



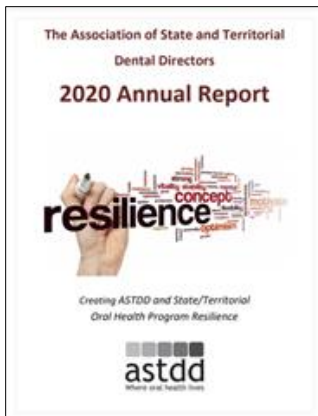
By Bev Isman, RDH, MPH, ELS

Perfect signs of spring are the tulips and other flowers popping up in fields and yards and all the bottles of COVID vaccine that are popping into arms. Great progress and signs of hope all around! Our thoughts are still with the people in war-ravaged and pandemic-ravaged countries and communities across the world, wishing them peace and health.



ASTDD 2021 Virtual Annual Business Meeting and Awards Ceremony, April 9, 2021

The Annual meeting was attended via ZOOM by about 109 members and associate members. You can access the [2020 ASTDD Annual Report: Creating ASTDD and State/Territorial Oral Health Program Resilience](#) on the website as well as the [2020 ASTDD Highlights PowerPoint](#) and the [recording of the meeting](#).



New dental directors/program managers or primary contacts to ASTDD in 2020 and 2021 include:

- Barbara Carnahan, RDH, MS (OH) 01/17/2020
- Amy Umphlett, MPH, (OR) 03/21/2020
- Matt Zaborowski, MPH (Idaho) 07/28/2020
- Catherine Bridges, DMD (FL) 08/05/2020
- Elizabeth J. Conklin MPH (CT) 09/15/2020
- Matthew Horan, DMD, MPH (MA) 09/17/2020
- Charmaine Mayers, PhD (USVI) 10/14/2020
- Julie Boeckman, BS (MO) 02/01/2021
- Guy Deyton, DDS, FACD (MO) 3/1/21

Since the last annual business meeting we have added 105 new Associate Members bringing our total Associate Membership to 465; by the end of April, total membership was 544. The treasurer announced that ASTDD remains financially stable with increased membership dues and diverse funding sources.

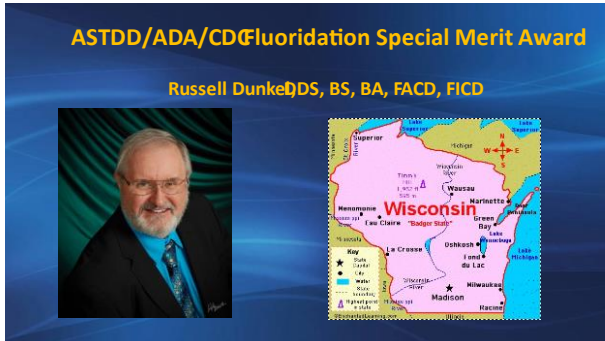
Three nominees to the Board of Directors were elected and then installed by Kimberlie Payne the most recent Past President in attendance:

- Treasurer: Russell Dunkel, DDS, BS, BA, FACD, FICD (WI)
- Director: Adam Barefoot, DMD (GA) (incumbent)
- Associate Member Director: John Welby, MS (MD) (incumbent)

The following awards were presented; the [2021 ASTDD Awards Brochure](#) and the [Fluoridation Awards Brochure](#) are on the website.

**ADA/ASTDD/CDC
COMMUNITY WATER FLUORIDATION AWARDS
Honoring 76 Years of Community Water Fluoridation in the United States**

Special Merit Award



Dr. Dunkel, Wisconsin State Dental Director, was honored for his creativeness and fortitude to fight fierce challenges to community water fluoridation (CWF) in multiple communities and challenges to him and others personally on multiple fronts. Because the pandemic restricted in-person testimony, Russ and many individuals and groups in the US and internationally coordinated efforts to join in virtually to testify about the benefits and safety of fluoridation. Science and commitment to public health prevailed to keep Wisconsin fluoridated.

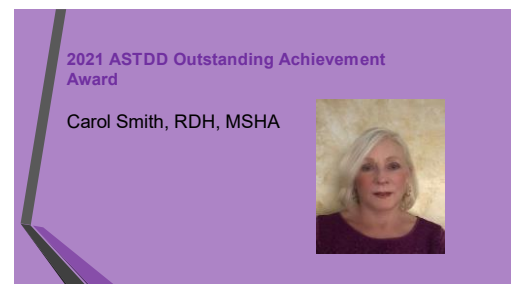
Community Awards

- Fifty Year Awards: 379 water systems in 30 states (see list of states on graphic)
- Systems Reaching 75 Years of Continuous Water Fluoridation: 2 water systems in 2 states, the pioneers in fluoridation: Grand Rapids, Michigan and Newburgh, New York
- 2020 Community Fluoridation Reaffirmation Awards. Communities that defeated initiatives to discontinue community water fluoridation during the past year: Rangely, Colorado; Park Hills, Missouri; Tavares, Florida; Green Bay, Wisconsin
- 2020 State Fluoridation Quality Awards. Consistent optimally fluoridated water in over 90% of the adjusted water systems or population supplied by adjusted water systems as measured in WFRS: Connecticut, Delaware, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Dakota, Nevada, Utah
- 2020 Community Initiative Awards: There were no communities that passed water fluoridation initiatives during the past calendar year
- Healthy People 2020 Award: There were no states that achieved the Healthy People 2020 objective for the first time during the past calendar year.



ASTDD Outstanding Achievement Award

Carol Smith has demonstrated outstanding leadership in the state of Georgia, in ASTDD and in other national organizations. She started with the GA Oral Health Program in 2009 and became director in 2011, serving in that role until 2018. Under her leadership, GA was successful in securing CDC funding for three consecutive 5-year project periods. She received the GA Department of Public Health Partnership Award in 2016 for her partnership with the Infectious Disease team to address an issue with dental unit water lines at a local dentist's office. Carol served on the ASTDD BOD for two years and on numerous ASTDD Committees.



ASTDD Distinguished Service Award

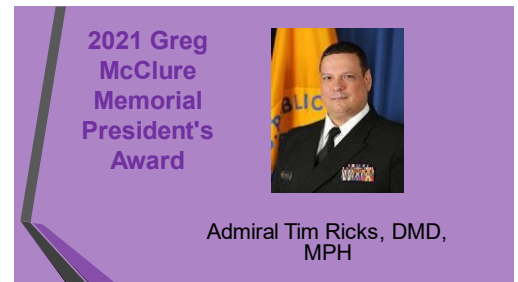


Michelle Landrum was honored for her commitment to improving the oral health of young children locally and nationally, particularly those in Head Start. She became an ASTDD consultant in 2009 as the Early Childhood Oral Health Committee Consultant and as the co-lead for the Head Start National Center

on Health. She was co-creator and then the lead for the Dental Hygienist Liaison Project through two national center grants from 2011-2020. This project has been recognized as an exemplary model by the federal Office of Head Start and the American Dental Hygienists' Association. Michelle also served as Dental Hygiene Program faculty at Austin Community College in Austin since 2008, becoming the Program Director in 2020 as the pandemic hit the US.

Greg McClure Memorial President's Award

Dr. Tim Ricks, USPHS Chief Dental Officer, among many other titles, has demonstrated his unique ability to search out connections and his passion for promoting the importance of dental public health along with oral health's impact on overall health. He has been overseeing the development of the second Surgeon General's Report on Oral Health and serves in numerous roles with the Indian Health Service. Dr. Ricks is an active associate member of ASTDD and has long supported state and territorial oral health programs. He shares his monthly newsletter with ASTDD members and has reconvened the federal dental session at the NOHC.



Chris Farrell's President's Remarks

Last year, I mentioned the equation of A+B+C+D= Always Be Connecting the Dots. ASTDD has connected a lot of dots this past year to create interconnectedness. Here are a few highlights. ASTDD has connected with new partners through the Public-Private Partnership group that has been convened by Admiral Ricks. We have demonstrated capability and reach by collaborating with a variety of partners. We have shared information with the American Association of Dental Boards having to do with COVID testing and vaccine administration. We have connected with diverse people to combine talents, experience, and perspectives.



Many dental directors and staff have worked with other state staff to distribute PPE, develop nursing home guidance, and develop return to school guidance. This has helped strengthen and foster relationships within our own agencies. We have connected ideas with different ones to create new and unusual concepts such as drive through fluoride varnish administration programs for Head Start families. These new initiatives have assisted in preventing and controlling oral disease. We have supported and strengthened dental directors by connecting with them on their needs and wants to help them solve problems by hosting bi-weekly dental director calls with topics that have ranged from PPE distribution, dental office guidance, aerosol generating procedures and air quality in dental settings, school sealant program readiness, public health emergency procedures, health equity and updates on the essential public health services. The dental director calls have allowed directors to learn from other states, share ideas and keep abreast of the changing and challenging environment that has occurred over the past year. Two workgroups were established this past year to update ways that state oral health programs operate and determine different practices based on the COVID-19 pandemic. One was the school based oral health workgroup and the other was the public health emergency preparedness workgroup. Both groups promoted new and better policies and practices for state oral health programs.

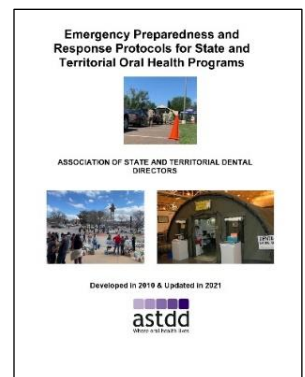
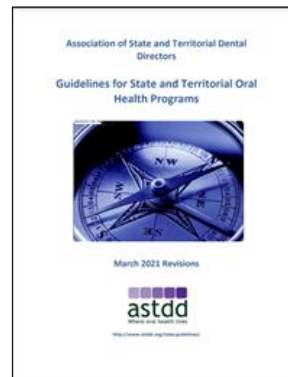
This past year ASTDD has been busy connecting the dots to explore new models, ideas, and systems. We will continue to improve our connections with the help of many talented and enthusiastic consultants and members. We have all seen the effects of change that this past year has made on us individually, within our state programs and our communities. The ASTDD Board of Directors remains committed to the priorities of the ASTDD mission and values as we continue to understand and manage the changes this past year has brought. As we face more rapid change in the coming year, I would like to close with a quote from legendary Coach John Wooden, "Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do."

State Dental Director Calls and COVID Related Workgroups and Partnerships

ASTDD continues to participate in calls and emails of the COVID-19 Public-Private Partner Dental Coordination Group comprised of federal agencies and almost 30 national organizations to share information about activities. Several organizations mentioned how helpful ASTDD has been in collecting and sharing information. ASTDD also participates in the DentaQuest Partnership Oral Health System: Pandemic Response Workgroup. The COVID-19 School-Based Programs Workgroup activities are reported under the School Health section.

Dental directors continue to meet, usually biweekly. Here are a few issues from the March 3 and 25 calls. There were no calls in April because of the ASTDD Business Meeting and the National Oral Health Conference.

- March 3 focused on the updated [Emergency Preparedness and Response Manual](#) that was developed in 2010 in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, with Julie Janssen, workgroup leader, covering an overview of updates that now include information on infectious disease epidemics, not just natural disasters such as floods. The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) has since shared this resource with their members as part of their COVID-19 Daily Brief.
- March 25 featured Bev Isman providing an overview of updates to the [ASTDD Guidelines for State and Territorial Oral Health Programs](#) necessitated by recent changes in the national [Ten Essential Public Health Services](#). These national changes were then mirrored in revisions to the Ten Essential Public Health Services to Promote Oral Health in the US, which serve as the framework for the Guidelines.



ASTDD Peer and Member Support Program



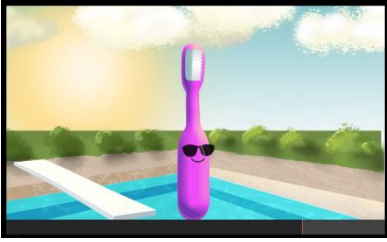
We still have five dental directors/program managers in the mentoring program. Kimberlie Payne contacted 43 new associate members during the past two months for orientation, and Lori Cofano oriented Dr. Guy Denton, the new Missouri dental director. At the end of April, Lori and Chris Wood led a discussion group for new mentees or those recently completing the program as an addition to our peer support strategies. Frances Wise (AK) and Katie Glueckert (MT) have both agreed to be future mentors.

Data Committee and National Oral Health Data Portal

Kathy Phipps and Mike Manz continue to help states and territories plan for surveys or other surveillance assistance despite many Basic Screening Surveys (BSS) being on hold. Mike has completed final editing and updating of [Emergency Department surveillance documents and ICD-9/ICD-10 crosswalk table](#). He has been providing BSS TA to Florida for their third grade and adolescent BSS and LA for their third grade BSS, which have been on hold due to the pandemic, as well as helping GA with analysis of their Head Start BSS data. Kathy has been providing BSS TA to GA and PA for their 2021-22 surveys, and oral health surveillance TA to the NJ staff. In March Kathy provided online BSS training to staff from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. She has also begun updating the BSS training slides. States have been returning their 2021 State Synopses forms and Kathy has started creating tables for the Synopses reports.

John O'Malley continues to build the National Oral Health Data Portal. He has been acquiring feedback from selected states, which resulted in adding an Orientation section to guide people through the dataset and dashboard and a Findings section with some top-level observations/analysis. He is developing a Tableau Workbook and giving examples of the types of analysis that individuals can run. Expect more progress this summer as we near a launch.

Communications Committee



The committee hosted a Spotlight on March 24, [2021 Social Media Campaign for Head Start Parents and Caregivers](#) that was featured in the National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety (NCHBHS) section in the last Roundup issue. Matt Jacob presented for more than 90 attendees. The next spotlight is in May. John Welby and Kimberlie Payne prepared and staffed the virtual NOHC ASTDD booth that involved live chats and downloadable documents but no video exchange; about 40 people participated. View the [ASTDD Compendium of Communications Resources](#) for an overview of our communication pathways. An ad-hoc committee has been working to create ASTDD design standards and guidelines for new documents including ASTDD logo placement, color, font, line spacing and other elements. This will help standardize documents and the visual themes.

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

Work continues on the new Data Dissemination Best Practice Approach Report (BPAR), the update to the Oral Health of Children, Adolescents and Adults with Special Health Care Needs BPAR, an update to the School-Based Dental Sealant Programs BPAR, and a new Opioids Prescribing Practices policy statement. A new Teledentistry BPAR is being supported through funding from the CareQuest Institute for Oral Health, with Dr. Scott Howell serving as the primary author. Lori Cofano facilitated the April 16 NOHC Elevate Oral Care session Don't Reinvent the Wheel: Best Practices for Improving Oral Health for Pregnant Women and Infants. View the [Compendium of ASTDD Dental Public Health Resource Documents for State Oral Health Programs](#) and [general information about the Best Practices Project](#).

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

The SAOHC is in the process of reviewing some new and updated policy statements. ASTDD and the CareQuest-funded Workgroup on COVID-19 and School-based Oral Health Programs has been meeting and discussing results from a follow-up survey with dental directors about their school-based program experiences during the pandemic. Based on the results of the survey, they are hosting a webinar on May 13 on Challenges in Implementing School-Based Oral Health Programs: Short- and Long-Term Impact of COVID-19 co-branded by the National Association of School Nurses and CareQuest. The SAOHC is sponsoring a webinar on HPV in June with Merck highlighting their materials to train providers. Sandy Tesch facilitated a Sealant Community of Practice webinar on March 26 on the Application of Glass Ionomer (GI) Sealants. The presenter was Michelle Wright, RDH from GC America. Sandy also continues to provide TA to multiple states that have questions about school-based sealant programs. View the updated [Compendium of Dental Sealant Resources](#) on the website.



ASTDD Fluorides Committee (FC)

A Fluorides Community of Practice webinar attended by about 100 people was held on March 29 with the developers of the New Wave Fluoridation Tablet and Feeder System. Fluoridation coordinators from the CDC-funded states stayed on after the presentation to discuss the information. The Committee updated [Compendium of ASTDD Fluoridation and Fluorides Resources](#) and [Community Water Fluoridation Recommended Websites for Scientific Evidence and Resources for State and Territorial Oral Health Programs](#). Judy Feinstein coordinated presentation of the annual fluoridation awards at the ASTDD annual business meeting and served as moderator for the NOHC Roundtable, Community Water Fluoridation during COVID-19. She is collaborating with the American Fluoridation Society to plan their two-session panel discussion, Defending CWF in the Zoom Era, that will be held in May and June, and with Tracy Boehmer at CDC to plan the 2021 Annual CDC Fluoridation Update to be held in May.

Healthy Aging Committee (HAC)

View the updated [Compendium of ASTDD Healthy Aging Resources](#) on the website. Lori Cofano began developing the Older Adult Oral Health Promotion Toolkit based on the ASTDD Guidelines focus areas, and the workgroup states have begun adding information such as resources, partners and activities to the document.

Evaluation Activities

JoAnna Hillman 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 to ASTDD committees on specific projects. They held Part II of the webinar series on Implementing, Analyzing and Reporting from Qualitative Data Collection Methods on March 12. In this webinar they provided an overview of analysis and reporting for qualitative evaluations. This session covered the approaches to qualitative analysis, the tools available to support qualitative analysis and how to approach reporting. The bulk of the session was spent in small groups working through an interactive exercise on qualitative coding and identifying thematic areas, giving attendees a chance to experience the methods first-hand and to discuss any challenges they faced. In response to listserv requests from the CDC-funded states, Maggie Pustinger from Emory drafted two extensive listserv tutorial posts, one on Photovoice methodology, with an infographic, and a second on equity evaluation to be sent in May.

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



Check out the revised webpage on our website, [Dental Hygienist Liaisons for National Center on Health, Behavioral Health and Safety](#), as well as an overview shared by Gina Sharps during an NOHC Roundtable, [Something to Smile About! Head Start and Dental Hygienist Liaison Project 2021 NOHC Roundtable Slides](#). The oral health team finalized new promotional materials to recruit future DHLs and disseminated materials to promote new Regional DHL coordinators (RDHL) for Regions XI (AIAN) and XII (Migrant Farmworker). They recruited a new state DHL in northern California (Darla Dale) and New Hampshire (Myra Nikitas), and Kim Attanasi in New York took on the additional role of Region 2 RDHL. Regional DHL coordinators participated in a quarterly ZOOM call on April 2. The agenda included the role of the new Regional XI and XII coordinators, collaboration with the the Head Start Regional Health Specialists, the revised DHL webpage, Head Start approved presentations, and the Head Start Social Media Campaign. They also began plans for the next DHL Webinar in June and the RDHL annual meeting in August that will be virtual.

Center for Oral Health Systems Integration and Improvement (COHSII)

Also view the recent website revisions and additions related to Maternal and Child Health and individuals with special health care needs:

- [Maternal and Child Oral Health](#)
- [Perinatal Oral Health](#)
- [Oral Health for People with Disabilities: Learning About Healthy Smiles in a Virtual World.](#)



Consultants participated in the March Networks for Oral Health Integration (NOHI) Learning Collaborative webinar to discuss possible topics for the annual virtual NOHI meeting in May and the April 8 webinar on Innovations in Integrating Oral Health into Primary Care. They also reviewed feedback from states/territories that selected the MCH National Performance Measure (NPM) 13 for FY2015-2020. Mary Davis, one of our evaluation consultants, is assisting Katrina Holt and Sarah Kolo from COHSII with report preparation of the findings from the 22 responses received so far from the 32 states that selected the NPM. Eight sessions at the 2021 NOHC were related to the project. See the special Roundup Issue on the NOHC for more details. The Perinatal Oral Health Committee also held a call on April 14 to finalize the webpage revisions and review their workplan progress.

US Territorial Needs Assessment and Technical Assistance

Check back periodically for additions to the [Territorial and Freely Associated Oral Health Programs page](#) and the links to the individual territorial pages. The Puerto Rico Oral Health Needs Assessment Report is currently under review and will be posted soon. We continue to share links to resources and funding opportunities with all the oral health programs. Dr. Tut and Phipps also continue to provide TA on the BSS and oral health surveillance as well as maternal and child health issues.

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



American Public Health Association. COVID-19 Crisis Communication: Empowering the Public Health Community. April 8, 2021 virtual webinar. Beverly Isman reporting.

Elham Ali, the Health Data Techologist & Design Lead from US Digital Response and Anthony Shop, Chief Strategy Officer & Co-Founder of Social Driver, presented information and shared many resources of interest to oral health programs. Ms. Ali discussed tactical best practices on digital health communications issues, e.g., [vaccination acceptance](#), trusted messengers from a health equity angle, and shared successful applications and content from [Digital Health's COVID-19 health communication toolkit](#) with local and state governments. Mr. Shop discussed a proven framework to drive important social media and digital strategies that go from storytelling to storydriving. One of the articles they mentioned was [When Advocacy Obscures Accuracy Online: Digital Pandemics of Public Health Misinformation Through an Antifluoride Case Study by Brittany Seymour et al.](#)

National Institute for Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) Dental Public Health (DPH) Research Training Stakeholder Listening Session. April 26, 2021. Chris Wood reporting.

The purpose of the session was to gather information from key stakeholders representing national organizations about DPH training gaps and opportunities. Other organizations participating in the listening session included: American Association for Dental Research, American Association of Public Health Dentistry, American Board of Dental Public Health, American Dental Association, American Dental Education Association, American Institute of Dental Public Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services and Indian Health Service. Questions asked by NIDCR were:

- What are high priority DPH research training challenges and opportunities?
- How has COVID-19 highlighted these gaps?
- How should NIDCR work to address these gaps?

Prior to the call, Chris solicited input from the ASTDD BOD and then shared their input on the call, which included:

- Investigate dental public health research workforce capacity, funding and other resource availability.
- Develop a model for Dental Public Health Practice-Based Research Networks to answer questions about public health practice by engaging existing public health programs such as school dental programs for conducting studies to inform programs and policy and achieve oral health equity.
- Conduct more research on health communication strategies as dental public health practitioners, researchers, administrators need to be stellar communicators for oral, written and digital pathways. This applies to risk communication as well as emergency preparedness and response; promoting an understanding of science and how to distinguish between disinformation, misinformation and valid science; motivating people to seek, receive

and follow up on care; enrolling for and understanding health and dental benefits; promoting use of new dental products and techniques; demonstrating workforce models; communicating research findings to diverse audiences, etc. This means involving health communication and marketing experts in research projects.

- Initiate research that develops methods of patient self-care that improves a person's ability to control decay without the necessity of professional visits; equitable access to professional care is a problem we have been trying to address forever with limited success. Research should be directed toward improving product characteristics (SDF or other non-silver caries arrest formulation) towards greater acceptability and utilization by both patients and professionals.
- Increase evidence-based research on building a productive bi-directional relationship between physicians and dentists.
- Find ways to integrate dental research with other public health research.
- Investigate if teledentistry and the use of electronic health records lead to improved outcomes.
- Conduct research on vaccine administration, especially on the impact of dental public health on HPV and oral cancer.

Although it is not a research question, multiple stakeholders expressed concern about the dissolution of the NIDCR DPH Residency program and suggested opening training opportunities for other oral health professionals with advanced degrees.

UCSF Global Virtual Oral Health Symposium. How Dental Universities Adapted to COVID-19: Education, Research and Patient Care. April 29, 2021. Bev Isman reporting.

Session one featured speakers from dental schools at the University of Queensland in Australia, University of California San Francisco, Cardiff University in Wales and the University of Nairobi in Kenya. Speakers shared many innovative strategies for meeting patient and student needs for their diverse facilities, locations, students, community-based dental workforce and COVID experiences. Key to their successes was involvement of all levels of dental school staff, faculty, students and local community members in planning and implementing changes. Schools were able to hold online courses and some clinical experiences; provide financial, housing and food assistance for students to help with their well-being; mostly prevent the transmission of COVID in all settings; and graduate their seniors. They faced challenges trying to provide training and support for faculty in the new online format, revising and individualizing the curriculum, measuring student proficiency and creating peer support/socialization opportunities.

The second session featured faculty from Cardiff University, the University of Nairobi and Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences in Tanzania briefly discussing leading edge research projects. These involved comparisons of different filling strategies for caries in primary teeth (the FICTION project), levels of proficiency among oral care providers in infection control in urban care centers during the pandemic, and previous experience and barriers towards tooth filling treatments in adults in rural Tanzania where numbers of dental professionals are limited.

Recording of the Symposium can be accessed at <https://oralhealthsupport.ucsf.edu>.

Look for the next issue of Roundup in July 2021. Send any questions or comments to Bev Isman at bev.isman@comcast.net