



# INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR DENTAL RESEARCH

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## **Materials Expert Denounces Norwegian Ban on Dental Amalgam**

**Alexandria, Va.** – In an editorial published today in the February issue of the *Journal of Dental Research*, Derek Jones, Professor *Emeritus* of Biomaterials, Dalhousie University (Halifax, NS, Canada), and Chair of the International Standards Organization's Technical Committee on Dentistry, denounces new Norwegian regulations governing the use of mercury that will adversely affect the use of dental amalgam not only in Norway, but also in other countries around the world that are contemplating taking similar action.

Says Jones, "For the past 20 years, the public has been bombarded by sensational, confusing, and misleading media reports about health issues related to dental amalgam. The public opinion on this issue has been modified by minority, non-scientific views driven and supported by media sensationalism. Mobilization of irrational public fear is the strategy used by lobby groups to pressure governments to change public policy. It is important that governments adhere to scientific principles and base health and environmental policies on sound scientific knowledge. Dentistry is an applied science and needs to bring issues such those dealing with dental amalgam to the attention of governments."

Effective January 1, 2008, the Norwegian government now prohibits the production, importation, exportation, sale, and use of substances that contain mercury, including dental amalgam. In the editorial, the author contends that, at present, there is no conclusive evidence in the scientific literature to demonstrate a link between the cause of irreversible neurological disorders or of impaired kidney function and mercury vapors from dental amalgam. Further, although it is generally accepted that some 50% of mercury pollution comes from natural sources, the relative contribution from natural vs. anthropogenic mercury sources remains unclear, and the natural source may be considerably higher. Pollution from dentistry is insignificant compared with that from industrial use and natural sources. Clearly, the above information leads to the logical conclusion that banning "dental amalgam" is a political issue that will not only have no impact on total worldwide mercury pollution, but also removes a viable treatment option for dentists and their patients.

Deborah Greenspan (University of California-San Francisco), President of the International Association for Dental Research, co-publisher of the *Journal of Dental Research*, stated, "All policy decisions should be informed by evidence-based science, and we are pleased to provide a forum for this in the *JDR*."

The editorial is freely available to the public at <http://jdr.iadrjournals.org/cgi/content/full/87/2/101>.

Derek Jones is a Past President, Canadian Association for Dental Research (CADR, 1992-95), Past President of the IADR Dental Materials Group (1990-91), and Chair of the Canadian Dental Association's Dental Materials and Devices Committee (1993-1998). He is currently Chair of ISO/TC 106 Dentistry (2005-2010). He was Secretary of ISO/TC/SC1 Dental Filling and Restorative Materials from 1979 to 1997, and Chair of ISO/TC/SC1 from 1998-2005, as well as Chair, Canadian Standards Association Technical Committee on Dentistry, and Chair, Canadian Advisory Committee to the International Standards Organization, 1979-2005.

The *Journal of Dental Research (JDR)* is the official publication of the International & American Associations for Dental Research (IADR/AADR), and continues to hold the top SIF ranking of all dental journals worldwide. The IADR is a non-profit organization with more than 11,000 individual members worldwide, dedicated to: (1) advancing research and increasing knowledge to improve oral health, (2) supporting the oral health research community, and (3) facilitating the communication and application of research findings for the improvement of oral health worldwide. The AADR is the largest Division of the IADR, with more than 4,000 members in the United States.

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