

South Asian Association of Pediatric Dentistry becomes the first dental society in the world to get Special Consultative Status by ECOSOC, United Nations

The South Asian Association of Pediatric Dentistry (SAAPD) was established in 2018 with member countries namely India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Maldives and Sri Lanka. It is a non-profit organization of individuals primarily concerned with area(s) of practice, education and research related to the field of Pediatric Dentistry providing a platform for the Pediatric Dentists of South Asia for the benefit of the child's oral health.

SAAPD has been working ardently towards children's oral health care across the continent. In 2022, SAAPD added another feather in its cap with its entry into the NGO branch of **United Nations**. It has been accorded **Special Consultative Status** by the **Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations**. The Society is also registered in Darpan, NITI Aayog, Government of India.

Application for tie-up with the United Nations was processed in 2020 and we were fortunate to present our SAAPD society in front of the committee of ECOSOC on 24th May 2022. The secretary Dr Gyanendra Kumar and Dr Jatinder Kaur Dhillon, Associate Editor, made a presentation about the objectives, vision, and future plans of SAAPD at the meeting of the ECOSOC of the United Nations at New York, USA, and explained how it could play a pivotal role in improving children's oral health in South Asia region.

The consultative status for an organization enables an organization to engage in a number of ways with ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies, the Human Rights Council and, under specific conditions, some meetings of the General Assembly and other inter-governmental bodies, as well as with the United Nations Secretariat.

After obtaining this special status, the society is entitled to designate its official representatives to the United Nations Headquarters in New York and the United Nations offices at Geneva and Vienna as observers in relevant meetings of the United Nations, public meetings of ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies, the Human Rights Council and, under certain conditions, also in the General Assembly and other United Nations intergovernmental bodies.

Association may be benefitted in many ways:

- SAAPD can now access the resources of the world body in carrying out works from the grassroot level and in broadening its horizon.
- With this special status, SAAPD will have the privilege of being recommended for expert advice by the UNICEF in cases SAAPD specializes in.
- Society will become eligible to get funds from the United Nations and related organizations for the upliftment of oral health status of children of South Asian region.
- The SAAPD will get opportunity for advocacy for oral health from the United Nations platform and able to host meeting or small gathering in conference venue of UN headquarters or other UN offices.

Inputs by:
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