On the World Oral health Day, the Indian Dental Association (IDA) launched an ambitious awareness program, Tobacco Intervention Initiative (TII), by pledging to engage its member dentists to sensitize their patients to health hazards of tobacco consumption, and help quit the addiction. The program is voluntary and interested dentists need to receive structured training at the designated centers before they can offer this free-of-cost service to their patients.

Dr. Ashok Dhoble, secretary-general, IDA said, “For dentists to start TII centers in their practices, they would first need to undergo training by experts on how to assist patients overcome nicotine dependence through a certificate program.” “In this, a TII centre kit consisting of technique manual kit and CD, patient education CD and brochure, and a poster on patient education would be provided to each attendee,” he added. A TII website is also slated to be launched for professionals and public to access information related to activities planned under this initiative. Mumbai took the lead by warming up to this campaign by opening 56 TII centers, while Delhi began with three such centers. IDA is hoping to see 5000 TII centers operating by the end of 2010, hoping to see 5000 TII centers, while Delhi began this campaign by opening 56 centers before they can offer this free-of-cost service to their patients.

To commemorate the world oral health day, Indian Dental Association (IDA), announced the launch of Tobacco Intervention Initiative and Women Dental Council

Dr. Meera Verma, Vice Chair person of WDC said, “The WDC would take initiative in promoting the general and oral health of women and children.” A lot of women dentists have come forward and have expressed their desire to be part of the body to attain the vision of WDC she added.

Women Dental Council of IDA was conceptualized and inaugurated during the Nagpur, IDA annual conference in Feb 2009. The launch programme of the WDC in Northern India was held on September 12, to coincide with the oral health day.

The guest of honor at this function Dr. Kiran Bedi, after finding that in the present governing body of IDA there were few women office bearers, prevailed on the general secretary of IDA, Dr. Ashok Dhoble, to commit reserving 50% of such posts only for women dentists in future. She, felt, was the necessary first step for IDA to show its seriousness about the formation of WDC. Dr. Kiran Bedi is a well known social worker who has received the Mangsay award for her contributions, and was adjudged the most admired woman in 2002. She also hosts a popular TV show on family disputes that helps raise public awareness to the legal solutions of such conflicts.

Government of India plans to initiate a nation-wide tobacco control program that will aim to discourage use of this product as well as encourage farmers to shift to non-tobacco crops in its 11th 5-year plan. In this direction, the health ministry recently was able to make it legally mandatory to display graphic warning in large-fonts on all the tobacco products, after battling stiff resistance from the pro-tobacco groups for several years. Smoking at all public spaces and offices is already prohibited in India. But, despite all such efforts, tobacco consumption continues to rise in India, while a reverse trend has been achieved in the western world. With such an enormous public health challenge to cope with, TII by dentists is one more effort to gather against tobacco, and the tangible gains of this initiative will only be known later.