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PRESS RELEASE

Council of European Chief Dental Officers Meet in Lisbon and Review the Provision of Emergency Oral Health Care in Europe

The Council of European Chief Dental Officers (CECDO) held their six monthly meeting in Lisbon from 21 – 23 November 2007. The meeting was hosted by the Portuguese Ministry of Health and the Portuguese Dental Association as part of the Portuguese Presidency of the European Union and in parallel with the Dental Association's annual conference.

On 21 November, during open sessions, the CECDO heard presentations on the current state of oral health in Portugal from a series of distinguished local speakers. On 22 November, closed workshops (for CECDO members only) were held on the issues of the provision of oral health care for adults and emergency oral health care and the CECDO business meeting was held. On 23 November, CECDO members attended the morning session of the Portuguese Dental Association's conference during which speakers from Spain, United Kingdom, France and Portugal reviewed models for the provision of oral health in Europe.

Immediately prior to the meeting the CECDO had conducted a survey of the provision of emergency oral health care in the different countries of Europe. It was concluded that in the vast majority of these countries there is a legislative obligation for national and local Government to ensure that all citizens, who have life threatening diseases and/or conditions, should receive prompt care (including dental care). They also concluded that there is a need to educate the public in the appropriate use of emergency and urgent dental care.

The results were discussed during the workshop: criteria for diseases and conditions in which there is a need for emergency oral health care and for the degree of urgency for the treatment of these conditions. CECDO intends to continue these discussions at future meetings.