



By Bev Isman, RDH, MPH, ELS

Welcome to 2022!!! We never thought that 2021 would end, we hoped the pandemic would end, but here we are still masking, vaxing, distancing, and ZOOMing. In December ASTDD President Chris Farrell asked the dental directors to list three words to describe their feelings going forward into 2022 and this is the resulting WORD cloud. It seems that the directors continue to maintain optimism and feel they and their staff have demonstrated resilience in the face of so many challenges.

### State Dental Director Calls and National Partnerships



In November ASTDD leadership held calls with Renee Joskow DDS, MPH, FAGD in her new role as Senior Advisor to the National Institute for Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) director, and with Natalie Chalmers, DDS, MHSc, PhD in her role as Chief Dental Officer in the Office of the Administrator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), to discuss future collaborations and communications.

ASTDD continues to participate in calls and emails with the COVID-19 Public-Private Partner Dental Coordination Group, more than three dozen organizations and a dozen federal entities dedicated to improving the oral health of the nation. We work through coordinated messaging, sharing knowledge about the ongoing pandemic as it relates to oral health, promoting integration of oral health into overall health, and working collectively on oral health topics. ASTDD also participates in the CareQuest Institute’s Pandemic Response Workgroup.

Dental directors continue to meet virtually to provide information and support to each other. Calls in November and December included:

- November 17: Dr. Ada Kieke from the CDC Division of Reproductive Health presented an overview of the timing and process for states and territories to provide input and participate in the next round of the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) for 2021-25; the actual survey will be launched in April 2023 after questions development and field testing. PRAMS is an ongoing, population-based surveillance system of self-reported maternal behaviors and experiences around the time of pregnancy, including oral health. You can access PRAMS information and data at <https://www.cdc.gov/prams/index.htm>. Here is a link to an ASTDD BRFSS/PRAMS document, [BRFSS/PRAMS State Added Questions](#) from 2016 - 2020.
- December 15: Julie Beckman and Guy Deyton from the Missouri Office of Dental Health discussed how Missouri incorporates teledentistry into their school-based dental sealant programs. If you are not familiar with teledentistry, review the brand new ASTDD Best Practice Approach Report, [Teledentistry: Opportunities for Expanding the Capacity and Reach of the Oral Healthcare System](#) as well as the ASTDD Policy Statement, [Teledentistry: How Technology Can Facilitate Access To Care](#) (March 2019).

## Congratulations



ASTDD would like to congratulate Julie Watts McKee, DMD on her recent appointment to the Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations (JCNDE). Dr. McKee is the State Dental Director in Kentucky, a longtime member of the Kentucky Board of Dentistry and a former member of the ASTDD Board of Directors.

ASTDD would also like to congratulate and thank three of our long-standing dental directors who retired at the end of 2021 for their service to their states and to ASTDD. James R. Miller, DDS, MSD, PhD retired from his position as the State Oral Health Director at the Indiana Department of Health (IDOH). Bob Russell, DDS, MPH, MPA, CPM, FACD, FICD, Public Health Dental Director for the Iowa Department of Public Health also retired. Bob served on the ASTDD Board of Directors as well as on numerous committees and workgroups, served as a peer mentor to countless new dental directors, and shared his expertise during many webinars, workshops, panels, etc. Katya Mauritson, DMD, MPH(c), Dental Director for Colorado, has served on many committees and workgroups and has also participated as a mentor in the peer support program. We wish them happy retirements but hope they stay connected with our ASTDD family!



## State Dental Directors Contribute to Oral Health in America: Advances and Challenges

As a twenty-year follow-up to the seminal *Oral Health in America: A Report of the Surgeon General*, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) released the new report *Oral Health in America: Advances and Challenges*. This report recognizes the initiatives and efforts of the past decade in improving oral health care for all, and reviews new directions and innovative strategies that contribute to preventing and treating oral health problems. The report also identifies current disparities and inequalities in oral health care and recognizes the importance of oral health in improving health equity, thereby improving the overall health of our nation. We'd like to acknowledge Chris Farrell, MI dental director, Jay Kumar, CA dental director, San Zwetchkenbaum, RI dental director, and Harry Goodman, ASTDD consultant and previous MD dental director as Contributing Authors, and Debony Hughes, MD dental director as a Reviewer. Here are the links to the report and executive summary:

<https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/2021-12/Oral-Health-in-America-Advances-and-Challenges.pdf>

<https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/sites/default/files/2021-12/Oral-Health-in-America-Executive-Summary.pdf>



## National Oral Health Conference (NOHC) Update

Join us for the virtual annual ASTDD business meeting on March 23 from 1-2:30 EST, ZOOM details to be shared later. Plans are progressing well for the in-person 2022 NOHC at the Omni Fort Worth hotel April 11-13 with 7 weekend workshops on April 9-10 as well as Board meetings and Award ceremonies, a Federal Dental Services session, DPH Residency Directors meeting, and American Board of Dental Public Health exams. Many abstracts were submitted and selected for roundtables, posters, oral presentations and panels and there will be plenary sessions. The exhibitors are excited about meeting you in person and you can reunite with friends and meet new friends at the receptions, breakfasts and lunches. The program will be available in January when registration opens.

## Annual Committee Reports for 2021 can be viewed on the Members Only webpage or on Committee webpages

### ASTDD Peer and Member Support Program

Guy Deyton (MO) and Jonise McDaniel (PA) are still participating in the mentoring program. Kimberlie Payne oriented 17 new associate members to ASTDD during November and December. A new version of the *ASTDD Mentoring Guide* will soon be available for peer mentors. Bob Russell has shared some insights for new directors based on his years of experience working in state government; his key messages are being summarized in a document that will be available in January.

### Data Committee and National Oral Health Data Portal

Kathy Phipps and Mike Manz provided TA to 10 states for Basic Screening Surveys (BSS) or other surveillance assistance. Although many BSS still are on hold due to COVID, some classrooms are re-opening and BSS plans are moving forward. Kathy presented information on BSS issues to the CDC-funded state dental sealant Community of practice (CoP) based on their questions (see SAOHC section). She also is updating the BSS toolkit. States will be completing the 2022 Synopses questionnaires distributed in early January; a webinar describing the Synopses questions and process will be held on January 25. We hope you were able to attend the launch of the National Oral Health Data Portal on January 10. If not, a [partial recording](#) is available (technical difficulties occurred so only listen until minute 33.) This will be an invaluable resource for accessing state and national datasets through one portal. Access [the Portal](#) through the ASTDD homepage.

### Communications Committee

The Committee's Spotlight, *Don't Bury the Lede: Making the Most Important Message Easy to Find*, was held on December 8 with 107 attendees. The recording is available at [Don't Bury the Lede](#) and the PowerPoint at [Don't Bury the Lede PowerPoint](#). Their key points highlighted in this Spotlight will help all writers rethink how and where they present important information. *Personal note from Bev: I totally rewrote a document based on the key points. Thanks John Welby and Matt Jacobs for a wonderful ½ hour presentation!*



The first meeting of ASTDD's Communications Community of Practice (CCoP) was held on December 14. The dynamic duo of Matt Jacob and John Welby discussed the challenges that oral health programs can encounter when posting, reviewing and/or updating web content. Prior to the call, potential participants were asked to respond to five questions related to their own websites (those who were not on the call should also consider ways to improve your webpages based on your responses):

1. How often do you or your staff review your oral health webpages?
2. What specific details of your web content does your review cover? (For example, are all hyperlinks tested to ensure they are not "broken"?)
3. When a member of the public emails you with a comment about something they read on your oral health page(s), is there a standard protocol you follow as far as when, if or how to respond?
4. What is your approval process for updating oral health web content? Is the process clear or has this process tended to change?
5. Have you built, or tried to build a relationship with your department's Public Information Officer or Communications Director?

Check out this helpful link: <https://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/developmaterials/plainlanguage.html>.

If you are not signed up for the CCoP and would like to join, contact Kimberlie Payne at [kpayne@astdd.org](mailto:kpayne@astdd.org).

ASTDD Design Standards and Guidelines have been created and are recommended for use in creating ASTDD print and visual materials, such as handouts, brochures, newsletters, reports, policy papers and Power Point presentations. They include guidelines for using the logo and tagline, typography, color, and images and/or photography. The guidelines are available for use by those writing documents on the [members only](#) portion of the ASTDD website.

Heads up! Hold the date for the National Conference on Health Communication Marketing & Media, August 16-18, 2022. More information will be forthcoming on the conference format (i.e., in-person, virtual or hybrid), abstract submission process and other details. This conference is an excellent opportunity to enhance your communication skills and hear about communication successes as well as lessons learned around the country. Sign up for regular updates on the 2022 NCHCMM [HERE](#).

### Dental Public Health Policy Committee (DPHPC) and Best Practices Committee (BPC)

Continuing with the theme of Teledentistry (see page 1), the Best Practices Committee and the CareQuest Institute for Oral Health hosted a one-hour webinar, *Best Practices for Teledentistry Today and in the Future* on December 16 discussing the new [ASTDD Best Practice Approach Report](#). Lori Cofano, from ASTDD described the process for creating best practice approach reports. Dr. Scott Howell from ATSU School of Dentistry & Oral Health in Arizona and primary author on the report discussed his research and the focus of the content including uses of teledentistry, reimbursement policies, and the need for educating dental providers and the public. Caroline McCloud from CareQuest examined CareQuest Institute’s strategic priorities around teledentistry. The webinar focused on systems level changes for programs to be successful and sustainable rather than clinical aspects of how to use teledentistry. The report, however, does include clinical guidance. You can access the [webinar recording](#) and download the [slide Powerpoint](#). CE credits are available. An additional resource is the [ATSU teledentistry website](#). While some information on this website is specific to the program at ATSU-ASDOH, much is applicable to any clinic that wants to use teledentistry or anyone who wants to teach people about teledentistry. Also, check out the [National Network for Oral Health Access \(NNOHA\) Teledentistry Toolkit](#).

Authors and workgroups continue to make progress on updated BPARs on *State Oral Health Improvement Plans* and *School-Based Sealant Programs*. The DPHPC continued to review and annotate a list of ASTDD documents older than five years and is checking with several potential resource people about updates.

### School and Adolescent Oral Health Committee (SAOHC) and Dental Sealant Subject Matter Expert

The School and Adolescent Oral Health Committee met on November 4. Members of the CDC-Funded States Sealant Community of Practice (CoP) participated in a webinar on November 5 featuring Kathy Phipps, ASTDD Data Consultant, answering questions about the ASTDD BSS implementation and data collection, including sealant related issues. Several BSS coordinators from non-funded states attended the call and discussed challenges and successes within their states. Eight listserv posts were made during November and December, including one with links to letters that can be shared with school personnel to promote allowing the BSS in schools. CDC released new on-demand SEALS training modules on November 3. The set of recordings is for new Sealant Efficiency Assessment for Locals and States (SEALS) users and provides a refresher for seasoned users. The training contains four modules and can be accessed from the [SEALS landing page](#). Lori Cofano and Sandy Tesch also participated on a CDC data presentation call related to school sealant programs and the impact of COVID-19 on data collection by CDC funded states and attended HRSA’s Uniform Data System Sealant Measure: 2021 annual update webinar on December 3. Sandy continues to post information on the sealants listserv including the American Dental Association’s materials for the 2022 National Children’s Dental Health Month in February with the theme “Sealants Make Sense.” Materials can be accessed at [ada.org/ncdhm2022](#).



This summer, the School-Based Health Alliance will host small, in-person seminars in place of their annual national convention. The 2022 National School-Based Health Care Conference, *Achieving Health Equity Through School-Based Care*, will take place June 27-30, 2022, in Washington, D.C.

### ASTDD Fluorides Committee (FC)

Discussion during the November 1 Community Water Fluoridation CoP meeting focused on the New Wave fluoride tablet system and what could be included in a “toolkit” or handbook for states. ASTDD’s Fluorides Committee is very interested in this project, and in the successful implementation of the New Wave system when and where appropriate.



The FC held calls in November and December discussing a range of topics including updates from members. The FC is reviewing the ASTDD/ADA/CDC Awards criteria for selecting states and water systems for presentation of awards during the NOHC. Tracy Boehmer reported that CDC sent the state (community) quality awards to about 1500 public water systems across the country in early November. She sent printed certificates and electronic files to each state so they can make PDFs as needed. Tracy also commented there are ongoing shortages of sodium fluoride (NaF) in various states and localities, most recently in KY and MI. These are definitely supply line issues and alternatives are limited. Some suppliers will not take orders at all, apparently because they don't know when they would be able to fill them.

Judy Feinstein continued to work with Sahira Khalid on the revision of selected ASTDD fluorides documents. Judy also continues to monitor anti-fluoridation activity via Google Alerts and Curate, sending updates approximately bi-weekly to several groups listed in the previous *Roundup* issue. These alerts have been extremely helpful to states and communities to counter attacks and celebrate successes. Notices to states during December alerted a few states to potential situations about which they were unaware. Judy provided TA to staff in the Michigan Office of Oral Health to help them prepare for a town council meeting where pros and cons of CWF were to be presented. Johnny Johnson, from the American Fluoridation Society and an ASTDD associate member, provides TA to Idaho on an ongoing basis and has responded to requests from several states for assistance with local challenges.

### Healthy Aging Committee (HAC)

The workgroup formed to develop an Older Adult Oral Health Promotion Toolkit with resources to educate a variety of partners and stakeholders on older adult oral health had a meeting in November. The workgroup discussed formatting for the toolkit and is looking for assistance with graphic design. The Healthy Aging Committee met in December. The Toolkit draft was shared with members and their input will be incorporated into the final resource document. Dr. Steffany Chamut, Instructor, Oral Health Policy and Epidemiology, Harvard School of Dental Medicine, a member of the HAC and the workgroup, is the first dentist selected for the [Health and Aging Policy Fellows](#) program. The 2021-22 program is providing fellowships for 13 individuals to advance their careers in Gerontology.



### National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety (NCHBHS)



On November 17, Dental Hygienist Liaisons (DHLs) participated in a webinar, *Tips for getting Your Presentation Accepted and Making it Engaging*, facilitated by Oral Health Team Members Kathy Hunt and Beth Lowe. This webinar was meant to help build skills and confidence for submitting a presentation abstract for in-person or virtual state meetings and for giving the presentation. Topics included *Cultivating Relationships with Key Colleagues*, *Writing an Abstract and Selecting a Presentation*, and *Delivering an Engaging Presentation*, each containing tips from the presenters, examples and tips from the participating DHLs, and links to resources.

There were eight listserv posts in November and five in December ranging in topics from toothbrushing in Head Start, funding opportunity for hydration station grants, and release of the NIDCR's [Oral Health in America](#) report. The Oral Health Team has been pursuing ways to increase collaboration with the American Dental Hygienists' Association around the DHL project through attendance and an exhibit at their annual meeting and a potential reception at the National Oral Health Conference.

### Center for Oral Health Systems Integration and Improvement (COHSII)

COHSII will be launching a new project, *Integrating Oral Health Care and Primary Care Learning Collaborative: A State and Local Partnership*. In November and December COHSII invited state oral health programs to submit applications. Nine programs were selected for the project, to be implemented from January 2022 through March 2024. Selected programs will participate in a learning collaborative that includes a state and local component. The state component will focus on assessing and



improving systems-level capacity for integrating oral health care and primary care for pregnant women, infants, children, and adolescents, including those with special health care needs. A capacity inventory and prioritization tool will be developed for state oral health programs to review and revise to identify relevant drivers or change concepts. The local component will focus on integrating oral health care and primary care for pregnant women at the community health center level. COHSII staff and consultants will provide technical assistance to state oral health programs on using the capacity inventory and prioritization tool to identify action strategies and to community health center teams to integrate the interprofessional oral health core clinical competencies into primary care practice. Project resources, including the capacity inventory and prioritization tool, will be promoted to all states. For more information, contact Katy Battani at [keb302@georgetown.edu](mailto:keb302@georgetown.edu) or Sarah Kolo at [sk22@georgetown.edu](mailto:sk22@georgetown.edu).

### **Responsibly Employing Safe Pain Interventions (RESPITE) Project**

Since September, the RESPITE team has solicited feedback on a draft version of the evidence-based clinical practice guideline for the management of acute dental pain from stakeholders representing interested parties from diverse fields. This feedback was presented to the guideline panel, which revised the draft to address issues raised by stakeholders. With the guideline now finalized, the manuscripts presenting the guideline are being written, and the chairside guides and decision aids are being developed. In addition, the manuscripts summarizing the evidence synthesis and process used to obtain patient values and preferences have been drafted and are in the process of being revised. The Continuing Education course has been recorded and is in the process of being edited. Publicity about the CE course is starting to be shared with stakeholders in the five intervention states. Next steps include rolling out the CE course in the intervention states and developing the CME course for emergency medicine providers.

### **US Affiliated Pacific Islands (USAPI) and Caribbean Islands**

ASTDD recently posted a comprehensive [Oral Health Needs Assessment Report for Puerto Rico](#) on our Territorial webpage. Thanks to the many individuals who contributed to the report, including Puerto Rico dental director Dr. Elaine Pagan and ASTDD consultant Magda de la Torre. We are reviewing a draft report for the Virgin Islands, so look for it on the same webpage in the new year. ASTDD consultant Dr. Ohnmar Tut continues to provide TA to the USAPI dental and Maternal and Child Health (MCH) directors focused on adopting the national MCH Title V performance measures for oral health, providing preventive services for children, and conducting BSS in various grades. Most of the BSS efforts have been on hold due to COVID. ATDD consultants Dr. Reg Louie and Bev Isman continue to post messages about resources to the USAPI listserv.

### **Evaluation Activities**

In November the ASTDD Evaluation consultants shared tips and resources about survey methods and how to increase participation in surveys and other data collection efforts. On December 6 the team presented a webinar, *Evaluation of Training Programs*. The training highlighted best practices and selecting the right evaluation method, with examples of state oral health training programs, breakout rooms, exercises and resources. Some participants stayed on after the webinar to provide suggestions for future trainings and technical assistance.

The Emory Evaluation team and Mary Davis continue to provide general assistance and TA to CDC-funded evaluators through their listserv and emails and review of states' evaluation reports and progress updates. A December listserv post reminded evaluators about the many resources and webinar recordings on the ASTDD [Evaluation and Quality Improvement webpage](#). The consultants also assist ASTDD committees on specific projects such as design of Survey Monkey queries.

### **ASTDD Competencies for State/Territorial Oral Health Workgroup**

An ASTDD workgroup updated the [ASTDD Guidelines for State and Territorial Oral Health Programs](#) earlier this year. Another workgroup, facilitated by Julie Janssen, previous IL dental director and ASTDD consultant, is in the process of updating the [ASTDD Competences](#). They were developed as a companion tool to the Guidelines and focus on core public health functions and essential services categorized under seven domains; clinical skills are not included. The Competencies represent those skill sets needed for a successful state/territorial oral health program, whether they are present in oral health program staff or are obtained from other programs or outside sources. The workgroup is

reviewing other documents such as the [2021 Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals](#). Look for revisions this Spring. There will also be a weekend workshop at the NOHC for state/territorial oral health staff focusing on using the Guidelines and Competencies for program improvements and staff professional development.

### Meetings and Webinars

(links aren't available if they were a member only or pre-registration event)



### **National Network for Oral Health Access 2021 Annual Conference, San Antonio TX, November 14-17, 2022. Celebrating NNOHA's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (information excerpted from their post-conference newsletter and website)**

As of December, more than 860 individuals have participated in either the in-person meeting or the virtual conference option, with 33 exhibitors. Forty onsite sessions were offered and 30 CE courses are available on demand through [Online Select](#), along with several live virtual Q&A opportunities through January 31 for NNOHA members and non-members. Some of the featured speakers included:

- Lisa Simon, *Healthy Policy, Health Equity, and the Value of Oral Health*
- Eva Grayzel, *Beating the Odds: A Story NOT Silenced by Stage IV Oral Cancer* (Eva was a keynote at our NOHC one year)
- M. Chris Fabricant, *Separating Science from Junk Science in Forensic Dentistry*
- Gordon Hartman, *The MAC-Game Changer for Individuals with Special Needs*
- Panel presentations of Provider Stories: *How Did I Get Here? Many Paths to a Common Destination.*
- Directors or staff from the IA, CA and TX state oral health programs also presented on various topics.

NNOHA launched the 10th year of the NNOHA Oral Health Leadership Institute (NOHLI). At the conference, Cohort 9 graduated, and Cohort 10 began its year of learning. To date, NOHLI has produced 159 alumni from 37 states.

**Look for the next issue of *Roundup* in March 2022. Send any questions, comments or articles to Bev Isman at [bev.isman@comcast.net](mailto:bev.isman@comcast.net)**