

Wellness Resource DEVELOPMENT PLAN

This guide aims to help National Dental Associations develop mental health programmes to support dental professionals. Dental professionals and students face unique pressures that can significantly affect their mental health and overall well-being. This plan outlines a structured approach to supporting dental teams through resource development, awareness initiatives, and advocacy efforts. The ultimate goal is to ensure that wellness remains a central and sustained focus within the dental profession worldwide.

Note: Some of the recommended actions are available for free, while others may involve costs.

COLLECT DATA AND REVIEW

Use formats such as online membership surveys on mental health, as well as interviews and/or focus groups, to collect data across different groups and settings (e.g., students, public or hospital workforce, private practice, specialists, corporate employees, military personnel, and those in rural areas etc.) to assess the drivers of mental health challenges at the national level and guide future well-being initiatives.



Periodically review the effectiveness of resources and initiatives through membership surveys, interviews and focus groups.

Reference survey example: [Mental-health-and-wellbeing-survey](#)

Implement updates and changes as required, based on the findings and feedback collected.

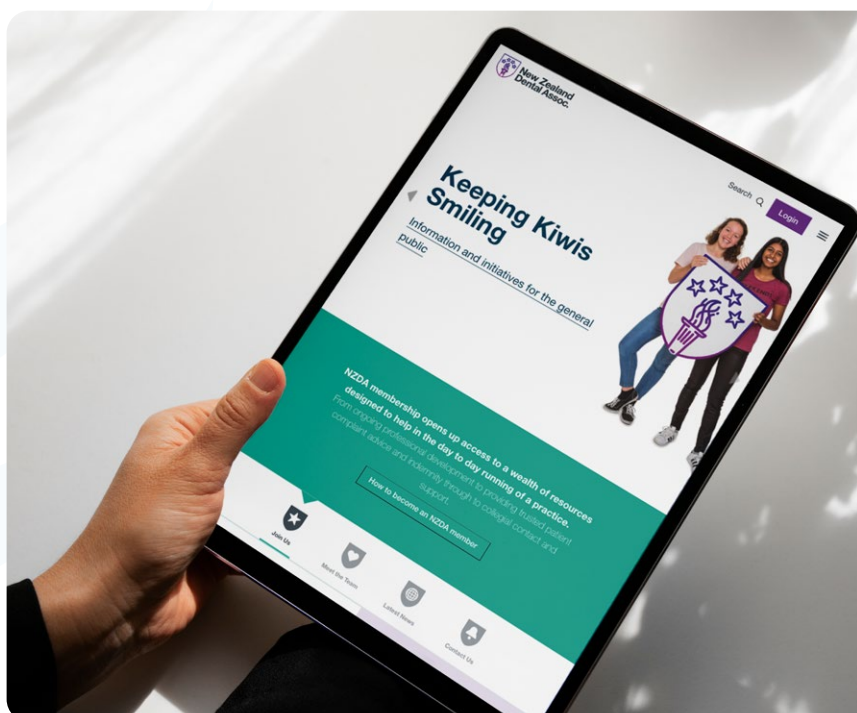
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Create website resources - Develop tools such as the FDI Mental Health and Well-being in the Dental Workplace Toolkit and other materials relevant to members' needs, based on data analysis.

<https://fdimentalhealthtoolkit.org/>

<https://www.nzda.org.nz/>

Collate local support services - Present and promote free resources already available in the country, such as depression, anxiety, and suicide crisis helplines, addiction services, mindfulness apps, and other easily accessible supports for members.



Specific member support services

- Provide counselling services.
- Deliver webinars and/or podcasts on mental health e.g. FDI mental health series available through the Dental Check-up Podcast.
- Offer support in response to complaints.
- Offer training for Well-being Champions including peer communication and Mental Health First Aid.



ENGAGEMENT AND AWARENESS

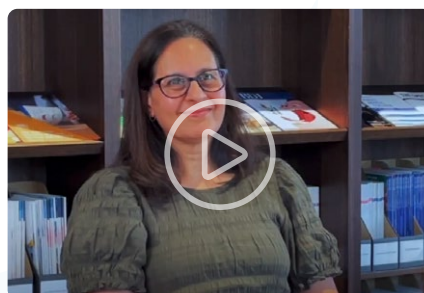
Integrate well-being sessions into NDA events (e.g. meetings and conferences): Include relevant speakers or workshops on topics such as burnout awareness and symptoms, ergonomics, sleep health, mindfulness, work-life balance. Consider showcasing members' personal or creative pursuits, for example through an art exhibition featuring their work.

Local roadshow: Host in-person mental health discussions where possible. Organize group meetings to discuss data findings, workshop wellness strategies, and encourage peer support and connection.

Promote the normalization of mental health discussions: Share videos and personal stories from members, including leaders in the profession, discussing their challenges and how they overcame them (e.g., NZDA's "It's Time to Open Up"). Encourage members to participate.

References:

- FDI Mental Health Series¹
- Stress & Prioritizing Mental Health in Dentistry²
- Videos: Amanda Johnston³, Fleur Woolford⁴, Anita Zaveri⁵, Mo Amso⁶



ADVOCACY AND POLICY

Ensure the regulator maintains “right touch” standards and that complaint management processes are timely and consistent.

Ensure members are informed that mental health support services should be sought during any stressful process.

Encourage the inclusion of mental health provisions in the clauses of provident insurance contracts.

Provide mental health services for the extended dental team, including practice managers, covering topics such as warning signs and what to do in times of crisis.

Collaborate with universities and dental schools to promote and encourage discussion and monitoring of the mental welfare of dental students.

Promote financially and physically sustainable practice models among all stakeholders, including governments, insurance providers, and corporate partners.

Monitor workforce data, including practitioner population and distribution, and encourage collegiality and peer support in isolated areas.

Launch a public and patient awareness campaign to promote kindness towards dentists and their teams, such as “*Be kind to the Dentist and the Team.*”



COMMIT

Ensure that the mental well-being of dentists and their teams remains a core priority for National Dental Associations.

Resources

- ¹ <https://www.fdiworlddental.org/dental-check-mental-health-series>
- ² <https://www.fdiworlddental.org/stress-strength-prioritizing-mental-health-dentistry>
- ³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RBAKolZEmkM>
- ⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qpqM3RI9pag>
- ⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9dIVAhfOs3Q>
- ⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NbZ24I9ZcPY>



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