

IFDH Membership Committee - House of Delegates Report

Committee Members

Kelli Swanson Jaecks, USA, Co-Chair

Diane Rochford, UK, Co-Chair

Manon Van Splunter-Schnieider, Netherlands

Enrica Scanetto, Italy

Nicole Stormon, Australia

Rhiannon Jones, UK (joined the committee November 2023)

William Carlson-Jones, Australia (joined the committee April 2024)

IFDH Board Liaison: Fouzieh Eliassy, Vice President.

* July 2023 – Enrica informed the committee that she was stepping away for personal reasons. We thanked her for her contribution and wished her well.

Committee meeting dates:

September 25th/26th 2022

Present: Kelli Swanson Jaecks, Diane Rochford, Manon Van Splunter-Schnieider, Enrica Scanetto and Nicole Stormon. Apologies: None

November 20th/21st 2022

Present: Kelli Swanson Jaecks, Diane Rochford, Manon Van Splunter-Schnieider and Nicole Stormon. Apologies: Enrica Scanetto

January 31st/February 1st 2023

Present: Kelli Swanson Jaecks, Diane Rochford, Manon Van Splunter-Schnieider Nicole Stormon and Fouzieh Eliassy. Apologies: Enrica Scanetto

May 22nd/23rd 2023

Present: Diane Rochford, Manon Van Splunter-Schnieider Nicole Stormon and Fouzieh Eliassy. Apologies: Kelli Swanson Jaecks and Enrica Scanetto

September 6th/7th 2023

Present: Kelli Swanson Jaecks, Diane Rochford, Manon Van Splunter-Schnieider Nicole Stormon and Fouzieh Eliassy. Apologies: None

October 4th/5th 2023

Present: Kelli Swanson Jaecks, Diane Rochford, Manon Van Splunter-Schnieider Nicole Stormon and Fouzieh Eliassy. Apologies: None

The Charge

The initial charge of membership committee was to research and target three (3) new country members and to review new member applications. However, the committee has been tasked with other work over the past year and a half.

It is also important to know that three of the new membership committee, Kelli Swanson Jaecks, Diane Rochford and Manon Van Splunter-Schneider, had previously worked together as part of the Dental Therapy Task Force which was established following the House of Delegates in Brisbane, Australia in 2019. The task group was asked by the then IFDH Board to *investigate and discuss the benefits and ramifications for a new association membership category to be developed for national dental therapists' associations to be called Dental Therapist Association Member.*

Kelli, Diane, Manon along with Nicole Stormon felt that it was important to keep the work the Task Force had completed on the agenda of the new IFDH Board.

New Country Members

Following the initial membership committee meeting, several questions were asked of the IFDH Board relating to information on potential new member countries and a request for further information relating to the work and report the Dental Therapy Task Force had completed. Along with the information on work of the previous membership committee Nicole Stormon had researched and gathered a list of potential countries to target the list included professional titles such as 'oral therapist' and 'dental therapist' used in countries around the world that are currently not represented in the House of Delegates.

An Allied Membership application from the Californian Dental Hygienists Association in October 2022 and was forwarded on to the membership committee for review.

Kelli declared a conflict of interest being from the country of origin, so did not take part in the review process or final decision.

Diane and Nicole reviewed the application and submitted a favourable outcome with justifications for the decision to the IFDH Board, who subsequently approved our decision.

Reviewing the membership application form

The membership committee reviewed the current membership application form and submitted to the IFDH Board justifications for adding and amending questions relating professional titles, qualifications/education, and scope of practice.

How to Start an Association

The IFDH Strategic plan A1.4: Develop materials for countries on “How to Start an Association”. In September 2023 the membership committee was asked by the IFDH Board to collate a list of key governing documents and share similarities.

A resource for thinking points or questions to ask for countries considering establishing an association, with examples from various countries.

Recommendations the current committee discussed where:

- The use of the word Association; in order to be inclusive of all representative organisations who are a Society, or Federation etc, consider using professional organisation or professional workforce organisation.
- The document we received can be refined and add in some case studies, with examples of what other countries have done setting up their organisations.
- We discussed proposing to the Board that there is consideration for a mentor/buddy system, between countries starting a professional organization and member countries who would be available to seek advice from in practical terms.
- There needs to be consistency in the terms used such as dental hygienist/hygienists etc, consideration of the title *Association* (referenced in the first bullet point) and ensure the language and terms used are appropriate for countries where English is not their first language.

This work remains in complete to date, further work, and meetings with the IFDH Board relating to inclusion of Dental Therapists became the focal point of our work.

Inclusion of organisations representing dental therapists

The current Membership committee as reported previously felt it was important to keep the work of the *dental therapist task force* on the agenda as the global landscape evolves with more countries training dental therapist. Nicole gathered some data relating to this and continued to report back to the Membership Committee and the IFDH Board.

As work continued on recruitment of potential new member countries the committee brought our finding to the attention of Fouzieh Eliassy and highlighted that it is becoming increasingly difficult for this committee and future membership committees, to recruit country organisations as full members. Challenges include, changes in undergraduate education, titles and terminology used by professional organisations representing *dental hygienists* only are less common, and those that do, are not likely to meet the standard required by IFDH, especially newer organizations in developing countries.



In September 2023 we received a memo from Wanda Fedora, IFDH President regarding the inclusion of organisations representing dental therapists - *it appears that we do have a number of countries that actually have therapists within their members, and we need to look at the growing body of mid-level oral health providers; dental hygienists, dental therapists, oral health therapists etc. and become one global voice.*

The membership committee have subsequently met twice with the IFDH Board, in November 2023 and February 2024 to firstly review and discuss the Task Groups report that was submitted to the House of Delegates in 2022, before discussing how the Board plans to introduce this to the House of Delegates in Seoul, in July 2024 and then assisted and provided feedback on the motion that will be put to the House of Delegates.

Respectfully submitted:

Kelli Jaecks, MA, RDH Committee Co-Chair

Diane Rochford, BSc (Hons), Dip DH Committee Co-Chair