

**PRESS RELEASE**

## **Treatment of preventable gum disease, caries and tooth loss totals 4.9% of global healthcare expenditure**

**Brussels, 13 February 2024.** ‘Time to put your money where your mouth is: addressing inequalities in oral health’ is the new *Economist Impact* white paper published today, commissioned by the EFP (European Federation of Periodontology) with support from Haleon. The paper explores the escalating burden of periodontitis and caries, highlighting the critical associations between these two diseases, and proposing a combined approach to level up the population’s oral and systemic health outcomes.

A new caries prevention and care cost calculator is introduced in the paper, revealing direct treatment costs of US\$357 billion yearly, which represents 4.9% of global health expenditure. Productivity losses due to caries, severe periodontitis, and severe tooth loss amount to an estimated \$188 billion annually.

The calculator, which estimates the long-term direct costs associated with managing dental caries between the ages of 12 and 65 years in six countries (Brazil, France, Germany, Italy, Indonesia, and the UK), also revealed:

- The overall direct costs of caries varied from \$10,284 billion in Italy to \$36,231 billion in Brazil, partly due to differences in population sizes.
- The largest per-person costs were estimated in the UK (\$22,910) and were lowest in Indonesia (\$7,414).
- The direct costs of caries were highest in the most deprived group across all countries except Indonesia and Germany, where it was highest in the least deprived, followed closely by the most deprived.

Oral diseases impact nearly half the world's population, surpassing the burden of most common non-communicable diseases (NCDs). With dental caries affecting more than two billion people globally and severe gum disease ranking second with over one billion cases, this paper emphasizes the pressing need for action. By targeting common risk factors such as diet, tobacco, and alcohol use, it unveils a transformative opportunity to mitigate not only oral diseases but also those NCDs like diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and stroke that are linked to oral disease.

Report initiator and contributor Professor Nicola West, EFP secretary general, said: “*Time to put your money where your mouth is: addressing inequalities in oral health*” is a timely reminder that there is no overall health without oral

health. Oral diseases have surpassed all other non-communicable diseases in global prevalence, and for the majority of people, gum disease and tooth decay are totally preventable. Through this paper, the EFP is calling on policy makers and budget holders to put their money where their mouth is”, highlights Professor West.

Building on the success of a previous *Economist* white paper on the cost of gum disease, “Time to take gum disease seriously”, which demonstrated the positive return on investment achieved through home-based preventive care and early diagnosis, the new white paper also introduces a conceptual framework detailing the progression of caries, spanning from a healthy tooth to an unsalvageable carious state. This innovative model outlines preventive interventions, such as maintaining oral hygiene by brushing with fluoridated toothpaste, applying topical fluoride and strategically targeting different stages to hinder or prevent caries development.

Steve Mason, Global Medical Lead for Oral Health at Haleon, said: “As a global leader in consumer health, Haleon’s purpose is to deliver better everyday health with humanity. We are proud to have supported this initiative from both the EFP and Economist Impact Unit. It represents a further important step to better understand and raise awareness of the importance of Oral Health Promotion and Prevention, to help support the WHO action plans on oral health.”

To encourage better oral health globally, it's time to take decisive action. The paper showcases the need for stakeholders to invest and collectively champion preventive measures, promoting a better alignment between policy, public health, payment systems, and clinical practice.

### **EFP, global benchmark in periodontology**

The EFP (European Federation of Periodontology, [www.efp.org](http://www.efp.org)) is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting awareness of periodontal science and the importance of gum health for oral health professionals and the public. Its guiding vision is *Periodontal health for a better life*.

Founded in 1991, the EFP is a federation of 38 national periodontal societies representing more than 16,000 periodontists, dentists, researchers, and oral health professionals in Europe and around the world. It organises events and campaigns grounded in evidence-based science in periodontal and oral health, including EuroPerio (the world’s leading congress in periodontology and implant dentistry), Perio Master Clinic, and Perio Workshop.

The EFP also organises workshops and outreach campaigns with its partners: past projects have covered the relationship between periodontal disease and diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and caries, as well as women’s oral health during pregnancy. The extensive list of EFP publications include the *Journal of Clinical Periodontology*, the research summary *JCP Digest*, and the online

magazine *Perio Insight*, which offers expert views on periodontal science and clinical practice.

The federation's work in education is also highly significant, notably its accredited university-based programmes for postgraduate education in periodontology and implant dentistry.

The EFP has no professional or commercial agenda.

## **About Haleon**

Haleon (LSE / NYSE: HLN) is a global leader in consumer health, with a purpose to deliver better everyday health with humanity. Haleon's product portfolio spans five major categories - Oral Health, Pain Relief, Respiratory Health, Digestive Health and Other, and Vitamins, Minerals and Supplements (VMS). Its long-standing brands - such as Advil, Sensodyne, Panadol, Voltaren, Theraflu, Otrivin, Polident, parodontax and Centrum - are built on trusted science, innovation and deep human understanding.

For more information, please visit [www.haleon.com](http://www.haleon.com)

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