

Oral health: action plan for promotion and integrated disease prevention

The Sixtieth World Health Assembly,

Recalling resolutions WHA22.30, WHA28.64 and WHA31.50 on fluoridation and dental health, WHA36.14 on oral health in the strategy for health for all, WHA42.39 on oral health; WHA56.1 and WHA59.17 on the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control; WHA58.22 on cancer prevention and control; WHA57.14 on scaling up treatment and care within a coordinated and comprehensive response to HIV/AIDS; WHA57.16 on health promotion and healthy lifestyles; WHA57.17 on the Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health; WHA58.16 on strengthening active and healthy ageing; WHA51.18 and WHA53.17 on prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases, and WHA58.26 on public-health problems caused by harmful use of alcohol;¹

Acknowledging the intrinsic link between oral health, general health and quality of life;

Emphasizing the need to incorporate programmes for promotion of oral health and prevention of oral diseases into programmes for the integrated prevention and treatment of chronic diseases;

Aware that the importance of the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases has been highlighted in the Eleventh General Programme of Work 2006–2015;

Appreciating the role that WHO collaborating centres, partners and nongovernmental organizations play in improving oral health globally,

1. URGES Member States:

(1) to adopt measures to ensure that oral health is incorporated as appropriate into policies for the integrated prevention and treatment of chronic noncommunicable and communicable diseases, and into maternal and child health policies;

(2) to take measures to ensure that evidence-based approaches are used to incorporate oral health into national policies as appropriate for integrated prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases;

¹ Document A60/16.

- (3) to consider mechanisms to provide coverage of the population with essential oral-health care, to incorporate oral health in the framework of enhanced primary health care for chronic noncommunicable diseases, and to promote the availability of oral-health services that should be directed towards disease prevention and health promotion for poor and disadvantaged populations, in collaboration with integrated programmes for the prevention of chronic noncommunicable diseases;
- (4) for those countries without access to optimal levels of fluoride, and which have not yet established systematic fluoridation programmes, to consider the development and implementation of fluoridation programmes, giving priority to equitable strategies such as the automatic administration of fluoride, for example, in drinking-water, salt or milk, and to the provision of affordable fluoride toothpaste;
- (5) to take steps to ensure that prevention of oral cancer is an integral part of national cancer-control programmes, and to involve oral-health professionals or primary health care personnel with relevant training in oral health in detection, early diagnosis and treatment;
- (6) to take steps to ensure the prevention of oral disease associated with HIV/AIDS, and the promotion of oral health and quality of life for people living with HIV, involving oral-health professionals or staff who are specially trained in primary health care, and applying primary oral-health care where possible;
- (7) to develop and implement the promotion of oral health and prevention of oral disease for preschool and school children as part of activities in health-promoting schools;
- (8) to scale up capacity to produce oral-health personnel, including dental hygienists, nurses and auxiliaries, providing for equitable distribution of these auxiliaries to the primary-care level, and ensuring proper service back-up by dentists through appropriate referral systems;
- (9) to develop and implement, in countries affected by noma, national programmes to control the disease within national programmes for the integrated management of childhood illness, maternal care and reduction of malnutrition and poverty, in line with internationally agreed health-related development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration;
- (10) to incorporate an oral-health information system into health surveillance plans so that oral-health objectives are in keeping with international standards, and to evaluate progress in promoting oral health;
- (11) to strengthen oral-health research and use evidence-based oral-health promotion and disease prevention in order to consolidate and adapt oral-health programmes, and to encourage the intercountry exchange of reliable knowledge and experience of community oral-health programmes;
- (12) to address human resources and workforce planning for oral health as part of every national plan for health;
- (13) to increase, as appropriate, the budgetary provisions dedicated to the prevention and control of oral and craniofacial diseases and conditions;

(14) to strengthen partnerships and shared responsibility among stakeholders in order to maximize resources in support of national oral health programmes;

2. REQUESTS the Director-General:

(1) to raise awareness of the global challenges to improving oral health, and the specific and unique needs of low- and middle-income countries and of poor and disadvantaged population groups;

(2) to ensure that the Organization, at global and regional levels, provides advice and technical support, on request, to Member States for the development and implementation of oral-health programmes within integrated approaches to monitoring, prevention and management of chronic noncommunicable diseases;

(3) continually to promote international cooperation and interaction with and among all actors concerned with implementation of the oral-health action plan, including WHO collaborating centres for oral health and nongovernmental organizations;

(4) to communicate to UNICEF and other organizations of the United Nations system that undertake health-related activities, the importance of integrating oral health into their programmes;

(5) to strengthen WHO's technical leadership in oral health, including increasing, as appropriate, budgetary and human resources at all levels.

Eleventh plenary meeting, 23 May 2007
A60/VR/11

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