

Regional European Organisation of the FDI

National Report

February 2021

Country: Poland

Association: Polish Chamber of Physicians and Dentists

Changes in the association and its organisation

No major changes in the reporting period.

Trends and developments:

It is obvious that 2020 has been overshadowed by the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the healthcare system, economy and social life. The pandemic has dominated most aspects of activities of healthcare professionals, including dentists. The epidemiological situation has become topic number one locally, nationally and globally.

In the early stages of the pandemic in Europe (March – May 2020) most dental facilities in Poland suspended their activities, providing only essential dental care.

The Chamber recommended suspension (postponement) of all treatment that could be postponed from the medical point of view and left the decision to individual dentists whether to continue and in what scope.

At the beginning of the pandemic, the availability of PPE was limited and prices soared.

In March – April the Chamber has been calling upon the authorities to secure adequate amount of PPE for the healthcare staff - there were significant shortages.

Thanks to the donation in the amount of 20 million PLN (appr. 4,5 million EUR) from one of the leading Polish business persons the Chamber's Foundation "Doctors to Doctors" managed to purchase in April 57 tons of PPE and to bring it from China to Poland (4 aircraft deliveries). We managed to obtain 57 t – 470 m³ of PPE:

- 1 million surgical masks,
- 1.5 million FFP2 N95 masks,
- 100,000 class 2 overalls,
- 100,000 goggles,
- 100,000 helmets.

The supplies were transferred to the Regional Chambers and distributed to hospitals and other medical facilities, incl. dental offices.

On 8 April 2020 an article entitled "COVID-19 and professional dental practice. The Polish Dental Association Working Group recommendations for procedures in dental office during an increased epidemiological risk" was published online in the Journal of Stomatology (official journal of the Polish Dental Association). The link to this material was also made available in the Cochrane library as part of "COVID-19 (coronavirus): resources for the oral and dental care team".

It was written by 11 co-authors from the board of the Polish Dental Society and the Polish Chamber of Physicians (incl. dr Anna Lella and dr Radosław Maksymowicz).

In conclusion, the authors recommended making available treatment of urgencies during the epidemic which requires appropriate preparation of the dental office and its personnel. The epidemiological situation in the country changes dynamically, but it is recommended not to leave patients without access to needed medical aid.

As far as the guidelines of the Ministry of Health are concerned, on 25 March 2020 the Ministry of Health issued and made available guidelines regarding provision of dental services during the state of epidemic threat which were developed jointly by the National Consultants in the field of conservative dentistry with endodontics, paediatric dentistry, epidemiology, dental prosthetics, orthodontics, periodontology and dental surgery.

The first guidelines of the Ministry of Health were quite restrictive, then other guidelines were published in May, i.e. when we already had a more experience in working in pandemic conditions.

Generally, limitation of the scope of dental offices' functioning was then recommended. The scope of dental services provided as part of general primary care, dental surgery, paediatric dentistry and conservative dentistry should be limited to performing procedures necessary in the case of urgent intervention, i.e. pain, inflammatory and purulent processes, injuries, cysts and conditions with a high risk of complications of patients.

in professional politics

In the last months of 2020 in Poland new regulations regarding the access to the medical and dental professions for non-EU nationals were adopted.

Initially, the Parliament rejected these proposals in July/August. However, they were submitted again in Autumn (as part of broader regulations related to COVID-19) and adopted quickly by the Parliament – going even further than the initially rejected proposals.

According to new regulations physicians and dentists with non-EU diplomas are to be entitled to work in Poland up to 5 years without the requirement to have their qualifications recognized as equivalent to Polish and EU training standards, in some situations without the need to speak Polish - and even without the need to be registered with the chamber as all other Polish and EU doctors and dentists.

in educational politics

No major changes in the reporting period.

However, due to COVID-19 the e-learning became the most common form of postgraduate learning. Many of them were available free of charge.

On 23 September 2020 dr Anna Lella, following invitation from the International College of Dentists, Section XV, attended a webinar on the activities of ERO (European Regional Organization of the Federation Dentaire Internationale – 56 years of vivid existence). Colleagues who took part in the webinar were very interested in learning about the functioning of ERO.

in health and social politics

A new “sugar” tax which applies to soft energy and alcoholic beverages was introduced in Poland as of 1 January 2021.

The tax applies to certain beverages and syrups, provided that they contain added sugars, sweeteners, caffeine or taurine. The new fee will be calculated for each liter of drink as the sum of two values, constant and variable:

- PLN 0.50 for the content of sugars in an amount equal to or less than 5 g in 100 ml of drink or for the content of at least one sweetener in any amount, and
- PLN 0.05 for each gram of sugar over 5 g in 100 ml of drink.

If caffeine or taurine is added, a fee of PLN 0.10 will be payable, also per liter of drink.

in the insurance system

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

No major changes in the reporting period.

Corporate Dentistry:

position of NDA towards dental chains

Until now the Chamber has not taken any official position towards dental chains since this is not yet occurring in a way it is in some other European countries.

problems with dental chains and possible solutions

In Poland there are chains like LUX MED, Enel-Med, Medicover which include dental offices.

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.

Changes in fees:

No major changes in the reporting period.

Information regarding promotion of the World Oral Health Day:

Due to the pandemic organizers of various events had to slow down or even abandon their normal activities and initiatives. This, for example, concerned the celebrations of the World Oral Health Day in 2020. In Poland since long we have been planning a campaign as part of "Poland says #aaa!" and a project "To make it before caries". A conference announcing the WOHD took place at the Supreme Chamber's office, materials were prepared. Honorary patronage of the action was taken by the Ombudsman for Patient Rights, Ombudsman for Children Rights, Supreme Medical Chamber, Supreme Council of Nurses and Midwives, Polish Society of Midwives and Polish Society of Periodontology.

For obvious reasons, these celebration could not go according to plans. Events that involved public gatherings had to be cancelled.

Further information (activities):



Polish Chamber of Physicians and Dentists

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