



NOVEMBER 2013

// CED RESOLUTION

**ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT
OF DENTAL MATERIALS:
RESPONSIBLE PRACTICE 2013
UPDATE**



// INTRODUCTION

The Council of European Dentists (CED) is the representative organisation for the dental profession in the EU, representing over 340,000 practising dentists through 32 national dental associations. Established in 1961 to advise the European Commission on matters relating to the dental profession, the CED promotes high standards of oral healthcare and effective patient-safety centred and evidenced-based professional practice across Europe.

// MINAMATA CONVENTION

On 10 October 2013, the Minamata Convention was formally adopted by 139 governments and will be open for signature until 9 October 2014. This treaty is a global legally binding instrument to manage mercury in an efficient, effective and coherent manner, to reduce the demand for and supply of mercury as well as to reduce and control mercury emissions in the environment.

Dental amalgam is a compound containing mercury and therefore is among the products regulated in the treaty. The provisions encourage governments to phase-down the use of dental amalgam.

The CED believes that the signing of this treaty is a sensible outcome that recognises the practicalities of improving oral health. For many years, the CED has stressed the importance of avoiding a complete phase-out of the use of mercury in dentistry, particularly in a short timeframe.

The CED welcomes the flexible approach adopted to take into account countries domestic circumstances; and notes that many of the measures identified in the treaty are already implemented in several EU countries.

// STATEMENT ON RESPONSIBLE PRACTICE

In support of responsible practice for the reduction of the environmental impact of the use of dental amalgam, dentists should:

1. Use amalgam separators which respect ISO standards;
2. Keep amalgam separators well-maintained and serviced;
3. Use precapsulated amalgam only;
4. Fully-comply with waste management regulations, in particular Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on waste and repealing certain Directives;
5. Ensure proper separation of amalgam waste;
6. Ensure that the disposal of waste is carried out by licensed carriers, leading to appropriate recycling.

// STATEMENT ON ALTERNATIVE MATERIALS

1. The scientific community is not yet fully able to demonstrate the relative emerging risks of the use of alternative materials;
2. Evidence about the toxicology of the alternative materials is a work in progress;
3. The profession urges manufacturers to fully declare the chemical composition of the alternative materials;
4. The environmental data regarding the use of alternative materials is lacking and the profession should urge the decision-makers to know more;
5. More research on alternative materials including clinical studies is essential;
6. In the best interest of the patient, dental professionals should consider not choosing to use a material where the manufacturer has not made a full qualitative declaration of its chemical composition.

Unanimously adopted by the CED General Meeting on 22 November 2013