

Ethical International Recruitment of Oral Health Professionals

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FDI acknowledges that access to oral healthcare as well as migration for professional, economic or personal reasons are human rights and all countries need to plan accordingly. Many oral health workers are seeking opportunities and greater job security in the international labour market.

Expanding labour markets have intensified professional concentration in urban areas and accelerated the international migration of health workers from the poorest to the wealthiest countries. Some countries are limiting investment in health worker education that is resulting in fewer young graduates. The resulting severe shortages together with inappropriately trained healthcare workers, and gaps in service coverage characterize the workforce crisis that now exists in many countries.

Planned international recruitment of oral health professionals can only be a partial solution to domestic shortages. It is essential that international recruitment be done without detriment to health services of countries.

FDI endorses the 57th World Health Assembly resolution (WHA57.19) that recognized the place of government-to-government agreements in helping to manage migration and to consider independent monitoring of these agreements. National Dental Associations are called upon to:

- collaborate with governments to ensure that an adequate number of dentists are educated and licensed to practice, taking into account national needs and resources;
- promote policies and strategies that enhance effective retention of dentists in their countries;
- promote strategies with partners to lessen the adverse effects of emigration of dentists and minimize their impact on health systems; and
- encourage their governments to provide oral health professionals legally recruited from abroad who meet the destination countries' practice requirements with employment rights and protections equivalent to other oral health professionals in their countries, including careers support and access to continuing professional development.