

## Platform for Better Oral Health in Europe's statement on EU4Health

### Improve health system resilience by addressing inequalities in oral health

12 June 2020

The Platform for Better Oral Health in Europe welcomes the European Commission's proposed €9.4 billion [EU4Health Programme](#), part of the EU [Recovery Plan](#) published on 27 May. The COVID-19 crisis has shown how critical it is to adequately fund health to address health security, inequalities and health crises in the EU.

This is an encouraging sign from the EU in terms of its commitment to health funding. A standalone funding programme with a significant budget sends the right sign that health is a priority for the EU.

The Platform was glad to take part in a stakeholder seminar on 11 June on the Programme, organised by the lead MEP on the EU4Health file in the European Parliament, Cristian-Silviu Buşoi, from the European People's Party (EPP). We welcome the many proposals tabled by our colleagues from civil society and industry, and emphasise that **addressing health inequalities should be a key, overarching focus of the program**. We heard many MEPs support this approach – which we hope to see further developed in the months to come.

As our [Manifesto](#) outlines, oral health is an integral part of general health and a good indicator for current and future health risks as oral diseases share common risk factors with other noncommunicable diseases, such as tobacco and alcohol consumption, which impact cardio-vascular and respiratory diseases. As such, good oral health can improve health system resilience.

Health inequalities are likely to be deepened in post COVID-19 health systems across Europe and must be addressed by any health funding settlement. Due to the big variations in access to oral care between and within countries and social-economic groups, increasing inequalities in oral health is particularly concerning and something that should be addressed urgently through coordinated EU action.

As the debate on the EU4Health Programme continues between Member States and in the European Parliament, we urge all policymakers to ensure funding for health remains a European priority and to remember that adequate oral health is a crucial component of a cohesive, One Health approach.

*The Platform for Better Oral Health in Europe is a joint initiative of the Association for Dental Education in Europe (ADEE), the Council of European Chief Dental Officers (CECDO), the European Association of Dental Public Health (EADPH), the Oral Health Foundation and the Pan-European Region of the International Association for Dental Research (PER-IADR). Its work is supported by an unrestricted grant from Mars Wrigley through the Wrigley Oral Healthcare Program (WOHP) and GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare who have no editorial control over its activities or the content of any externally distributed content or reports.*

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