



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION  
OF DENTAL HYGIENISTS

International Federation of Dental Hygienists  
PARTNERS IN  
**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**  
Improving Oral Health Worldwide

# NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## UNIQUE WORLDWIDE DENTAL HYGIENE CONFERENCE ON SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY A HUGE SUCCESS

Florence, Italy

Rockville, MD, 1B July 13, 2017– The International Federation of Dental Hygienists (IFDH) held *A Global Oral Health Strategy Session, Social Responsibility Conference-Workshop* in Florence, Italy, July 7-8, 2017. The meeting was attended by worldwide leaders in the area of social responsibility, and representatives from 20 IFDH country association members, all with the goal of improving health worldwide.

The meeting was opened by IFDH President Robyn Watson, who welcomed the group and said: *"It is a great pleasure to see the realization of our efforts in bringing together experts from around the world to help us create projects, develop leaders, and change the emphasis of oral health care to prevention. This is the beginning of our journey"*

Professor Raman Bedi, Chair, Global Child Dental Fund and WFPHA Oral Health Committee said: *"Developing leadership and advocacy within the dental profession will ultimately lead to improved oral health understanding among the global population."*

The message is that "we need to be the change we wish to see in the world" (Gandhi). The importance of care for the unserved and underserved in all phases of life was emphasized during the conference.

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Professor Wendell Evans, Colgate Chair, University of Sydney, WHO consultant, said: *"Only hygienists can save us!!!"*

This conference is the second phase of the IFDH Social Responsibility program. The first phase, the 2016 Social Responsibility Workshop, built awareness amongst the IFDH House of Delegates with a half-day workshop held at the 2016 House of Delegates meeting in Lucerne, Switzerland, where representatives of all 30 member countries were present. The workshop set the stage for delegates to understand their role in supporting social responsibility programs within their respective countries and worldwide.

The delegates were charged with initiating further discussions about social responsibility in their respective countries and identifying teams to attend a 2017 conference that focus on identifying action plans that are community-based and advocacy focused to prevent caries in children.

This two-day conference in Florence, Italy brought together experts in prevention programs and health literacy who supported dental hygienists in creating the steps needed to be effective in health promotion and disease prevention.

Also among the speakers were Professor Ken Eaton, Chair, Platform for Better Oral Health Europe; Yvonne Nyblom, President EDHF; Dr. Ono Hofman, Chairman, Ivory Cross; and Dr David Walker, Honorary Research Fellow, University of Sydney, WFPHA Working Group on Oral Health. Wil Pelksman of the Netherlands gave a workshop and presentation on working with the elderly.

To give all members more specifics on types of programs to undertake, several of the IFDH country members gave presentations on the current social responsibility programs currently underway in their countries. The IFDH country member teams will implement their programs from 2017-2019.

The third element of the program will include a workshop and poster presentations at the 2019 International Symposium on Dental Hygiene where representatives from countries who have implemented social responsibility programs will provide information concerning the outcomes of their programs.

President Robyn Watson, on behalf of the Board of Directors, and the IFDH thanked the sponsors - Dentsply Sirona Preventive, GSK, Colgate, and Crest Oral Care-Oral B; The Italian Dental Hygienists Association (AIDI); the speakers; all those who attended the conference, and everyone involved in the success of the conference.

The International Federation of Dental Hygienists was officially formed on June 28, 1986 in Oslo, Norway. The forerunner of the IFDH, The International Liaison Committee on Dental Hygiene, was established in 1973, by some European countries (including the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the UK), the USA, Canada and Japan. The IFDH is an international non-governmental organization, free from any political, racial, or religious ties. It is incorporated and registered in the United States as a 501(c6) non-profit organization. It unites dental hygiene associations from around the world in their common cause of promoting dental health.

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IFDH attendees of the Social Responsibility Workshop representing 17 countries, including Australia, Canada, Italy, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Latvia, Malta, New Zealand, Nepal, Russia, Spain, Africa Singapore, UK, UAE and USA, along with the IFDH Board of Directors (seated).

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