum.

- **Pension reform**

Since 1948, dentists have an autonomous pension fund that guarantees its registered members pension coverage.

However, the French government has proposed to overhaul the current pension system in order to establish a universal system in which 1 Euro paid gives the same rights to all whatever their professional status, incurring the *de facto* disappearance of autonomous pensions. The dental profession stands united against this reform.

— **In educational politics**

- **Continuing education**

The new healthcare bill adopted in France in March 2019 introduces re-certification for all healthcare professionals including dentists.

This re-certification procedure helps, at regular intervals throughout one's working life, to guarantee the maintenance of skills, the quality of professional practice, and a good, up-to-date level of knowledge. All the relevant legislative texts have not been published yet. Re-certification should be implemented from 2021 onwards.

Corporate dentistry/Dental chains

Since the removal in 2009 of the necessity to obtain an administrative authorisation prior to the opening of a dental clinic, private practitioners have been continually warning the government of the health risks incurred by such a measure. Despite these warnings, the number of dental clinics has increased considerably, in an unregulated way (with a 25% increase between 2011 and 2016 and a close to 10% annual increase in 2017 and 2018), particularly in already over-served areas.

Not only has this brought no improvement in terms of access to care (99% of these dental clinics are located in urban areas and 97% apply the third-party payment system to complementary out-of-pocket expenses) but it has resulted in the same consequences as those seen abroad, for the same reasons: health scandals such as the one with Dentexia. Unfortunately, the response from the public authorities – who are under pressure from the health clinic managers – will not be equal to the risks exposed. However, a new legal text adopted in January 2018 does bring slight changes to the requirements for opening and running a health centre. It specifies the content of the health project and empowers the regional health agencies (ARS) to shut down clinics without limiting the motives strictly to health risks, as was the case before. The non-profit nature of health centres is also re-specified.

Information regarding promotion of the World Oral Health Day

The French Union for Oral Health: Union Française pour la Santé Bucco-dentaire (UFSBD), an ADF member organisation, organises specific activities on behalf of the French dental profession. In 2019, the UFSBD conducted awareness, motivation and education campaigns to encourage the population to adopt good oral health habits. The campaigns will include an online survey of the general public, media packs, and information outlets in pharmacies, in schools, and on the social networks.

Further information

The ADF 2020 Annual Dental Meeting (*Congrès de ADF 2019*) will be held from Tuesday 24 November until Saturday 28 November 2020 at the Palais des Congrès de Paris, Porte Maillot. This meeting, the largest European dental meeting with over 27 000 visitors, combines in one single venue an international exhibition (23 000 m² and 400 exhibitors) and a scientific programme (over 100 lectures and workshops, including a large selection in English, and over 400 speakers).

- **Artificial intelligence**

The ADF dedicated the opening session of its 2019 Annual Meeting as well as the triennial seminar it organises for its member associations to digital and new technologies and to artificial intelligence, a (r)evolution already underway in dental offices.

The Association is committed to understanding and anticipating the potential effects of the digital revolution – and particularly the impacts of artificial intelligence – on the way our profession evolves.

Points we would like to discuss

Professional demographics and the quality of training.