



Dr. Jack Cottrell, Treasurer, FDI World Dental Federation

Chiraz: Hello and welcome to CDA Oasis. FDI world dental federation wrapped up their mid-year meetings last May and we have invited Dr. Jack Cottrell to tell us more about the meetings. Dr. Cottrell, is a general dentist in port Perry Ontario and currently treasurer at FDI. Dr. Cottrell it's always a pleasure to host you on Oasis, welcome to this conversation.

Dr. Cottrell: Thank you so much.

Chiraz: So, can you tell us what are the highlights of the mid-year meetings?

Dr. Cottrell: The meetings are very special in the FDI world dental federation. It's an opportunity for all of the leadership to get together in one venue. Also, all of our committees, our standing committees and at that point it's more of a working and planning session together. So by having everybody under one roof, we're able to kind of impart what our vision and strategy are, based on our strategic plan details; and then what we're doing is giving really the marching orders, the work plans for the committees and they will deliberate and they will come up with projects, activities that they would like to do, not only finishing up this year but also for next year. And this is crucial for our budgeting process because you know after this meeting is completed, they have about a month to be able to finalize plans for the following year and then be able to submit budgets and of course all of that goes through a process in order to be able to get approvals by the large general assembly which will be in Buenos Aires in September. So, it's not only a matter of seeing where we were, where we have been, it's where we are and where we're going.

Chiraz: So, you mentioned project by committees and planning for projects for FDI. Can you give us a few examples of those?

Dr. Cottrell: Yes, you know we're very fortunate actually right now that we've been able to be very fiscally flush with the organization, so we've been very ambitious in terms of what we've been able to tackle, and we've got a few amazing programs in place right now that are ongoing. And one is an oral health for an aging population project and that's been ongoing now for a couple of years. It's in the final stages. We will get a report in Buenos Aires, but the final report will come the following year and it's really about recognizing the importance of oral health in order to achieve health into the later years in life, how important oral health is. And it's about positioning oral health in that manner. Our position in the global arena with the NCDs, non-communicable diseases: we've tried for many, many years to be able to elevate oral health, to be recognized on the same platform as say diabetes, cardiovascular disease or cancer or chronic respiratory disease. These are the big ones when people talk about non-communicable diseases and the high mortality rates and the high cost of health care as a result of that. And oral health is right in that category in terms of the prevalence of

oral health disease within the global population and the costs associated with the treatment as well as the lost time and productivity because of problems in that area. And this year, through our advocacy efforts, we've been able to get on the agenda for a very high-level meeting on non-communicable diseases and that will be held in New York in September and oral health now is on the agenda and we're a very active part of what we call an NCD or non-communicable diseases alliance. So, we now have a much stronger voice when we're talking to government and government health agencies.

Chiraz: Can you tell our audience how do these issues get to be on the agenda for FDI? And at the same time, this ties into a question that I always ask you when I speak with you about FDI, why is it important for Canada to be sitting around the executive table?

Dr. Cottrell: Well, again, they're very, very closely tied. The issues come up, as you know, the FDI world federation is made up of about 200 national dental associations in 130 some odd countries around the world. So, it's a very, very much a global force. And Canada, the Canadian Dental Association is one of those national dental associations, a very vital, national dental association in terms of respect that they carry on the global scene. But many of these issues, we're continually monitoring and getting feedback from our national dental association, so we're surveying, regular contact and through our world dental congress in order to be able to have them bring issues that are relevant in their countries and we start to get a kind of a ground [inaudible]; then we'll see where our role is in being able to bring that forward.

Dr. Cottrell: The other way that some of these issues come is from the top down and from the WHO, issues that they're working on. One example would be sugar index and the statements that they made on sugar consumption a couple of years ago. And FDI was very very much involved in a huge way in the production of those statements and the positions relative to those statements. In trying to get with the United Nations for example, you know, when they make health policy and part of this is just what I talked about with the higher-level meeting in September; is getting oral health integrated in every single health policy that's produced around the world. And so that is extremely important for dentists universally.

Dr. Cottrell: So, getting back to your questions about Canadian dentists, a lot of things that are extremely relevant to administer in their offices. The position that we develop every year, we have a whole library of positioning statements. These are a collaboration with all the dental national dental associations worldwide with the scientific community bringing together positions on various things, whether it be infection control or dental materials or antimicrobial resistance. All of these aspects of dentistry and to have the world get together and agree on this is where we have to put our stick in the ground. This is where the profession is at right now. This is extremely helpful for dentists in their offices and to be able to look at that and be comfortable with where they are and what



they're doing in their clinical practices. Canada has a huge part in that input process. And, again, they should be very, very proud of the work that the Canadian Dental Association delegation does in order to bring these things to light, to be able to critically [inaudible] these statements as they get kind of synthesized into the final drafts and would be able to have a final product. If you're not at the table, then whatever is developed could be entirely different or substantially different from what we may be doing already in our practices.

Dr. Cottrell: And yet, now you were going in a different direction. So, it's very, very important for Canadian dentists to first of all, have their own association very actively involved and respected, as the Canadian Dental Association is, as well as to be able to use policy statements to be able to tailor them to what they do in their practices.

Chiraz: Can't emphasize it enough. Dr. Cottrell, thank you so much for taking the time to speak with me today.

Dr. Cottrell: Thank you so much. It's always a pleasure.