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A NEW DAY FOR PATIENTS AND CONSUMERS: TOOTH WHITENING TO BE ONLY CARRIED OUT BY DENTAL PRACTITIONERS

The Council of European Dentists (CED) welcomes the adoption yesterday by the Council of the European Union of the [Council Directive amending Directive 76/768/EEC, concerning cosmetic products, for the purpose of adapting Annex III thereto to technical progress.](#)

The CED called repeatedly for appropriate regulation of tooth whitening products at EU level in line with the advice from the European Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety which stressed that higher concentration products can be safe when used after a clinical examination and under the supervision of a dentist.

Following the Council's decision, tooth whitening products containing up to 0.1% of hydrogen peroxide will continue to be freely available to the consumers on the market. For products containing between 0.1% and 6% of hydrogen peroxide, clinical examination and first treatment by a dentist will be required, to ensure the absence of risk factors or oral pathologies, after which the patient will be able to continue the treatment by him or herself. The use of these products by persons younger than 18 years will not be allowed. Tooth whitening products containing more than 6% of hydrogen peroxide will continue to be prohibited. The CED believes these changes will enhance patient safety by ensuring that they can only access appropriate products via a trained and qualified dental professional.

Member States will have 12 months to transpose the Directive into national legislation after its publication in the Official Journal of the European Union.

The CED considers the Council decision to be a very important step towards ensuring patient safety and removing any uncertainty as to how and by whom tooth whitening should be performed in the EU.

Dr. Wolfgang Doneus, CED President said: *"This Directive is refreshing because it recognises the unique role of the dental practitioner, enabling the bleaching process to be controlled properly and to ensure patient safety"*.

Dr. Stuart Johnston, CED Chair of the Working Group Tooth Whitening said: *"I am pleased to see the protection offered to the public by this long awaited decision. It is now clear that tooth whitening is the practice of dentistry and it can be safely carried out by the dentist"*.

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