

ASTDD Fluorides Committee Annual Report Jan 1, 2020 – Dec 31, 2020

Chair: Bruce Austin

Members: Tracy Boehmer, Susan Deming, Sahira Khalid, Jay Kumar, Jennifer Lansing, Summer Macias, Katya Mauritson, Dixianne Parker, Howard Pollick, Misty Robertson, Gina Sharps, Gwen Sullentrup, Sandy Sutton, Brad Whistler, Matt Zaborowski, Tooka Zokaie

1. List any new members or subcommittee members:

Sahira Khalid, Jennifer Lansing, Gwen Sullentrup, Katya Mauritson, Misty Robertson and Matt Zaborowski joined the committee during 2020.

2. Describe the purpose of your committee:

To provide ASTDD membership with the partnerships, policies and guidelines needed for the appropriate use of fluorides in community/population-based programs designed for dental caries prevention. The Committee works to assure that ASTDD positions and policies are presented in all appropriate venues, and oversees, reviews or provides input for all activities that ASTDD may be involved in regarding fluorides; in addition, technical support is provided as needed to state dental directors and fluoridation contacts. The Committee also coordinates annual fluoridation awards in collaboration with ADA and CDC at ASTDD's Annual Meeting.

3. List your committee accomplishments for the last calendar year.

- Updated Committee logic model and work plan for September 2020-August 2021.
- Met twelve times during 2020.
- Updated Committee compendium for NOHC.
- Reviewed relevant section of ASTDD annual report to CDC.
- 2020 Fluoridation Awards were announced during ASTDD's annual business meeting, held virtually on May 13, recognizing achievements in four categories in 2019, along with a Merit Award.
 - Fifty Year Awards (283 water systems in 25 states)
 - Community Initiative Awards (four communities in two states)
 - Community Fluoridation Reaffirmation Awards (six communities in four states)
 - State Fluoridation Quality Awards (5 states)
 - The 2018 Fluoridation Merit Award for “an outstanding contribution toward the progress of fluoridation” was presented to the American Fluoridation Society, and accepted by AFS president, Dr. Johnny Johnson.
- State dental directors were emailed a toolkit including templates and instructions for award certificates along with sample cover letters and media release materials

with ideas for recognizing awardees as a way to promote increased recognition and/or media coverage.

- Updated the Fluoridation Awards database for 2018 and 2019.
- In collaboration with Tracy Boehmer, National Fluoridation Engineer, coordinated and presented the annual CDC Fluoridation Update as a Zoom webinar on May 20, in lieu of the usual NOHC session. About 120 people participated. A highlight of this session was an update on the “New Wave Fluoridation Tablet and Feeder System.”
- Provided annual report on ASTDD Fluoridation Activities (June 2019 to May 2020) to the National Fluoridation Advisory Committee (NFAC), an advisory committee of the ADA Council on Advocacy for Access and Prevention (CAAP).
- Continued to coordinate the CWF “Community of Practice” for the 20 states funded by the CDC’s Division of Oral Health and promoted the use of a dedicated listserv for the grantees. The Committee coordinator facilitated five webinars during the year, including the CDC Fluoridation Update in May.
- Provided limited technical assistance to three states (MO, CT, RI) related to their CDC grants.
- Facilitated a follow-up call in April with interested states (AZ, GA, MA, MI, NC, NJ, OH, OR, UT, WI) to discuss termination of their school-based fluoride mouthrinse programs, alternatives, and messaging; a partner of the Utah program offered a short presentation on successful strategies, and ASTDD Associate Board Member John Welby offered further consultation if requested.
- Decided to draft a questionnaire to states about data reporting in WFRS, both to encourage updating state data for the National OH Data Portal but also to explore factors in under-fluoridation in many states. The idea is that better information from states will increase our understanding of perceived barriers to reporting and maintaining optimal fluoridation; then, we can offer more targeted technical assistance and perhaps develop a toolkit for states to work with partner agencies and local water systems. The questionnaire was drafted with input from several Committee members and will be reviewed by one of ASTDD’s evaluation consultants.
- Provided a “head’s up” to send to state dental directors about the release of the National Academies National Toxicology Program’s report on fluoride and neurotoxicity (*NTP Monograph on the Systematic Review of Fluoride Exposure and Neurodevelopmental and Cognitive Health Effects*); provided a letter for ASTDD to submit to the National Academies with comments on the current version of the report; provided guidelines for talking points for states to use in responding to the release of the report (expected in January or February of 2021).
- Drafted a letter to send to the American Nurses Association and the Alliance of Nurses for Healthy Environments expressing concerns about the apparent biases expressed against fluoride and water fluoridation by a featured speaker in ANHE’s Maternal Child Environmental Health Webinar Series.
- Maintained/updated the Fluoridation Rollback Catalog.

4. Describe the future activities planned by your committee:

- Continue to serve as resource, as a group and/or individually, to the CDC-funded states in their work toward CWF objectives, through the established Community of Practice and listserv for state fluoridation contacts.
- Complete review and revision of older fluorides resource documents.
- Continue to collaborate with partners (e.g., ADA, AFS, AAP, AAPHD) to identify fluoride advocacy opportunities.
- Develop and maintain regular communication with ADA for fluoride issues, starting with monitoring state/local activities (local actions, referenda, etc.)
- Continue to work as requested with ASTDD evaluators to evaluate CDC-grant-funded fluoridation activities, particularly the Community of Practice.
- Assess utility of our use of Curate, a data-mining company that provides a searchable database of local government meeting agendas and minutes built with “civic intelligence software [that] uses artificial intelligence and machine learning to process municipal meeting documents” and scans meeting minutes, agendas, planning documents, etc., from local government entities. We will be using the reports we can generate as a sort of early warning system on fluoridation-related activity, along with Google alerts.

5. Describe any subcommittees your committee uses, their roles and activities:

- There are occasional ad hoc subcommittees that are identified to assist in particular activities, such as a document review process.

6. List any unmet needs of your committee (e.g., members, funding, etc.):

- Funding might be needed to accomplish revision of several of the fluorides resource documents.