



## On International Standards in Dentistry

Editorials in national dental journals often emphasize the role of international dental standards in maintaining both the quality and safety of oral health products routinely used by both the general public and those in the dental health profession.<sup>1</sup> The published standards inform virtually every dental procedure; and this journal's readers are reminded of their significance in optimally managing patients' oral rehabilitative needs.

The late 19th and early 20th centuries saw an increasing recognition by manufacturers and end-users of the need for standards for materials as well as the emergence of bodies to carry out this task. It was evident that the process would be of great benefit in dentistry both for patients and dental health care workers and would help the dental industry provide suitable products. As a result, dental standards began to be developed, initially at a national level by recognized bodies as well as by other organizations such as companies and learned societies. Some of the latter groups also prepared their own standards or guidelines for internal or specialist use.

International collaboration became more important in the second half of the 20th century and initially was based in the FDI (Fédération Dentaire Internationale) and subsequently focused via the

International Organization for Standardization (ISO), which collaborates with most national and several international bodies. As products and procedures became more complex, national and international links became more common, which has continued to this day. Similarly, technological progress and the widening scope of standards work are creating requirements for developments in new fields such as dental informatics. More than ever, standards development requires a multidisciplinary approach in which input from the dental team continues to be crucial.

An increasing and evolving emphasis on the performance and quality of dental products as driven by consumer demand, together with optimized testing methods, terminology, and identified properties that ensure safety and reliability, is expected. ISO standards will also go on playing a major and indispensable role in facilitating international trade in dental products.

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### Reference

1. Jones DW. International dental standards. *Br Dent J* 2007; 203:361–369.