

Oral health and healthy ageing

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The important link between oral health and healthy ageing was the focus of this year's World Oral Health Forum (WOHF) event held on 5 September 2018 during the FDI World Dental Congress in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

The FDI World Dental Federation launched the WOHF in 2012, inspired by the model of the World Economic Forum annual meeting in Davos. WOHF is in line with FDI's Vision 2020 initiative to shape the future of oral health and takes place every year during the World Dental Congress.

During this year's WOHF, an advocacy leaflet *Achieving a healthy ageing society*¹ was released emphasising the need to adapt health systems to meet growing oral health needs of ageing populations globally.

Also available was the *Roadmap for healthy ageing*,² a quick reference guide outlining strategies and actions that stakeholders can implement to address the oral health needs of older adults that was developed by FDI's Oral Health for an Ageing Population Task Team.

The Roadmap proposes a range of strategies and actions that various stakeholders can implement, globally or locally, to meet the needs of older adults with different levels of dependency.

Adapting oral healthcare systems to meet the needs of older populations will require a coalition of different stakeholders and the Roadmap identifies the following groups who can contribute to improving oral healthcare systems within their area of expertise and action:

- Policymaker or government officials
- FDI World Dental Federation
- National dental association
- Dentist or member of a dental team
- Health professional
- Public health professional
- Researcher or academic
- Journalist.

In addition, eight different pillars, or fields of action, have been defined as:

- Integrate oral care into general care
- Promote oral health throughout the life-course
- Shape evidence-based oral health policies
- Remove financial barriers
- Remove physical barriers
- Provide appropriate oral healthcare
- Mobilise all stakeholders along the care pathway
- Foster community-based programmes.

Specific actions and roles of each stakeholder group are described, for each group, in a matrix format, allowing each stakeholder group to quickly identify how they can contribute to maintaining and improving the oral health of older adults. It also shows how each stakeholder group's role can complement the others.

Public Health England has also launched its new resources for older people, publishing three documents³ on 7 September 2018.

These resources are designed to support commissioners to improve the oral health of vulnerable older people in all settings.

The first 'toolkit' document gives an overview of the impact of oral diseases in vulnerable older people, the evidence on what works to improve oral health in this group, and advice to commission services to improve oral health.

The toolkit is supported by a rapid review of the evidence and a resource compendium, which has links to resources to support oral health improvement for older people. ■

1. FDI World Dental Federation. *Achieving a healthy ageing society*. 2018. Available at <https://www.fdiworlddental.org/resources/brochures/achieving-a-healthy-ageing-society> (accessed 8 October 2018).
2. FDI World Dental Federation. *Roadmap for healthy ageing*. 2018. Available at <https://www.fdiworlddental.org/resources/toolkits/roadmap-for-healthy-ageing> (accessed 8 October 2018).
3. Public Health England. *Guidance: Commissioning better oral health for vulnerable older people* (7 September 2018). Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/commissioning-better-oral-health-for-vulnerable-older-people> (accessed 8 October 2018).