



Organizational, Committee, and Consultant Subject Matter Experts (SME) Activities

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide an informal, brief summary of ASTDD activities to keep our members and partners aware of what we do on your behalf and to highlight resources. We also like to share more personal stories as ASTDD really is a family.

The Board of Directors (BOD) held ZOOM calls on January 13 and February 10. Much discussion centered on recent limitations put on our federal funders by the new administration and how ASTDD should respond. ASTDD has tried to be flexible and compliant with the ever-evolving situation. Although our invoices were not paid for a few weeks, they now have been honored and money deposited in our bank account. Consultants were paid in a timely manner by ASTDD but put on a work hold for two weeks until federal payments were received. During the February call, we also discussed plans to make sure the National Oral Health Conference (NOHC) is a success and the need to discuss strategies with the American Association of Public Health Dentistry (AAPHD).

The NOHC is “the premier meeting” for those interested in continuing education and networking opportunities within the discipline of Dental Public Health. The 2025 NOHC will be in Orlando, Florida April 7-9, 2025 with weekend workshops on April 5 and 6, 2025. [Registration](#) is open and so far more than 500 people have registered and 76 ASTDD members are scheduled to present in at least one of the formats; currently there are approximately 30 exhibitors. All meetings and events will be held at the [DoubleTree by Hilton](#) at the Entrance to Universal Orlando. This year presenters who are either ASTDD or AAPHD members were sent a graphic to post in their social media account or in their email signature block to market the meeting.

Peer and Member Support Program (PSP)



State dental directors/program managers participating in the PSP still currently include Nicole Reynolds (OK) mentored by Charles “Fritz” Craft (NE), and Elizabeth Lewis (GA) mentored by Robin Miller (VT). Kimberlie Payne reports there were 46 new associate members in January and February. ASTDD leadership and consultants continue to share ASTDD resources supporting state oral health programs. The state dental directors participated in a ZOOM call with ASTDD leadership and a few consultants on February 27 to discuss any issues they are having in their home states or any requests they have of ASTDD; 35 people attended the call and felt it was beneficial to share information and any concerns.

Fluorides Committee (FC)

The FC’s upcoming focus will be on completing policy background documents on water fluoridation and other fluoride modalities, with an emphasis on providing information and with an underlying emphasis on “staying

the course,” particularly with CWF. The Committee will continue to share research articles and media commentary as well.

The second CWF Community of Practice session for fluoridation coordinators from the 15 CDC-funded states was held on January 22 with 19 people participating. The theme of the meeting was a review of messaging principles and pointers. Feedback from the group was largely positive.

Planning continued for fluoridation related sessions at the NOHC in April. These include a weekend workshop, *A New Way Forward: Refining Message Strategies for Water Fluoridation*, to be presented by Matt Jacob and Judy Feinstein, and a “field trip” to an Orlando water plant, coordinated by Judy with Committee members Richard Crask and John Rudolph from Kentucky.



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Communications Committee (CC)

Bev Isman completed the [November/December Roundup](#) that is posted on the website and she is working on the 2024 ASTDD Annual Report. The Spotlight on January 11 featured Chris Wood

reviewing recent changes to the ASTDD website that were listed in the previous *Roundup*; 65 members attended the Spotlight. February 12 featured Grace Linn and Steve Geiermann discussing *Championing Minimally Invasive Care: Aligning Advocacy to Transform Oral Health*, based on a [posted ASTDD/CareQuest resource document](#), that was attended by 72 members. The Policy Consensus Tool Spotlight scheduled for February 5 was cancelled due to federal grant directives. It has been rescheduled for Wednesday, March 19. If you missed any previous Spotlights, you can access the links for those held in 2023 and 2024 on the [2023 ASTDD Documents, Publications, Webinar Recordings, Toolkits](#) and [2024 ASTDD Documents, Publications, Webinar Recordings, Toolkits](#) pages or the [Spotlight Presentations page](#), or by contacting Kimberlie Payne at kyinemanbhs@gmail.com.

Members of ASTDD’s Social Media Work Group created [a resource kit](#) to help members celebrate and promote National Children’s Dental Health Month. The resource kit offers links to numerous videos, infographics and other resources that can be shared through social media. Plans are also underway for social media at the NOHC and for items and staffing for the ASTDD exhibit booth. The CC Award Evaluation Group has selected this year’s winner of the ASTDD Excellence in Communication Award. The award will be presented along with many others at the NOHC awards ceremony which will be held Sunday, April 6, from 4:15 PM – 6:00 PM.

On a congratulatory note, our communication consultant Matt Jacob and his brother Mark Jacob just published a book, *Globetrotter: How Abe Saperstein Shook Up the World of Sports*, available through multiple online venues or bookstores. Yes, our consultants are multitalented!!

Dental Public Health Policy Committee (DPHPC)

The DPHPC met in January but not in February. They are following up on December’s discussion of processes the Committee has used and might use in the future, such as standards for drafts and a process for reviews, what a policy statement should cover (e.g., actionable steps) and related concerns. Harry Goodman

announced he will step down as chair for this committee after the NOHC but does plan to stay on as a member. McAllister Castelaz, DMD, MS, FAGD, FACD has agreed to be the new chair after Harry leaves the position. Dr. McAllister serves as a Dental Policy Consultant for Gainwell Technologies, Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Adjunct Assistant Faculty at Marquette University School of Dentistry, and Clinical and Community Care Director for Virginia Health Catalyst Glen Allen, VA. She serves both the ASTDD DPHPC and the BPC. We thank her for stepping up her involvement with ASTDD.

The DPHPC will update the *Perinatal Oral Health policy statement (2020)* with the National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center (OHRC) and the Perinatal OH Committee (POHC); DPHPC members held a call in February to discuss revisions and responsibilities. This paper would complement the related BPAR. The deadline for completion is June 30, 2025.

Best Practices Committee (BPC)

The OHRC also reported it has funding available to support an update to the *Perinatal Oral Health Best Practice Approach Report (BPAR)*. The deadline for completion is also June 30, 2025. A planning call was held on January 8 to discuss the update to the BPAR. Lori Cofano reviewed the 19 descriptive report submissions from the previous Perinatal BPAR and created a list of those that might be asked for updates. A BPC meeting was held on February 14. There will be an annual BPC face-to-face meeting at the NOHC for those in attendance. Lori also sent the BPAR template and Descriptive Report (DR) template to Kristin Giordano, one of our evaluation consultants, as the CDC may be interested in using or modifying the documents for future success stories.

Healthy Aging Committee (HAC)

The Gary and Mary West Foundation (GMWF) is funding a portion of an Advocacy Playbook project proposal, while Delta Dental Community Care Foundation notified ASTDD they will support the remaining funding needed. CareQuest Institute (CQI) for Oral Health may assist with dissemination efforts or other aspects of the project. Lori Cofano, ASTDD HAC consultant, drafted the Communication Plan. The primary author, Dr. Lyubov Slashcheva, worked with John Poornour on the outline for the project. Lori submitted the final grant report for the previous project to the GMWF. Lori also drafted a response to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Department of Health and Human Services, for a Federal Register query on the impact of ageism in healthcare that was sent to the BOD for review and input in February. The submission deadline is March 15.

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



Lori Cofano and Sandy Tesch fielded multiple requests for information during the past two months. Sandy monitored the dental sealant group listserv and posted information on upcoming sealant and Infection Prevention and Control (IPC)-related events. CDC had to cancel the planned SEALS training by Commander Wright for February due to the current national landscape and funding freeze. Sandy facilitated the Evidence Based Preventive Dental Services (EBPDS) Community of

Practice (CoP) session on February 26. Sarah Stream from the Association for Dental Safety (ADS) presented on 1) 2025 Boot Camp Recap, 2) IPC for Portable and Mobile Dentistry, and 3) the State Infection Control Assessment and Response (ICAR) Needs Assessment Survey Results.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) reached out to Lori for SAOHC volunteers to review the Health Services Assessment Tool for Schools (HATS). Several members volunteered.

Evaluation Activities

The ASTDD Emory evaluators, Kristin Giordano and Maggie Pustinger, have been working with ASTDD on evaluation plans, activities, roles and a timeline for 0049 evaluation deliverables including data collection methods, evaluation questions for polling CoP participants, an outline template for case studies, and a monthly reporting form for consultants working on the CDC new cooperative agreement. They have been meeting with ASTDD and CDC to discuss cooperative agreement components 1 & 3 evaluation. They have also been planning their NOHC session.

Evaluation is a key component of future CDC activities. Dr. Kendra Piper, from Emory will be supporting Kristin and Maggie's work on CDC projects. Kendra has extensive experience leading evaluation plan development and implementation efforts, providing evaluation technical assistance, and collaborating with diverse partners. She has a PhD in Health Education and Health Promotion and an MPH with a focus on Maternal Health and Global Health from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Data and Oral Health Surveillance/Diabetes Medical-Dental Integration Technical Assistance and Training



Kathy Phipps and Brooke Mehner, ASTDD data and surveillance consultants, provided TA to states for Basic Screening Survey (BSS) or other surveillance assistance for 57 hours these past two months to Ohio, Montana, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Washington, and New Jersey.

Brooke prepped and sent the 2025 State Synopses surveys (web and Word) on January 13, 2025 and prepped and presented the 2025 State Synopses Webinar on January 28. Kathy updated the BRFSS analysis for diabetes, dental visit, and tooth loss.

Barb Park, our diabetes consultant through the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD), conducted the first CoP call with the Epi/Surveillance/Data and Medical Dental Integration (MDI) Group on January 14. The call discussed the purpose of a CoP, how to use CoP calls to help the states, access to data, and plans for presenting/sharing the data. Ten of the 15 states attended in addition to a few of the ASTDD Data consultants. Barb also conducted meet-and-greets with the CDC DOH-funded states to better determine their needs for diabetes and MDI data.

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

NCHBHS has placed a pause on communication with the public for now and staff, consultants and dental hygienist liaisons have only been conducting internal communication. Updates will be provided in the next issue of *Roundup*.

Consortium for Oral Health (COH) Update

[COH](#), led by the National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center, working in collaboration with ASTDD, promotes evidence-based/informed content and resources to increase access to and use of oral health care to improve oral health for the maternal and child health population. COH is funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration.

[Building State Capacity for Integration \(BSCI\) Learning Collaborative \(LC\)](#)

In October 2024, the COH selected five state oral health programs—Idaho, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and West Virginia—to participate in BSCI LC. This 16-month LC focuses on enhancing the capacity to integrate oral health care into prenatal care at the systems level. Each state oral health program has engaged partners, including state agencies, managed care organizations, nonprofits, and coalitions, to be involved in project activities.

[Maternal and Child Health—Improving Oral Health Integration \(MCH-IOHI\) LC](#)

COH also supports the MCH-IOHI LC comprised of eight projects—seven states: Colorado, Connecticut, Montana, New York, South Carolina, Texas, and Wisconsin, and one jurisdiction: Puerto Rico. This LC focuses on advancing the integration of preventive oral health care (POHC) into primary care to make POHC more accessible to children, adolescents, and pregnant women who are at risk for poor oral health. Projects are implementing a two-tier, state-level and local-level improvement approach that addresses three core functions: (1) policy and practice; (2) education and outreach; and (3) data, analysis, and evaluation. A workgroup call was held on January 22, 2025, for projects to discuss progress on their state policy and practice activities (i.e., capacity inventory, environmental scan). Also, in January and February, COH provided technical assistance to projects to address approaches and challenges and provide resources.

Meetings and Webinars

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

Announcements about meetings and webinars are regularly included in the ASTDD Weekly Digest. These are just some examples of meetings attended.



Oral Health Prevention Summit. January 29, 2025, Boston, MA. *Matthew Horan Reporting.*

This annual summit aims at shifting the paradigm from a traditional disease-based industry to one that prioritizes prevention. This year's theme, "Managing Dental Disease with a Medical Mindset," focuses on education for preventive-based clinical models, policy and advocacy, best practices for patient care, medical-dental integration, cutting-edge product innovation, AI and the latest in dental technology. Key points from this meeting included:

- Renewed emphasis on dental disease (primarily caries and gingivitis/periodontitis) as chronic diseases that require a chronic disease management model approach including a prevention focus, likely alternative/value-based payment models, and medical-dental integration.
- Many new or recent dental products are available in the prevention space and aimed at minimally invasive care
- AI is rapidly progressing. Dental front and back-office functions will likely be impacted most broadly and first.
- State /territorial oral health programs (S/TOHP) should embrace the chronic disease management model and use that concept when framing connections with other programs within their states.
- S/TOHP should aim to engage with their dental boards and provide feedback internally around the need to prepare for brush-on therapies and medical dental integration activities in terms of the many related delegable duty issues/clarifications or regulations updates that may be necessary.
- S/TOHP should participate in discussions with their Medicaid Dental Program partners around all the codes related to viewing caries management as a chronic disease model and consider the related payment models and/or innovative demonstration pilots that might be successful within their current state landscapes.
- S/TOHP should be aware of AI and look for places to provide policy feedback to internal leadership that simultaneously seeks efficiencies but also protects the public. Recommend steps to ensure any AI that may be used to impact the care of their populations is used during training with representative data. A human element is still required (to some degree) to ensure ethical healthcare.

This group plans to host an annual meeting at Yankee Dental Congress moving forward.

Send any questions, comments, or articles to Bev Isman at bev.isman@comcast.net