

PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

It is with great humility and honour that I assume the Presidency of the International Federation of Dental Hygienists (IFDH). When I consider those who have gone before me, I am very humble to be in their presence and honoured to be included with them.

A very sincere and special thank you to my colleague and retiring President Dr Kerstin Öhrn for all her years of involvement and service to IFDH, initially as Delegate for Sweden, then as an executive member, culminating in President 2001–2004. Kerstin's dedication and commitment to IFDH has contributed enormously to the growth and development of the Federation and further advanced our goal to raise awareness of the profession of dental hygiene on a global basis.

I would like to congratulate my fellow executives on their appointments and look forward to working together over the next 3 years.

Over the 15 years, I have been involved with IFDH, I have witnessed the evolution of a young fledgling organization into a strong global federation providing leadership and support to dental hygienists in 24 countries. The Federation has established itself within the global dental community, represents dental hygiene at international dental meetings, is recognized as a source of reference, developed an international Code of Ethics, established the IFDH International Dental Hygienist Day, developed resource material for members and non-members, i.e. draft 2, 3 and 4-year curriculum, established the IFDH website and published the Federation's first peer reviewed journal the *International Journal of Dental Hygiene*.

Every 3 years, prior to an International Symposium on Dental Hygiene, the governing body of IFDH, the House of Delegates, meets to conduct the business of the Federation and plan for the next 3 years. This past week, the House of Delegates met in Toledo where they reviewed and evaluated the recommendations of Standing Committees and set new operational goals for the next term. My fellow Executive and Committee Chairs will be working to achieve these goals, which embrace the Purpose of IFDH. They are to:

- Safeguard and defend the interests of the profession of dental hygiene
- Represent and advance the profession of dental hygiene

- Promote professional alliances with its association members as well as with other associations, federations, and organizations whose objectives are similar
- Promote and coordinate the exchange of knowledge and information about the profession, its education and its practice
- Promote access to quality preventive oral health care services
- Increase public awareness that oral disease can be prevented through proven regimen
- Provide a forum for the understanding and discussion of issues pertaining to dental hygiene

IFDH have established the following Standing and *ad hoc* Committees.

- Nominations
- Development
- Membership
- Procedures
- Education
- Oral Health Promotion
- Symposium
- Ethics

I am always empowered after attending these meetings. Working with such a dedicated group of oral health care professionals, who bring such a wealth of experience and knowledge to the group, you cannot help but be inspired by the comraderie, passion, vision and professionalism. They are a dynamic group of individuals who work in such a cohesive manner to promote and advance the profession of dental hygiene on a national and international basis.

It does not matter which hemisphere you are from, what language you speak, which country you reside in, there are so many issues faced by individuals and organizations that are common to us all. I am constantly amazed at the similarities between dental hygiene in my own country, Australia, and those of my international colleagues. Yes, we are truly a global profession.

Sue Aldenhoven
President IFDH

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