

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

### ***National Report***

**Country: GREECE**

**Association: HELLENIC DENTAL ASSOCIATION**

**Venue: BUCHAREST, ROMANIA (virtual)**

**Year: 2021**

*Please classify your national report by following subjects:*

#### ***Changes***

*in the association and its organisation*

There are no legislative or administrative changes.

#### ***Trends and developments:***

*in professional politics*

- We negotiate with the Ministry of Health for the abolition of N<sub>2</sub>O use banning by dentists.
- The legislation about the amalgam phase-down compliance and any improvement in it is applied in Greece through the EU legislation. HDA is in opposition of the amalgam phase-out status and informs all stakeholders and consumers for its opinion and willing.
- Greece is the champion in taxation with the highest rates in Europe. All monetary transactions for providing dental services in excess of € 500 will be obligatorily by a Bank account.
- A new legal framework exists in digitalizing private practices' financial transactions (my data file) by submitting them directly to the Ministry of Financial Affairs.
- After reinforcing an older law it is mandatory the clinic owners to implement measures concerning the accessibility of their premises for the disabled. New clinics must be inspected in a three-year' period if they have adopted the new standards. There is an exception to the measure if changes are architecturally impossible due to the conditions of the building.
- The management of the crisis resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic that leads to the suspension of dental activities. HDA presented two new costing plans for the provision of dental services with a) up-to-date data and b) data that emerged due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The new plans significantly changed the cost of dental services, mainly due to PPE and Infection Control strengthened protocols. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the outbreak observed after the summer period, an additional text of relevant instructions for dentists was issued by HDA. In parallel, a three-hour live streaming seminar on epidemiological and infection control issues related to the dental profession was organized under the auspices of HDA.
- Since September 1st 2020, the prescription of antibiotics for medical purposes is mandatory. After that date, the administration of antibiotics will be carried out only by Doctors/Dentists through the electronic prescription.

### *in health and social politics*

- In February 2020 a new social security law has been enforced related to the contributions to the state Insurance Fund. Now, dentists - as well as other private professionals - have to choose among 6 categories with specific and fixed contribution amounts. The new system replaces the previous contributions' calculating system which was based on an increasing proportion of the annual income.
- The emigration of mostly young dentists pursuing employment opportunities, in other European countries due to the economic and pandemic crisis.

### *in educational politics*

- There are no developments in educational politics in 2020. We remind you of the establishment and operation of the independent "Institute of Professional Affairs", under HDA's supervision and responsibility, where all continuous education scientific events are certified and credited and certified dentists' records are kept.
- A new specialty is recognized by the Government namely "Hospital Dentistry". This recognition follows the previous one of the "Dento-alveolar Surgery" which is internationally known as Oral Surgery.

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

The State insurance Scheme (EOPYY) continues not to cover any kind of dental treatment to all insured Greek citizens.

## **Corporate Dentistry**

### *position of NDA towards dental chains*

Investors must be registered in a separate to the dentists' File in every Regional Dental Society where the "chain" has established clinics.

The same to the dentists' sanctions for violations must be applied to the Investors by the same Disciplinary Body.

### *problems with dental chains*

No significant problems have been reported till now. We underline the need of setting the boundary between advertising and information and protect dentists and the public from unlawful, unfair, and misleading practices.

### *possible solutions*

- A) Licenced dentists must obligatorily obtain at least 51% of every dental entity.
- B) The investors must also comply with the dentists' Code of Ethics.

### *Changes in fees:*

Fees have remained the same for the last 8 years. Only the number of registered dentists increased last year. We expect this number to raise more in the next few years.

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

The Hellenic Dental Association is planning to celebrate World Oral Health Day 2021, although the COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically eliminated the options of in-person and large-scale events. The Council of the Hellenic Dental Association has decided to organize the activities mentioned below, on and around the 20<sup>th</sup> of March, trying to make the best use of modern technology while complying with local sanitary regulations, turning, this way challenges into opportunities.

We are living in the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic which continues to besiege health systems worldwide.

In Greece, the national vaccination plan entitled «ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΙΑ» (FREEDOM) is in progress, an operation which is the greatest health challenge in contemporary history and as reflected in the prioritization of the National Vaccination Committee, dentists are included in the first phase of vaccination against COVID-19.

In this context and with this years' World Oral Health Day as a milestone, the Hellenic Dental Association's Council will celebrate March the 20<sup>th</sup> with a communication campaign in an effort to raise awareness of the public, focusing on:

- The importance of Oral Health as one the most important preventive measures,
- The importance of early diagnosis of oral diseases and the close connection of oral health to general health and well-being,
- The vital role of dentists, especially during a pandemic,
- Patient safety in dental healthcare.

Last year, the Hellenic Dental Association won the WOHD Awards 2020 in the category "Best Media Campaign". The value of this media and communication work can have a powerful multiplier effect as we are in the middle of a period when the need for comprehensive, diverse and multi-level information is greater than ever. We shall disseminate this year's WOHD messages through:

### **Digital and Social Media**

The main communication channel is the official Facebook account of the Hellenic Dental Association.

The hashtag of the global campaign which is #MouthProud will be conveyed in Greek by the phrase "*Proud Smiles behind the masks*".

Photographs of the public's "*proud smiles*" will create a collage on the wall. The public will be able to share their own moments which will be shared by our account.

- Live webinar/Press conference.
- 5 posts with infographics on oral health and 1 video.
- The accounts of the National Ministry of Health and the National Public Health Organization on Facebook will be a means of reproducing and spreading the campaign messages.
- Participation of Social Media Influencers who will create their own content with the same hashtag.

### Television/Radio/Press

- Articles/ Interviews/reports on the importance of Prevention, to be reproduced and posted on social media.

The HDA WOHD21 campaign is under the auspices of the Ministry of Health.

### *Further information (activities):*

#### **What are your 3 main concerns?**

- Identifying the minimum basic number and kind of dental procedures that a (state or private) Insurance Fund must provide (or freely offer) to safeguard the oral health of its insured citizens.
- How the COVID-19 pandemic influences the dental profession generally and especially the provision of dental procedures, the economic transactions - income and the oral health indicators.
- A dentist must be treated by the state insurance Scheme (EOPYY) as a doctor in prescribing medical laboratory tests and bio-pathological indicators.

#### **3 points you would like to discuss**

- A single European grading system for Continuous Education events.
- Homogenization and harmonization of dental professions and specialties in European countries. Description of an ideal model.
- Support the basic right of the patients to freely choose their dentist. Interventions by merchants, hygienists, dental technicians, private insurance funds, etc.

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