

CED POSITION

COMMISSION'S PROPOSAL AMENDING DIRECTIVE ON WASTE

December 2016

INTRODUCTION

The Council of European Dentists (CED)¹ aims to promote high standards on oral healthcare and dentistry with effective patient-safety centred professional practice, and to contribute to safeguarding the protection of public health.

The CED welcomes the initiative of the European Commission to stimulate Europe's transition towards a circular economy², supporting the reuse and recycling of waste. Turning waste into a resource to increase resource efficiency and to close the loop is a fundamental goal to tackle the significant amount of potential secondary raw materials which are found in waste streams.

The CED further welcomes the European Commission's Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and the Council amending Directive 2008/98/EC on waste, COM(2015)595 (hereinafter "proposal"), which form part of the Circular Economy Package³. The proposal lists several measures covering the whole cycle of products – from production and consumption to waste management and the market for secondary raw materials.

SAFE MANAGEMENT OF HEALTHCARE WASTE

The safe management of healthcare waste has always been a concern for European dentists and the dental profession takes seriously the environmental impact of its activities. The CED continues to be committed to encourage dentists across the EU to be environmentally responsible⁴.

At present, the producers of hazardous waste and "waste contractors"⁵ have to keep a chronological record of the quantity, nature and origin of the hazardous waste, and, where relevant, the destination, frequency of collection, mode of transport and treatment method foreseen in respect of the waste. This information is generally found in consignment notes⁶ and in the summary information that the "waste contractor" provides to the dentist on the waste that is collected. It is currently only required to be provided on paper and upon competent authorities' request.

¹ The CED is a European not-for-profit association representing over 340,000 dental practitioners across Europe through 32 national dental associations and chambers in 30 European countries. Established in 1961 to advise the European Commission on matters relating to the dental profession. The CED is registered in the Transparency Register with the ID number 4885579968-84.

² Communication from the European Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, [Closing The Loop - An EU Action Plan For The Circular Economy](#), COM(2015) 614 final, 2 December 2015.

³ The Circular Economy Package includes proposals to amend six Directives addressing the management of different wastes as well as an action plan for the circular economy, that is to say the European Commission's Communication mentioned in footnote 2. The proposals to amend Directive 2008/98/EC on waste, 94/62/EC on packaging and packaging waste, Directive 1999/31/EC on the landfill of waste, Directive 2000/53/EC on end-of-life vehicles, Directive 2006/66/EC on batteries and accumulators and waste batteries and accumulators, and Directive 2012/19/EU on waste electrical and electronic equipment.

⁴ See [CED Resolution on environmental management of dental materials: responsible practice 2013 update](#) and [CED Resolution on Dental Amalgam: 2013 Update](#), from November 2013.

⁵ Company responsible for collecting and transporting hazardous waste, or act as dealers and brokers of hazardous waste.

⁶ Consignment notes are used to track waste movements and ensure safe disposal of hazardous waste.

ELECTRONIC RECORD KEEPING

The proposal introduces, under Article 35 (1) and (4) first part, an obligation for Member States to establish an electronic registry or coordinated registries to record the data on hazardous waste. This registry should cover the entire territory of Member States.

The proposal further establishes, under Article 35 (4) second part, the possibility for Member States to set up electronic registries for other waste streams, in particular those waste streams for which targets are set in Union legislation.

The proposal is not clear about who shall make that data available to the competent authorities through the electronic registry or registries. It would be very burdensome to request dentists to fulfil online registries of the information that already exists on paper (e.g. consignment notes).

Red tape would also exponentially increase if dentists would have to keep chronological records of non-hazardous waste in the same way as hazardous waste, demanding the same formal documentation.

Article 35 (4) second part is not sufficiently clear about which non-hazardous waste would be under surveillance [e.g. electronic, packaging (plastic, paper, glass, metal, wood), etc.], rendering very hard to know the real impact in the daily life of a dental practice.

POSITION

The CED supports the safe management of healthcare waste and the dental profession takes seriously the environmental impact of its activities.

The CED supports the setting up of an electronic registry or coordinated registries to record data on hazardous waste, under the condition that this does not create further red tape to dentists. The online fulfilment of electronic registries must be an exclusive competence of waste contractors or of competent authorities.

The establishment of electronic records for other waste streams, in particular those waste streams for which targets are set in Union legislation, is extremely difficult and time consuming to accomplish in practice. Non-hazardous waste consists of the same components as domestic waste, is consequently treated the same way and is managed by local competent authorities (municipalities), which means that those authorities will have the administrative and financial burden for the establishment of electronic records.

Unanimously adopted by the CED General Meeting on 2 December 2016