

ACTION

July/August 2022

Journal of the Dental Association



GDA Convention Hospitality Suite

Benefiting the GDA Foundation for Oral Health

Perfect for networking and just steps from the pool, the GDA Convention hospitality suite at the Omni Amelia Island Resort offers VIP access to a spacious beach-front suite offering amenities such as food and beverage and a large patio for relaxing with friends and family.

FEATURES

- ✓ Exclusive VIP access on Saturday, July 23, 2022
- ✓ Complimentary breakfast and lunch
- ✓ Signature cocktails throughout the day
- ✓ Happy Hour access with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres
- ✓ Spacious suite just steps from the pool
- ✓ Large beach-front patio for lounging



Proceeds benefit the GDA Foundation for Oral Health charitable and educational programs.



**Purchase tickets today
at GDAconvention.com.**
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**Note: If you have already registered for the GDA Convention you will need to go back into your registration to add this event.*



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features

22 [LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP](#)**28** [GDA CONVENTION](#)**30** [GDA FOUNDATION](#)
Healthy Smiles for Georgians**35** [CE FOR YOU AND YOUR TEAM](#)**38** [HIPAA COMPLIANCE AND PATIENT RECORDS](#)**40** [SPEAR PHISHING](#)

departments

9 [SEEN & HEARD](#)
GDA Members Making News
and News for GDA Members**16** [HEALTH POLICY CORNER](#)
Enrollment and Graduates in
Dental Public Health Programs**17** [THE PRACTICE](#)
Recruitment Strategies**20** [FINDING SUCCESS](#)
The Changing Landscape of
Dental Practice

in every issue

5 [CONTACT GDA STAFF](#)**7** [EDITORIAL](#)**42** [MEMBER PROFILE](#)**44** [CLASSIFIEDS](#)**46** [ADVERTISER INDEX](#)

DO YOUR PATIENTS SUFFER FROM ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS



If your patients have any of these symptoms and are not responding to treatments, they may be suffering from a TMJ disorder. Problems within the jaw can produce a myriad of symptoms that, at first glance, might appear to be totally unrelated to the temporomandibular complex. Our dedicated team of professionals have years of training and are happy to assist you in the diagnosis and treatment of possible craniomandibular/temporomandibular disorders.



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GDA ACTION seeks to be an issues-driven journal focusing on current matters affecting Georgia dentists and patients accomplished by disseminating information and providing a forum for commentary.

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UPCOMINGEVENTS

Visit gadental.org/events for the full GDA calendar.



GDA Practice Management Retreat
September 9–10
Jekyll Island, GA

Early Bird Pricing ends Sept. 1!

Save the Date

GDA Fall Conference in Savannah

September 23–24, 2022

Andaz Hotel
Savannah, GA



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REACHUS

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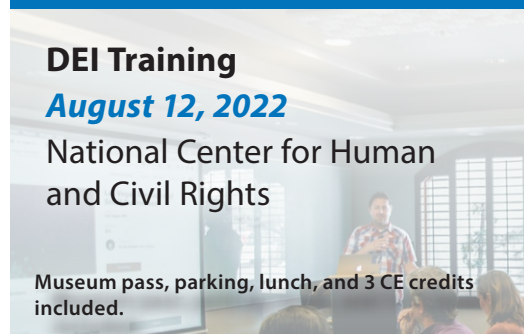
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GDA Convention & Expo**
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Save the Date

DEI Training

August 12, 2022

National Center for Human
and Civil Rights



Museum pass, parking, lunch, and 3 CE credits included.

House of Delegates Meeting Notice

Saturday, December 10, 2022

Hotel Avalon, Alpharetta, GA

Caucus lunches: Noon–12:45 pm

HOD: 1:00 pm until conclusion
of business



Are you curious about the connection between pain and sleep?

At Ben-Pat Institute, we go beyond just basic dental education on orofacial pain, temporomandibular disorders and dental sleep medicine. We link the correlation of these conditions together to help make you a more skilled clinician in these disciplines to further help your patients.

If you've ever been curious about how you can help pain and sleep patients, join us for a four-part dental education course on orofacial pain and dental sleep medicine. The great thing about this education series is that we take a hybrid approach, which means there are three ways to join: All sessions in a live setting, half virtual and half in person, or all virtual.

You will learn various bite techniques for sleep apnea appliances and TMJ splints as well as injections for various blocks that are associated with orofacial pain. We will also show you how to create temporary oral appliances, examine pain and sleep patients, and the delivery of custom sleep appliances.



Each attendee will also receive two custom appliances for themselves, temporary appliances for TMJ disorders and sleep appliances. But the benefits of this course don't stop there.

Our course also offers a 2-month complimentary mentorship.

This allows you to ask us questions or receive further guidance as you begin to implement services around orofacial pain, TMD and dental sleep medicine. And if you need additional guidance and advice beyond those two months, we also offer a pay-as-you-go mentorship service.

Join us for our pain and sleep programs

Location: 200 Ashford Center North, Suite 195. Atlanta, GA 30338

CLASS 1 (Early 2022):

Session 1: Jan 21-22
Session 2: Feb 25-26
Session 3: Mar 25-26
Session 4: May 13-14

CLASS 2 (Late 2022):

Session 1: Aug 26-27
Session 2: Sep 23-24
Session 3: Nov 4-5
Session 4: Dec 2-3



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PREPARING FOR THE UNEXPECTED: A DENTAL SPOUSE SURVIVOR GUIDE



DR. JAMIE MITCHELL

GDA Editor

Phone: 706.202.9307

jamitchelldmd@bellsouth.net

As an unselfish act, Debbie and Katherine looked back on all the obstacles they faced and created a guide for member dentists as an aide to survivors in our profession who are left to pick up the pieces.

Six Flags over Georgia is an amazing theme park that boasts thrilling roller coasters like The Great American Scream Machine, Superman: Ultimate Flight, Goliath, and many more. If you like the ups, downs, loop-the-loops, and the speed of such rides then this is definitely in your wheelhouse. Life itself can be like a roller coaster filled with the same twists and turns, highs and lows. Unfortunately, we all have to deal with the lows of the passing of loved ones. While such tragedies are never easy to endure, when they arrive unexpectedly they can be all the more difficult to weather. This is especially true when you find yourself trying to both cope with the loss and step in to manage a very busy dental practice. Just ask Debbie Torbush who lived this nightmare several years ago when her husband, and our past GDA President, Dr. Doug Torbush, suddenly passed away.

Last year, Immediate Past President Dr. Annette Rainge created a Presidential Task Force to revamp our Necrology Committee. She appointed Dr. Henry Benton to chair the task force with the assistance of Dr. Hardy Gray, Dr. Celia Dunn, Dr. Annette Rainge, Debbie Torbush, Katherine Torbush, and myself and asked us to modify the workings of the committee. The first step was to listen to experience. In hopes that they could help others prepare for such an ordeal, Debbie and Katherine candidly shared the struggles they encountered following Doug's death. They had found themselves completely unprepared to step in and run the dental office that Doug had solely maintained. Puzzling over passwords, determining payroll for employees, deciphering leases, insurance, business licenses, and what seemed like a thousand other things, was overwhelming to say the least. I can't even begin to imagine what hell they were going through.

As an unselfish act, Debbie and Katherine looked back on all the obstacles they faced and created a guide for member dentists as an aide to survivors in our profession who are left to pick up the pieces. The booklet they crafted gives quick references of things that need to be done ASAP such as meeting with the staff, contacting your attorney, accountant, transition companies, the Board of Dentistry, DEA, and a list of other things that need immediate attention. The extra pearl is that they have compiled a list of things to do *now* to be prepared in the event something like this should happen to your family. They even included templates to help get you started. This information is available on the next page and through the GDA website.

Other revisions the task force has initiated are a name change and the way deaths of member dentists are reported at the House of Delegates. First, the committee will change its name to Remembrance and Care Committee, which will replace the sterile Necrology Committee. Secondly, the remembrance of the member dentist at the HOD will include a brief bio and photo on the overhead projector screen if available.

Henry and the Task Force should be commended for addressing such a challenging and emotional topic. To that end, let's try and keep the excitement of the roller coaster ride in the hands of the theme parks and strive to avoid as many twists, turns, ups, and downs in our already fast-paced, thrilling lives. I'm sure the information here will help us all do just that. We all need to thank Debbie and Katherine for the hard work and passion they put into sharing their experience and putting together such an informative and thought-provoking booklet. Our hope is never to need this information, but it should make us all rest a little easier knowing we have such a great resource available.

Cheers. 🍷

Things You Can Do **Now** to be Prepared

Keep updated records of key business information:

- **Bank Accounts**—including account numbers, locations, passwords, and authorized signers
- **Safe Deposit Box**—location, key, and authorized parties with access
- **Contact Information**—keep a thorough and accurate list of all important contacts including, but not limited to:
 - » Attorneys—address, phone number, and point of contact
 - » All insurance information (personal and business)—address, phone number, point of contact/beneficiaries, type of insurance (Malpractice, Business, Life, Disability, etc.) and policy numbers
 - » Accountant/CPA—address, phone number, point of contact, and their role within the office (do they handle payroll, month end procedures, year-end, etc.)
 - » Financial advisor—address, phone number, point of contact, type of investments with account numbers/authorized users/passwords
- **Review and Update Will**
 - » Make sure any changes are updated regularly and those listed as executors know where the will is located
- **Office Information**
 - » Is building owned or leased?
 - If owned, provide mortgage, deed, or any sale agreements you have
 - » Recurring bills that need to be paid
 - Utility bills (gas, electric, water, sanitation, phone, internet, etc.)
 - Mortgage or rent
 - Staff—list of all current staff with important personal info such as names, birthday, phone numbers, addresses, salaries, and benefits
 - Lab companies utilized—list all companies with their address, phone, point of contact, and

preferably maintain active list of cases outstanding at each lab for easy reference

- Cleaning companies—provide address, phone, point of contact, and current schedule

» Dental equipment

- This will help in the sale of the practice; include a description, year of manufacture, brand name, model/serial number, repair/inspection history, warranties, and owner's manual (if available)

» Important office paperwork (keep in a safe location, but make sure spouse/estate executor knows where to find)

- Business License
Some cities may also require a Tax Occupancy Certificate (or license) to operate within the city, for more info on that, contact your local city government website

- Copies of insurance policies

- Dental License

- DEA/Tax ID/NPI numbers listed

» All passwords

• Staff Information

- » It is important to have a list of current staff, their contact information, and their roles within the office so they can be contacted immediately to help take action if the time comes. Also, helpful to include:

- Job description, salaries (also see recurring bills above), benefits package

• Dental Insurance

- » If the office accepts dental insurance, it is important to have a list of the accepted insurance companies with phone numbers so they can be notified of any changes (this can be kept within software but make sure someone knows how to access it)

- "If you participate in Medicaid or are enrolled with any PPO programs you should also keep a list of all of the programs and

their contact information... The insurance companies will *not* make an exception because of a doctor's death and let the new owner treat PPO and Medicaid patients without the proper credentials. This process takes time and will be very difficult if you do not have a complete list of the programs readily available. Practice Impact recommends that the buyer be credentialed with most of the programs by the time of the closing so that the buyer can immediately treat patients and not have to hold off scheduling them until the credentialing is complete. Making your patients wait for the credentialing will only cause the practice to lose patients and the value of your practice to drop even more." (Practice Impact, 2021)

Prepare a list of the organizations you belong to that may provide resources in the event of an unexpected office closure: This may help your family find dentists who can staff the office in your absence or provide other support/assistance.

- GDA
- Local Study Clubs
- Other Membership Groups
- Community Groups
- ADA

Get office evaluations periodically:

Obtaining office evaluations can help dentists, office managers, family members, etc. get an accurate understanding of the tangible and intangible aspects of the practice. Practice evaluations are critical for transition and estate planning, insurance funding, tax planning, attracting associates or partners to the practice, performance measurement, and emergency planning.

Review this important information regularly with spouse, family, and/or office staff to ensure the right people know what to do in the event of an emergency situation.





Dr. Marshall Mann shares a cup of coffee with House Insurance Committee Chairman Eddie Lumsden in Rome

GDA Contact Dentists Distribute GDAPAC Contributions

GDA Contact Dentists recently distributed GDAPAC contributions across the state to members of the Georgia General Assembly facing primary opposition prior to the May 24 primary elections.

If you have a relationship with a legislator in your area or are interested in serving as a Contact Dentist, please contact GDA Senior Director of Government Relations and Policy Thomas Beusse at thomas@gadental.org for more information.



Dr. David Bradberry hosted a visit by Senator Kay Kirkpatrick at his office in Roswell



Welcome New Members!

The following members joined GDA

| | | |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Behzad Aliassa | Michael Hall | Tani Rainford |
| David Browning | Dylan Hamilton | Celia Reed |
| Derrick Chen | Jeffrey Heath | Sonya Shyam |
| Susan Estep | Patricia Homer | Benjamin Wheeler |
| Jinoos Farhang-Fallah | Jeanette Kessler | Jeffrey White |
| Trudy-Ann Frazer | Young Okeke | |

Special Olympics Summer Games

Thank you to the GDA members who volunteered at the Special Olympics Georgia, Special Smiles event at the Summer Games in Atlanta last month. Athletes received screenings, sealants, and oral health education.



Christy Biddy working for the Georgia Dental Insurance Services

GDIS Receives Anthem's Silver Award for Medicare Supplement Sales for 2021



GDA Member Awarded Pierre Fauchard Academy Volunteer Faculty Award

Congratulations to Dr. Douglas Clepper for receiving the Pierre Fauchard Academy Volunteer Faculty Award.

GDA President Featured on Dental Business Radio

GDA President, Dr. Zach Powell joined Dental Business Radio host Patrick O'Rourke on April 21 to talk about the mission and initiatives of the GDA.





Save the Date

THE GREATER ATLANTA DENTAL FOUNDATION

PRESENTS A

GRAND SLAM GALA FOR SMILES

Saturday, August 20, 2022

Omni Hotel @ The Battery

Entertainment by: Dueling Pianos International

CALL FOR SILENT AUCTION CONTRIBUTIONS

We need YOUR help NOW! If you have an item to donate, please let us know now so we can plan ahead. Items might include: a vacation package or rental home, sporting event tickets, gift cards, spa packages, food and beverage, concert tickets, gift baskets....just to name a few!

Email: alyson@theassociationcompany.com



Also happens to be the rematch of the Atlanta Braves vs. Houston Astros! The Battery will be full of fun so you won't want to miss out!

CH HOUSE GATE

NDDS Northern District
GEORGIA DENTAL ASSOCIATION

DEI Training

August 12, 2022 | 9am–1pm

National Center for Human and Civil Rights

Join the GDA for its 2nd DEI Training event at the NCHCR. This course focuses on understanding what diversity, equity, and inclusion mean to you and your practice. It will explore organizational values, culture and identify ways to improve and strengthen your organization and leadership. Museum pass, parking, lunch, and 3 CE credits included. Program limited to 40 participants.



**Check out the ADA
CEBJA committee's
new podcast series
"Tooth Be Told"**

CEBJA PRESENTS



**EPISODE 1:
"PATIENCE BEFORE PATIENTS"
WITH
DR. MICHAEL HALASZ**



AUGUST 4, 2022 | 6:30PM - 8:30PM
THE COOKING SCHOOL AT IRWIN STREET

Cooking WITH CANINES



GDA's first dog friendly event! Join the GDA for an evening of food and friends! Come learn how to make a healthy meal, treat, and dessert for your pup while the chef prepares your dinner (locally sourced black angus burgers, steak fries, and beverages to suit the occasion). Special presentation by Periodontist and Exotic Animal Dentist Dr. Laura Braswell!!



Dr. Mitchell; Thomas Beusse, GDA Senior Director of Government Relations; Emma Paris, GDA Director of Health Policy; Dr. Kim Capehart of DCG; Dr. Adam Gordon, CDDS President; and Dr. Pinkney Gilchrist, CDDS Vice President at the Central District Meeting

GDA/DCG Adjunct Professorship Program

The GDA/DCG Adjunct Professorship Program is seeking volunteer dentists of all specialties to serve as adjunct professors to work with fourth-year dental students in three clinics in the Macon, GA area. This partnership will provide oral health care to underserved populations, build the dental student rotation program in this part of the state, and encourage students to practice in the middle Georgia area upon graduation.

Interested candidates can contact Emma Paris at emma@gadental.org or 404.636.7553x189 for additional information.



GDA Director of Health Policy Emma Paris and DCG Director of Community Programs Ketarya Hunt Bass presented the GDA/DCG Adjunct Professorship Program before a recent meeting of the Central District Dental Society

DENTAL DASH at DAWN 5K



Does YOUR Practice Have What It Takes?
The biggest team wins \$500 cash!

Dental Dash at Dawn 5K raises funds to support the DDD Foundation, Inc.'s programs providing dental care to patients with developmental disabilities.

Saturday, November 5 at 8AM 1800 Century Place NE, Atlanta

For information or to register, go to www.dentaldash.org



GDA Outstanding Student and Faculty Award

Congratulations to Stephanie Jaipual and Dr. Kim Capehart for receiving the 2022 GDA Outstanding Student and Faculty Award presented by Katherine Torbush, GDA Director of Member Services.

2021



William Edward Taylor

Dr. William E. “Bill” Taylor, Jr., 94, longtime Savannah Dentist, passed away Tuesday, July 27, 2021 at Buckingham South. He was born January 19, 1927, in Savannah to the late William E. Taylor and Alice Holm Taylor. Bill graduated from Savannah High School in 1945 and then served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. Bill then went on to graduate from The Citadel Military College and the University of Maryland School of Dentistry. Dr. Taylor practiced dentistry in Savannah for 43 years, retiring in 1997. Dr. Taylor was a member of the American Dental Association for 67 years, the Georgia Dental Association and the Southeastern District Dental Association. For decades, he enjoyed meeting the Original Clary’s Lunch Bunch (doctors and dentists who practiced downtown) for lunch and fellowship.



Thomas Marvin Strickland

Dr. Thomas Marvin Strickland passed away Friday, July 30, 2021, surrounded by family and friends. Dr. Strickland was born June 26, 1942, in Bay Minette, AL, to the late Marvin and Hazel Strickland. He grew up there and graduated from Baldwin County High School. He then attended the University of Alabama. After graduating from the University of Alabama and the UAB School of Dentistry, he joined the United States Air Force, serving his country for two years during the Vietnam War. Dr. Strickland practiced dentistry for thirty-three years before retiring in 2003. He was a founding member of the Tall Pines Retriever Club, past president of the National Retriever Club, charter member of the Purina Awards Committee, past president of the Georgia Dental Association, and member of the Dougherty County Rotary Club.



Christopher O. Jernigan

Dr. Christopher Owen “Chris” Jernigan, age 67 of Canton, passed away on Saturday, August 7, 2021 at

Northside Gwinnett Medical Center. Dr. Jernigan was an Orthodontist in Canton, GA for over 35 years. He graduated from the University of Tennessee with a B.S. in Biology. He followed this graduating from the Medical College of Georgia School of Dentistry, DMD; and St. Louis University, M.S. in Orthodontics.



James Timothy Hall

Tim Hall, 59, of Lawrenceville, Georgia passed away on Saturday, August 14, 2021. Tim was born in Atlanta to Max and Rosa Hall. He attended Milton High School and proudly attended the University of Georgia where he was a Freshman during the 1980 National Championship run. He went on to get his Master’s degree from Emory University and his dental degree from the Medical College of Georgia in 1989. In his dental practice in Lawrenceville, GA, Tim served the community and was known for his kind and gentle manner. He was generous with his professional skills often serving those in need.



Charles Lindy Cooley

Dr. Charles L. Cooley, Sr. of Stone Mountain went to be with his Heavenly Father on Monday, October 4, 2021. He was born on February 16, 1931 in Heard County, GA to JB and Mattie Belle Cooley. Charles graduated from Emory University School of Dentistry, was a LT in the U.S. Navy and served two years in the Naval Dental Core at Paris Island, SC. He opened his Dental practice in 1959 and served the Forest Park community for 47 years. Charles was a member of the Georgia Board of Dentistry, Georgia Dental Association, Hinman, Northern District Dental Society, Georgia Academy of Dental Practice, Eames Study Club, American College of Dentists, and International College of Dentists.



Gerrit C. Hagman

Born in Gary, Indiana February 27, 1936, Dr. Gerrit C. Hagman graduated from DePauw University with his BS degree. He then went to Indiana University for his D.D.S. degree, followed by a Masters degree and fellowship. After getting married and

tired of the cold, he moved to Atlanta to open his dental practice. He taught classes at Emory Dental school for over 10 years. He was a proud member of the Northern District Dental Society, the Thomas P. Hinman Dental society (served as President and General Chairman), the American Academy of Dentists, the Southern Academy of Periodontists, and the International College of Dentists, serving as a Regent for the Southern states, lecturing and speaking at “White Coat” ceremonies.

2022



Robert Alan Parrish

Dr. Robert Alan “Bob” Parrish, 74, of Albany, died peacefully Thursday, February 17, 2022 at Shands Hospital in Gainesville, Florida. He graduated from Central High School in Fountain City, Tennessee, and attended The University of Tennessee Memphis, where he obtained his Doctorate of Dentistry in 1974. He began his dental career by opening his office in Albany, Georgia in August of 1974, where he and his wife, Bobbie, built a thriving practice that lasted over 43 years until he had to retire due to his health. Dr. Bob was known as the most gentle dentist in town and with the help of Bobbie and their amazing staff, had many patients through the years, many of which Bob considered his friends.



Michael Stuart Blass

Michael S. Blass passed away on March 22, after a brief illness, at the age of 80. An Atlanta native, Michael attended Morningside Elementary, Grady High School, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He graduated from the School of Dentistry at Emory University, where he later served as an associate professor while managing a dental practice with his father, and later with his brother-in-law, for 36 years. After retiring from dentistry, he pursued his second vocation as a United States Professional Tennis Association-certified coach and enjoyed many years of giving complimentary lessons at Bridge Mill Athletic Club in Canton.

Congratulations, 2022 Graduates!

**Your Georgia Dental Insurance Services (GDIS) team
congratulates The Dental College of Georgia Class of 2022.
We're here to assist you with all your insurance needs.**

Business and Personal Lines Insurance:

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- ✓ Entity Coverage
- ✓ Business Insurance
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- ✓ Data Breach
- ✓ EPLI
- ✓ Commercial Liability Umbrella
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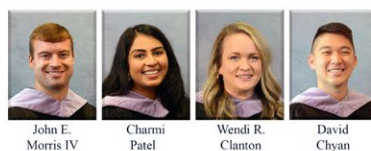


Call us at 770.395.0224 or visit
gdaplus.com for more information.

Welcome New Graduates

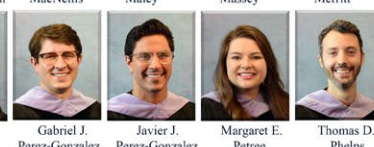
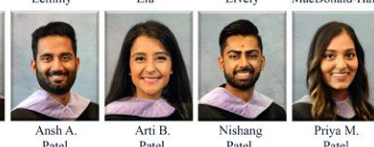
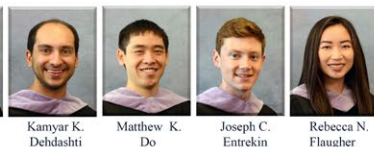
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The Dental College of Georgia Class of 2022



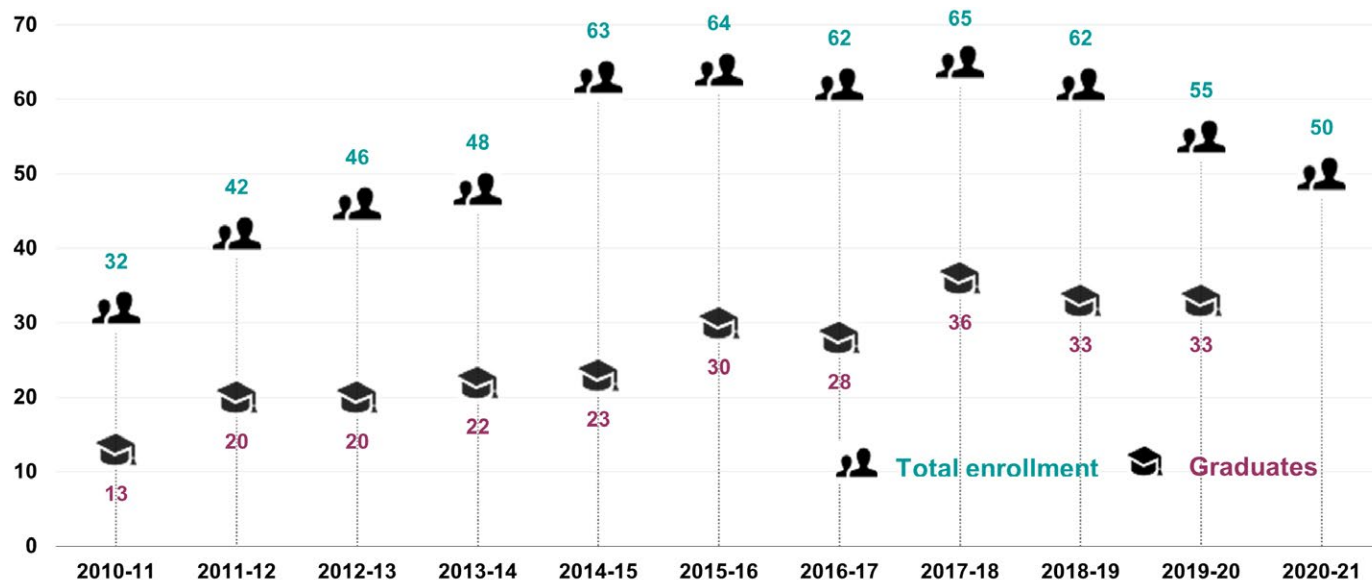
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**DENTAL COLLEGE
OF GEORGIA**

Class of 2022



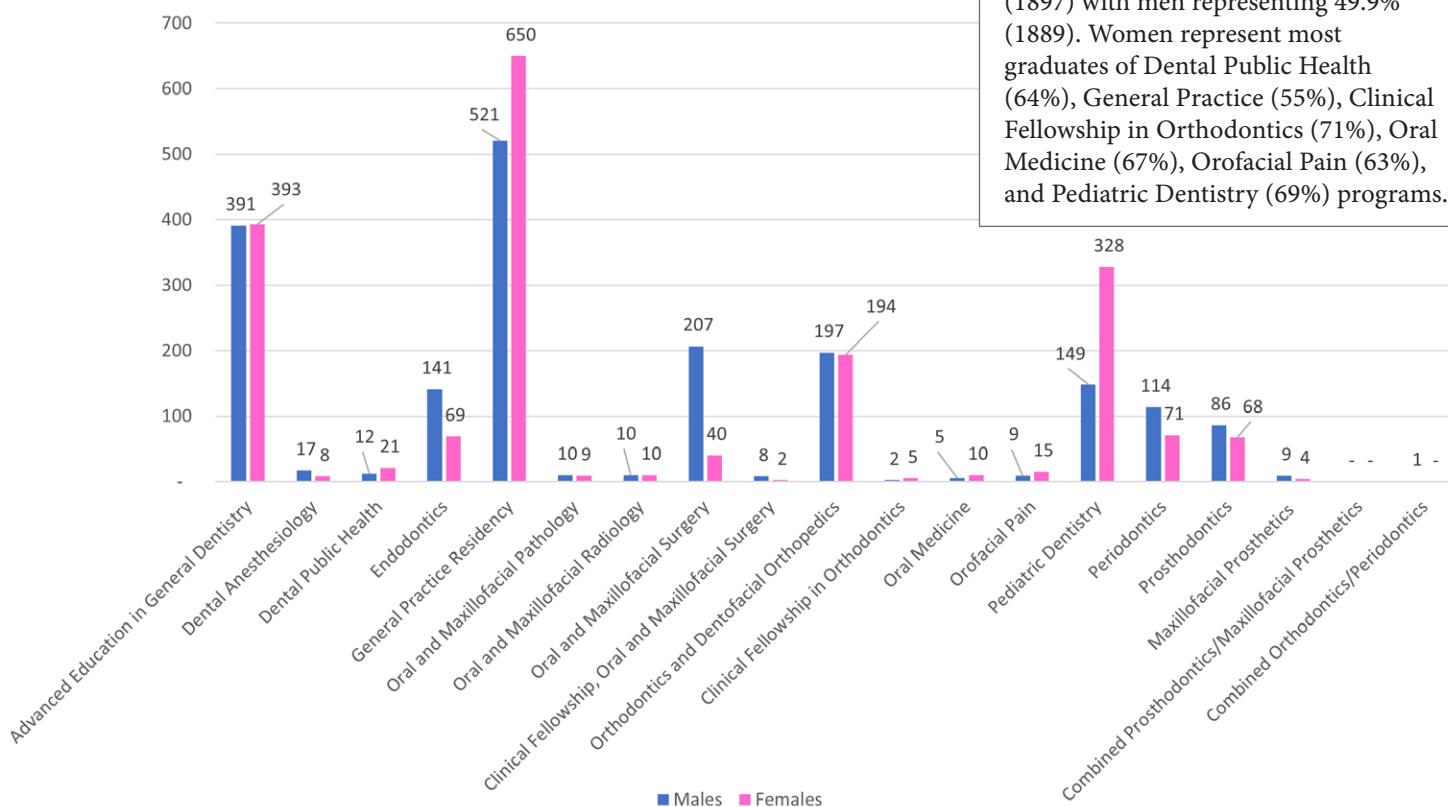
Total Enrollment and Graduates in Dental Public Health Programs, 2010–2011 to 2020–2021

Graduation rates for public health dentists have averaged between 40% (2010–2011) to 60% (2019–2020) of those enrolled in a program. Overall, graduation and enrollment are both trending upwards.



Source: American Dental Association, Health Policy Institute, Surveys of Advanced Dental Education. ©2021 American Dental Association

Graduates of Advanced Dental Education Programs by Gender, 2020



Overall, women represented 50.1% of Advanced Dental Education graduates (1897) with men representing 49.9% (1889). Women represent most graduates of Dental Public Health (64%), General Practice (55%), Clinical Fellowship in Orthodontics (71%), Oral Medicine (67%), Orofacial Pain (63%), and Pediatric Dentistry (69%) programs.

Source: American Dental Association, Health Policy Institute, 2020–21 Survey of Advanced Dental Education.

RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

to Overcome Staffing Shortages in Dental Offices

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Extended wait times, a lack of customer support, abbreviated service hours, and even business closures have become part of what is optimistically referred to as this decade's "new normal." The COVID-19 pandemic brought to light labor shortages in the United States that were already lurking in the shadows. A combination of declining numbers of working-age adults and a decades-long lull in wage growth existed even before the American workforce began dealing with pandemic-related employee absences and essential-worker fatigue.

Dental practices have been just as susceptible to staffing shortages as other businesses, if not more so. In a November 2021 poll from the ADA Health Policy Institute, results showed nine out of 10 hiring dentists believe it has been "extremely" or "very" challenging to recruit dental hygienists and dental assistants in the past year. Other results from the poll indicated that staffing shortages are the most common limiting factor for practices that want to see more patients.

CDA Practice Support can help dentists navigate what has become a complex and competitive hiring market. Dedicated Practice Support analysts continue to draw on their expertise to workable solutions dentists can use to solve—and prevent—staffing issues. If hiring and retaining qualified employees has been an issue for your practice, tap into the collective advice of the Practice Support team as you recruit, hire, and retain desirable candidates.



Think like a job seeker

When you needed an assistant yesterday, it can be difficult to think about anything beyond the job description you're posting. But in a competitive hiring market, it's imperative that you consider what will make the job you are posting stand out from the others job seekers are scrolling past—and not just those in the dental profession. One phenomenon of the current job market is that many employees are leveraging their skills to find jobs in other industries, particularly

if those sectors offer better wages, benefits, or schedules.

Before adding your help-wanted notice to the dozens of others out there, ask yourself, "Why would a candidate want to work for me?" If your answer relies on wages and benefits, make sure what you have to offer sets you apart from other practices in your area. If you really want to step up your hiring game, consider offering additional perks of employment that make your practice the one good candidates seek out. »

RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

Continued from page 17

- Evaluate the compensation you are offering. Many dentists are hesitant to increase starting wages, even when it would position them to attract more job candidates. Katie Fornelli, CDA's senior practice management analyst, encourages hiring dentists to think of long-term benefits and cost savings of offering competitive wages. "Offering \$2 more per hour equates to just over \$4K spent per year. Compared to the cost of hiring and training new employees who end up jumping to the next higher-paying job, it may be worth the increase in your hiring wage." Indeed, the Society for Human Resource Management estimates that employers spend an average of \$4,425 per job in hiring costs.

Fornelli does offer a word of caution to practice owners regarding competition, explaining, "This does not suggest you offer a wage that is beyond your profit margin." She suggests setting a budget for staff compensation and ensuring that

"You want to expand the talent pool of viable candidates as much as possible by utilizing different sources," explains CDA Practice Support Analyst Michelle Coker, PHR, PHRca. "Recruiting is not about hiring the first person you have interviewed for the position."

staff overhead costs remain below your collections margin.

- Practice owners should take a hard look at how the benefits they offer stack up against those of other employers in their community. If you aren't offering them to your employees already, additional vacation days, a floating holiday, medical coverage, a 401(k) plan, and even pet insurance can entice a potential candidate to accept a position. Little perks can go a long way when it comes to positioning your practice at the top of a job candidate's list.

Ashley Reich, CDA's senior learning and development specialist, adds, "A differentiator for some dental practices

is offering to pay licensing fees and costs for C.E. courses for their dental assistants and hygienists. These are pretty nominal expenses but are added value in retaining staff."

- New hire bonuses can be the icing on the cake when an offer of employment is extended. To encourage retention, the hiring bonus may be divided into two payments—one at the start of employment and another after a designated employment period.
- Think outside the 9-to-5 workday to expand your pool of job applicants. "I am hearing that many people still are not returning to work because the hours do not fit into their family schedules," notes Fornelli. Flexible scheduling could be the key to attracting employees to your practice. You might offer a schedule that would allow some employees to finish their workday at 3 pm a few days per week to be available for after-school pickup and care. Creating half-day schedules or a 4-day week are other potential options that will appeal to qualified candidates who are currently unable to commit to a traditional full-time schedule.

Recruit like a peacock

- In the bird world, male peafowl are masters of recruitment. Their showy tail feathers make an eye-catching display designed to attract many potential mates. When it comes to finding, attracting, and retaining employees to fill open positions in your practice, you should recruit like a peacock to draw a wide range of possible candidates to your practice. "You want to expand the talent pool of viable candidates as much as possible by utilizing different sources," explains CDA Practice Support Analyst Michelle Coker, PHR, PHRca. "Recruiting is not about hiring

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the first person you have interviewed for the position.”

While you may already have a go-to website for posting job openings, Practice Support analysts point out that one hiring tactic is not enough these days. They encourage practice owners to expand their talent pool by broadening their efforts to advertise for candidates.

- Incentivize your employees to recruit. Birds of a feather flock together. Chances are good that someone you’ve already hired will have at least one good lead on a potential new hire. Make sure your staff knows about any positions you are trying to fill and encourage them to promote open jobs to friends and family, as well as on their social media channels. Offering referral bonuses is a good way to encourage your current employees to join in recruiting efforts.
- Develop ongoing relationships with schools. CDA Practice Support Analyst Matthew Nelson says that some of the best recruiting success he’s seen recently comes from dentists who are willing to volunteer their time at dental assistant training programs. This could take the form of a short presentation to a class on what doctors are looking for in employees, providing feedback on X-rays, or taking the students on a tour of your office.

“It gets you right in front of all the prospective employees and builds valuable relationships with the staff at the school,” Nelson explains. “Don’t be the dentist calling to ask the school if they have someone for you. Be the dentist that fosters the relationships with schools, so they want to send you their best students. Or better yet, build those relationships with the students directly so they all want to come work for you.”
- Get social. Use your practice’s social media channels to announce job openings. Coker also encourages practice owners to explore the many social media groups that offer opportunities for dentists and dental staff to post available jobs. “Los Angeles Dental Peeps or Sacramento Dental Hygiene Subs are two very active

Facebook groups, and I often see posts there from CDA members looking for long- and short-term employees,” she notes.

Another place to connect with potential employees is the GDACareer Center at jobs.gadental.org which offers practice owners and job seekers an easy way to connect through job alerts, customized profiles, a resume bank, and much more. When it’s appropriate to do so, Practice Support analysts also suggest asking your patients if they know anyone who would be a good fit for your hiring needs.

- Think outside the box. In a competitive hiring market, it may be necessary to get creative with your hiring process. Practice owners should consider opening positions to candidates with excellent customer service skills in other employment areas and then provide training in dental technical skills. Coker explains, “If you’re able to step back and spend some time developing the role, you expand the field to more diverse candidates.”

CDA has been working to address the shortage of dental assistance through the Smile Crew CA program. Created to provide interested individuals the opportunity to learn more about a career in dental assisting, Smile Crew CA also lets participants submit their information for interest in a training program. Since its launch, CDA has piloted four Smile Crew CA training bootcamps in the Bay Area and San Diego with additional locations planned.

Value current employees

As the old saying goes, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Employee turnover is costly, it affects the overall performance of your practice, and in the current job market it’s becoming increasingly difficult to attract and hire experienced candidates. Not all turnover is harmful—a new employee may be more skilled or productive than their predecessor, but frequent staff changes can have a negative effect on your practice.

For this reason, employee retention is a good barometer for measuring the overall well-being of your practice as a

business. If you find yourself seeking new employees with increasing regularity, it’s time to step back and evaluate what may be enticing them away from your practice. CDA Practice Support analysts can offer an unbiased perspective on your business practices and provide guidance to help address any issues that may be affecting employee satisfaction.

Along with the competitive wages, benefits and employment perks, good practice management is essential to retaining employees

- Communicate job descriptions and expectations clearly. An employee manual can provide clarity and consistency.
- Employee performance evaluations offer a clear channel for opening communication designed to help employees learn and grow. These can also provide a standard for offering recognition, promotion, and bonuses.
- Prioritize and promote diversity and inclusion within your office. According to statistics compiled by Medium, the benefits of a welcoming, safe, and diverse workplace include higher revenue, more innovation, higher job acceptance rates, and better performance among employees.
- Provide opportunities for growth. In addition to supporting continuing education, practice owners can foster growth by giving employees more responsibilities. New opportunities keep employees from being bored with their jobs and encourage them to take more pride in their work.
- Celebrate small milestones. Taking the time to notice and acknowledge employee achievements and milestones promotes a culture of positivity.

The challenges of finding and hiring qualified candidates may be ongoing but are not insurmountable. By offering competitive wages and benefits, utilizing a variety of recruiting tactics, and making retention a priority, you can position your practice as one that will draw a large pool of qualified candidates. 🦋

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The Changing Landscape of Dental Practice

By Jeffrey G. Priluck, Master of the Academy of General Dentistry

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Georgia Dental Association.

The landscape of dentistry is completely different today than it was even 10 years ago. When I established my fee-for-service practice, it was simply a matter of hanging out your sign and somehow patients would find their way to your door. If you provided great care, at a reasonable price, and showed sincere compassion and loyalty to your patients, they would reward you with a long and dedicated relationship.

Today, it is not that simple for either the new dentist or the seasoned practitioner. We must be willing to reinvent ourselves to meet changing conditions. A practicing dentist is now certainly confronted with many challenges including rising overhead, insurance dependence, staffing shortages, and increasing competition. At times, these problems can seem insurmountable but, with this changing landscape, comes a myriad of opportunities. Dentistry is still a great profession, and even in these uncertain and complex times, we have a wonderful opportunity to improve our patients' lives. Three possible scenarios of practicing dentistry for newly graduating dentists as well as any doctors considering a change in their career paths are herewith presented. They each have inherent challenges which must be given serious consideration.

For those with the entrepreneurial spirit, private practice still offers a viable alternative to the corporate environment of a PPO or DSO. It provides the opportunity to create one's own office culture and practice style. There are, certainly, many rewards which come with practice ownership, and there are tough lessons to learn. If you are considering this path, it is important to know that the entrepreneur dentist must be prepared to

take a major leadership role in order to deal with personnel issues, last minute scheduling challenges, and spiraling overhead, in addition to the typical equipment failures in the middle of a busy day. These are just a few of the many concerns which can have a negative effect on how we view our dental practices. All the basic principles of patient care are still applicable but it now requires even more creativity and knowledge to establish the niche practice which sets your office apart in the marketplace. You must provide perceived value to attract those patients who are seeking enhanced services and are willing to pay for them. The big question is—would you rather learn the slow way, or would you rather find a way to make it easier now? Personally, I made every possible mistake due to my lack of knowledge of basic business principles. So, after practicing for almost 10 years, I decided there had to be a better way. I engaged the services of a dental coach/consultant to restructure how I was conducting my business. In a short time, I noticed that my practice started flourishing, and a consultant can help yours flourish too. If you're not ready to reduce a lot of the headaches by working with a consultant, there are many websites and podcasts which can offer some great guidance. However, be aware that while very helpful, there is no substitute for a seasoned practitioner/coach who can help the young dentist navigate a path to success and help save years and much expense in the process.

For those younger dentists who want to pursue this private practice path, another viable choice is to seek an associateship with a quality practice. It is an opportunity to experience the

business side of dentistry and see how the economic world really works in terms of controlling overhead, personnel issues, and approaching dentistry as a profitable business. The associateship provides valuable experience and improvement of one's clinical skills. It allows for the development of a patient base and an opportunity to set aside some financial reserve or at least reduce student debt. Remember that being an associate also has its own set of challenges. The younger dentist can often experience frustration by a lack of control and input in the daily operations of the practice. Unfulfilled expectations involving the number of new patients assigned to the associate is common and can obviously have a direct effect on financial compensation. The lack of open communication between parties can create frustration and the feeling of 'why bother' leading to a downward spiral until the associate decides to leave the practice. When this happens, the senior doctor may be blind to why his quest for an associate is a revolving door to failure. But, if structured properly, the successful associateship can represent a win-win scenario for the associate and the senior doctor who is now able to work less and realize some financial return on investment and equity in the practice. It can also provide a workable exit strategy for those anticipating retirement in the not-too-distant future. Professional consulting can expedite a more amicable and successful result for both parties.

In a third scenario, it is obvious that the extremely high cost of dental education has now produced a generation of young dentists who are burdened by large student loans. Many graduating dentists have little interest in incurring

further debt by starting a new practice from scratch. The increased market share of the DSOs and PPOs offers an alternative to the young graduating dentist. It provides the opportunity to practice, improve clinical skills, gain continuing education, have staff provided and even, perhaps, offer a more relaxed lifestyle than ownership. The DSOs or PPOs probably will not provide many opportunities to modify systems already in place. And, there are production requirements and, always, another party to whom you must answer. In 2019, only 10.49% of all dentists were affiliated with a DSO.¹ However, in the same time frame among dentists 21 to 39, 20.4% were affiliated with a DSO. A survey conducted by the American Dental Education

Association found that about one-third of the 2020 graduating class who chose to go into private practice after graduation intended to join a DSO.² It has now been determined that DSOs will experience a growth rate of nearly 100% between 2018 and 2025 and more than triple their current market share by 2035.³

All the changes in dentistry have been intensified by the unexpected COVID-19 pandemic which has served to accelerate the cost of doing business and emphasized how tenuous dentistry can be. Unfortunately, the shutdown of all but emergency dental services left over 500,000 healthcare professionals unemployed.⁴


We all have blind spots which can cause us professional pain no matter which

scenario we chose. Professional guidance from outside the practice can often make the journey easier. Remember, the same basic principles of a successful dental career still apply. Taking great care of our patient's dental needs is still the golden rule. The path is yours to choose. 🦷

Jeffrey Priluck, DMD, MAGD, is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine. He is a past president of the Georgia Academy of General Dentistry. He established and was the primary owner of Dentistry with a Difference for over forty years.

Dr. Priluck has coached dental practices on successful and profitable practice management in both the private and corporate sectors. He has lectured and been published internationally. His passion is to help individual dentists flourish in these turbulent times.

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GDA



2022

Legislative Wrap-Up

With the legislature having adjourned “sine die” in the early morning hours of April 5, 2022, and with the Governor’s forty-day bill signing period now concluded, it is time to take a final wrap-up look at the 2022 legislative session.

Nearly every aspect of this session was colored through the lens of campaign politics. Legislators, looking to retain their positions in their newly drawn districts, or seeking to run for a higher office, used the power of their incumbency to produce newsworthy sound bites on a variety of issues with the goal of having as many voters as possible know their names and faces by the May 24, 2022 primary election, and ultimately the November 8, 2022 general election.

Republican legislators, who hold majorities in both the House and the Senate, passed their fair share of red meat bills for their now ongoing campaigns. HB1084, which limits how racial issues are discussed in K–12 classrooms, was amended to also address transgender individuals competing in K–12 sports. The General Assembly also gave approval to SB 441 which gives the Georgia Bureau of Investigation authority to investigate election fraud complaints, which is a remaining ripple from the much-discussed 2020 election cycle. Under this law, the GBI is now able to launch election inquiries and subpoena records on its own. As is common in an election year, there was also legislation around firearms; HB 319 also known as the “constitutional carry” bill, allows law-abiding Georgians who are legally allowed to carry a concealed firearm, to do so without receiving a concealed carry permit from their county of residence, and HB 218 grants universal reciprocity to concealed carry permits issued by another state and held by non-Georgia residents.

While the session is notable for what passed, it is also important to note the hot button items which failed. The perennial issue of whether not to allow online sports betting failed yet again, this time by a single vote in the waning hours of sine die. HB 456, which would restrict mail-order abortion pills also failed to make it completely through the process. Finally, HB 1425, a bill aiming to fix Georgia’s broken medical cannabis regulatory apparatus also failed, leaving patients seeking care waiting at least another year for relief.

The only item which the Georgia General Assembly is constitutionally required to pass every session is the state’s budget. Thanks to actions taken by Governor Brian Kemp early on in the COVID-19 pandemic, Georgia has fared fiscally better than most states. Taking advantage of Georgia’s fiscal situation, the GDA Government Affairs Team was successful in ensuring that part of the state’s \$30.2 billion spending plan included increases for 19 select dental Medicaid codes identified by the GDA Medicaid Task Force. The amount of the increase would be a 10% increase for codes D7210, D7140, and a 7% increase for codes D2160, D2330, D2331, D2332, D2335, D2393, D2394, D2931, D3220, D7111, D2140, D2150, D2930, D0220, D0270, D0272, D0274. The GDA Government Affairs Team was also successful in protecting state funding for the Dentists for Rural Areas Assistance Program (DRAA), as well as for the Donated Dental Services program, a year-round charitable program that provides free, comprehensive dental treatment to our state’s most vulnerable populations, including people with disabilities, the elderly, and the medically fragile.

Georgians can look forward to a tax cut that will continue into the future as a result of HB1437. This bill will gradually drop the state's income tax rate from 5.75% to 4.99% by 2029. The standard exemptions would rise gradually as well over that same time from \$2,700 for single filers to \$12,000. For married couples filing jointly, it would go from \$7,400 to \$24,000. Also, many Georgians are already receiving special surplus tax refund checks courtesy of HB 1302, which will return approximately \$1.1 billion to Georgia citizens who filed taxes for the years 2020 and 2021.

The largest single healthcare topic of this session was addressing mental health issues in Georgia, and the largest piece of legislation to that end was HB 1013 championed by House Speaker David Ralston. The primary goal of this legislation is to require insurance companies to cover mental illness in the same manner in which they cover physical illness. After passing the House with only three dissenting votes, it appeared that this legislation was heading down a difficult path in the Senate with multiple committee hearings, loud protests, and far-right grassroots opposition. The bill, mostly intact, ultimately passed out of the legislature and was signed by Governor Kemp.

Below are updates on the Bills worked on and tracked by the GDA Government Affairs Team over the past two years which impact, or had the potential to impact, GDA members.

As a reminder, this was year two of a two-year session. Any bill from last year, or this year, that failed to pass is dead and must be reintroduced in a future session to be considered.

Teledentistry

SB 540 (2022): Insurance; coverage of dental care provided by means of teledentistry; provide: This bill was brought at the request of the Georgia Dental Hygienists' Association. This bill would have amended the General Provisions of the Insurance Code by adding a new code section mandating that Teledentistry services be covered by insurers, and that the insurer shall not exclude coverage solely because it is provided through Teledentistry. Furthermore, this bill would have amended the Dental Practice Act by adding a new Code section 43-11-54 which would authorize the use of Teledentistry in Georgia in a manner inconsistent with the current safe practice of dentistry within the state. This bill failed to pass.

Georgia Board of Dentistry

HB 1219 (2022): Georgia Board of Dentistry; revise composition: This bill had strong support from the administration, as well as House Health & Human Services Chairwoman Sharon Cooper. The final version passed by the legislature makes the new composition of the Board of Dentistry seventeen members, to include thirteen dentists, two registered dental hygienists, one "resident" member, and one member having a background in GA dental student education to be selected by the Board of Regents. This bill passed the legislature and has been signed by Governor Kemp.

Health Records

HB 832 (2022): Health; revise definitions; furnishing of copies of health records; provisions: This bill regarded health records and would have allowed an "authorized person" to have access to a patient's health records whether the patient is alive or deceased. Included in that definition would be attorneys as party to a trial. This bill would have mandated the preservation of the "metadata" embedded in a file be preserved, as well as adding "medical bills for healthcare services" as part of the information to be included in a health record. The bill would require anyone subject to the code section, including dentists, to produce the records within a narrow timeframe when requested by an authorized person and provides a fee structure for non-compliance. This bill would have also required any provider who creates a record on or after Jan. 1, 2022 to create, maintain, transmit, receive, and store records in an electronic format. This bill failed to pass.

Professional Licensure

HB 147 (2021): Professions and businesses; individuals who move to the state and establish residency to obtain a license by endorsement to practice certain professions and occupations in this state: This bill and SB 45 began the 2021 session as identical bills. This bill would have required all professional licensing boards in this state to issue a license by endorsement to any individual who establishes residency in GA and has substantially similar education, training, and examination as a Georgia licensed professional. This bill failed to pass.

HB 811 (2021): Professions and businesses; licensure and regulation of medical imaging and radiation therapy professionals; provide: This bill would have provided for the licensure and regulation of medical imaging and radiation therapy professionals and create the Georgia Medical Imaging and Radiation Therapy Board. As drafted, the new licensure requirements would not apply to a dentist "performing medical imaging" or to licensed dental hygienists and dental assistants. This bill failed to pass.

HB884 (2022): Professions and businesses; expedited licenses for military spouses; provisions: This bill, as introduced, would have allowed for fewer training and testing qualifications for expedited licensure of military spouses by endorsement under a framework passed by the General Assembly in 2020. The GDA Government Affairs Team worked to amend the bill to maintain existing language in the law which requires a current license holder from another state to have training, experience, and testing substantially similar in qualifications and scope to the requirements in Georgia, as well as an exam demonstrating knowledge of the laws and rules and regulations of this state specific to the practice of the profession, business, or trade for which such expedited license by endorsement is being sought. This bill passed the legislature and has been signed by Governor Kemp.

SB 45 (2021): Professions and businesses; individuals who move to the state and establish residency to obtain a license

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LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP

Continued from page 23

by endorsement to practice certain professions and occupations in this state: This bill, and HB 147, held identical language upon introduction. This bill would have required all professional licensing boards in this state to issue a licensure by endorsement to any individual who establishes residency in GA and has substantially similar education, training, and examination as a Georgia licensed professional. SB 45 was amended so that the requirements do not apply to the Board of Dentistry and Composite Medical Board. This bill was stripped of original language to include licensure language for construction trades, advance practice registered nurses, and physical therapists in the final days of the session. This bill failed to pass.

SB 352 (2022): Professions; issuance of expedited licenses by endorsement for certain licenses to spouses of firefighters, healthcare providers, and law enforcement officers who relocate to the State of Georgia: This bill would have allowed for the spouses of persons who are licensed as a firefighter, police officer, and/or a healthcare worker, to include dentists and later amended to include dental hygienists, in another state who move to Georgia and gain employment in those professions to have their spouses receive expedited licenses provided their spouses are not a firefighter, police officer, and/or healthcare worker. This bill would not have allowed for licensure of a dentist by endorsement in Georgia. This bill failed to pass.

Managed Care/Medicaid

HB 217 (2021): Community Health, Department of; annual quality and payment reporting for health care plans and programs administered: This bill would have established an adult dental and vision Medicaid benefit in Georgia. This bill failed to pass.

HB 448 (2021): Social services; all contracts for health care coverage or services under Medicaid and PeachCare for Kids Program contain provisions relating to disclosure of cost related data: This bill sought to establish transparency in the agreements and data associated with the state's relationships with the CMOs and any subcontracted entities. This bill failed to pass.

HB 1276 (2022): Community Health, Department of; statistical reports data relating to state health plans be posted on department website: This bill requires that on or after July 1, 2022 the Department of Community Health shall post in a prominent location on the department website statistical reports containing data relating to the state health plans administered by the Department. Such reports shall be updated and posted no less than biannually and shall contain specific metrics. This bill passed the legislature and has been signed by Governor Kemp.

HB 1449 (2022): Dental Medicaid Carve-Out: This bill would have directed the Georgia Department of Community Health to contract with no less than two, but no more than three, administrators for the Dental Medicaid benefit for Medicaid and PeachCare. The bill would have prevented the administrator from contracting out dental care to another dental administrator. Under this bill the selected administrators must establish a fee schedule which is at least 85% of the rates

published by DCH in 2020, and be adjusted annually. The administrator must report its loss ratios to the Commissioner of DCH. The administrator must contract with any willing provider and includes language that would require Recovery Audit Contractors to utilize a provider licensed and practicing a similar specialty for formulating audit methodologies. The GDA Government Affairs Team worked with the bill sponsor to include language favorable to the GDA's priorities, however, the bill failed to receive a hearing and failed to pass.

Insurance

HB 1339 (2022): State employees' health benefit plans; cover medically necessary care and treatment of head and neck conditions; mandate: This bill would have mandated that the State Health Benefit Plan, which covers state employees, their dependents, and state retirees, provide coverage for 'Head and neck conditions' which would mean conditions, disorders, and injuries to the head and neck, including: cleft lip; cleft palate; congenital defects; craniofacial anomalies; developmental deformities; head and neck cancers; head and neck conditions resulting from cancer treatment; head and neck injuries; limitations in mobility; sinus pain and disorders; and thyroid conditions and disorders. The care and treatment mandated to cover the aforementioned conditions would include oral and maxillofacial surgery, surgical management, and follow-up care, as well as prosthetic, orthodontic, and prosthodontic treatment and management among other non-dental procedures. This bill failed to pass.

HB 1519 (SB 82) (2022): Insurance; prohibit insurers from unilaterally changing network participation contracts impacting coverage, access to, or costs of ancillary services: This bill would have prohibited insurers from unilaterally changing network participation contracts impacting coverage, access to, or costs of ancillary services as defined in the bill as clinically appropriate and medically necessary healthcare items or services provided as part or in support of an inpatient or outpatient healthcare service. While HB 1519 was dead as a standalone measure as it failed to crossover by Day 28, the language from HB 1519, along with two other bills, was amended onto SB 82 in the final days of the session. While SB 82 passed out of the Special Committee on Access to Quality Healthcare it was ultimately unable to pass out of the House Rules Committee on Day 40 for floor consideration. The GDA Government Affairs Team was successful in amending the bill to include stand-alone dental plans, however the bill failed to pass.

Workforce

HB 1038 (HB 1039) (2022): Income tax; creates a new tax credit for rural healthcare providers and limits eligibility for the rural physician tax credit to physicians who qualify on or before December 31, 2022: This bill would have extended the sunset on the rural physician tax credit for those physicians qualifying prior to December 31, 2022, as well as created a new tax credit for rural physicians, dentists, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants for up to \$5,000 for up to 5 years. The language from

HB 1038 was amended onto HB 1039 in the final days of the session and passed the Senate on Day 40, unfortunately, the bill failed to be taken up again by the House prior to adjournment and the bill failed to pass.

HB 1371 (2022): Rural Health Advancement Commission; create: This bill would have provided for the creation of the Rural Health Advancement Commission which would have developed private-sector solutions to address short-term and long-term health care workforce shortages, with an emphasis on rural areas. One of the members of this Commission would have been a dentist appointed by the Lt. Governor. This bill failed to pass.

HB 1520 (2022): Georgia Council on Addressing Health Care Workforce Challenges; create: This bill would have created the Georgia Council on Addressing Health Care Workforce Challenges for the purpose of providing recommendations on the future of the health care workforce in Georgia. One of the members of the Council would have been “A representative from a state-wide association representing dentists” appointed by the Speaker of the House. This bill failed to pass.

Opioids

HB 474 (2021): Controlled substances; provide for concurrent prescribing of an opioid antagonist with opioids under certain circumstances: This bill would have required a prescriber of any opioids greater or equal to 50 MME to also prescribe naloxone for the patient. This bill failed to pass.

HB 1321/SB 500 (2022): Commerce; litigation bar on governmental entities regarding certain statewide opioid litigation; provide: These bills were brought by Attorney General Chris Carr. This will enable Georgia to receive roughly \$636,000,000 for opioid treatment and abatement purposes. This is part of a large opioid settlement resulting from a lawsuit onto which the State of Georgia has joined. The GDA has signed onto a letter of support for these pieces of legislation at the request of the request of the Attorney General’s office as part of the GDA’s participation in the Attorney General’s Statewide Opioid Task Force. SB500 has been signed by Governor Kemp

SB 571 (2022): Controlled substances; notification requirements for prescribers prescribing opioids; revise: This bill would have required the prescriber of an opioid medication to, on the initial prescription and third prescription, counsel a patient, or a patient’s parent if a minor, regarding the risks associated with opioids to include addiction and overdose risk, why the prescription is necessary, alternative treatments if available, and risks associated with opioid use. To include a record of the required counseling in their chart, and provide the patient with information on safe disposal methods. This bill failed to pass.

Miscellaneous

SR 364 (2022): A RESOLUTION creating the Senate Costs and Effects of Smoking Study Committee; and for other purposes: This resolution would have created a Senate Study Committee on costs and effects of smoking. This resolution failed to pass.

Updates from the Georgia Board of Dentistry Rule Adoptions

- *Rule 150-11-.01 Specialties:* The Board recently amended its rules to recognize the additional specialties of Dental Anesthesiology, Oral Medicine, and Orofacial Pain.
- *Rule 150-13-.01 Conscious Sedation Permits:* The Board recently amended its rules to require a dentist receiving permits for Moderate Enteral Conscious Sedation or Moderate Parenteral Conscious Sedation to complete their training in-person, as well as requiring facilities performing Moderate Enteral Conscious Sedation or Moderate Parenteral Conscious Sedation to have continual monitoring of end tidal CO2 available. Furthermore, the rule change would require any dental hygienist or dental assistant performing phlebotomy and venipuncture be in compliance with Georgia law.
- *Rule 150-13-.02 Deep Sedation/General Anesthesia Permits:* The Board recently amended its rules to require that any dental hygienist or dental assistant performing phlebotomy and venipuncture be in compliance with Georgia law, as well as to state that a licensed dentist shall not delegate the administration of drugs by any dental hygienist or dental assistant through phlebotomy or venipuncture procedures.

2023 GDA Law Days and Opening Day

At this time, it is our hope that the Capitol building will be back to a pre-COVID posture with regard to visiting groups and legislator access for the 2023 legislative session. Please be on the lookout for announcements about 2023 LAW Day dates. The opening day of the legislative session will most likely fall on January 9, 2023.

2022 Election Update

On May 24, 2022 Georgia passed the first major milestone of a busy and exciting election year with the completion of the statewide primary election. Many candidates now turn their eyes to the November general election, some candidates are busy gearing up for a June 21, 2022 primary runoff, and unfortunately, some candidates are making plans that no longer involve Georgia politics.

The 2022 election season is unique for multiple reasons, including newly redrawn districts as a result of the reapportionment conducted in 2021, and the 52 open seats in the House and Senate due to legislators either retiring or seeking higher office. Georgia has also drawn national attention not only as a purple-state battleground between the Republicans and Democrats vying for control of the Peach State, but also for the fight within the Georgia Republican Party which has tested the remaining influence of former President Donald Trump who endorsed a candidate in every statewide Republican primary race. To the aforementioned influence of the former President only two of his endorsed candidates, Herschel Walker—R (U.S. Senate) and Burt Jones—R (Lt. Governor), survived their primaries to proceed to the general election. »

LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UP

Continued from page 25

Below is a breakdown of statewide races as they stand right now, candidates facing a primary runoff election on June 21, 2022 are indicated with an “*.”

| Candidates for U.S. Senate in 2022 | |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| NAME | PARTY |
| Raphael Warnock (I) | Democrat |
| Herschel Walker | Republican |

| Candidates for Governor in 2022 | |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| NAME | PARTY |
| Brian Kemp (I) | Republican |
| Stacey Abrams | Democrat |

| Candidates for Lt. Governor in 2022 | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| NAME | PARTY |
| Burt Jones | Republican |
| Kwanza Hall* | Democrat |
| Charlie Bailey* | Democrat |

| Candidates for Secretary of State in 2022 | |
|---|------------|
| NAME | PARTY |
| Brad Raffensperger (I) | Republican |
| Bee Nguyen* | Democrat |
| Dee Hawkins-Haigler* | Democrat |

| Candidates for Georgia Attorney General in 2022 | |
|---|------------|
| NAME | PARTY |
| Chris Carr (I) | Republican |
| Jennifer “Jen” Jordan | Democrat |

| Candidates for Georgia Insurance Commissioner in 2022 | |
|---|------------|
| NAME | PARTY |
| John King (I) | Republican |
| Janice Laws Robinson* | Democrat |
| Raphael Baker* | Democrat |

| Candidates for Georgia Labor Commissioner in 2022 | |
|---|------------|
| NAME | PARTY |
| Bruce Thompson | Republican |
| William “Will” Boddie, Jr.* | Democrat |
| Nicole Horn* | Democrat |

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We are pleased to announce



Dr. Christine McGowan
has joined the practice of
Dr. Angela Ojibway
Dunwoody, Georgia

Dr. Lincoln Fantaski
has acquired the practice of
Dr. Jim Fagan, III
Atlanta, Georgia
(Pictured left.)

Dr. Igor Reizenon
has acquired the practice of
Dr. Michael Mansouri
Lawrenceville, Georgia

Practices for Sale

West Cobb: Grossing \$500K. 5 ops. Digital, paperless. Busy shopping center

East Cobb: Grossing \$550K. Digital, paperless. PPO/FFS. Low overhead.

UNDER CONTRACT! Atlanta: Grossing \$700K. 6 ops w/room to expand. Seller wants to stay on.

UNDER CONTRACT! Richmond Co: Perio. Grossing \$700K. 4 ops, room to expand. Mostly FFS. Digital

Dawson Co: FFS/PPO. Grossing \$400K. Seller will stay on. Real estate available.

West of Atlanta: Grossing \$750K. High visibility. PPO/FFS. 4 ops. RE for sale.

GA Coast: 5 ops. Grossing \$1M. Digital x-ray & PAN. Close to SSI & Jacksonville.

West of Atlanta: 4 ops. 2000 sq/ft. Grossing \$800K. All FFS. RE for sale.

UNDER CONTRACT! Newton Co: Grossing \$750K. All FFS. 4 ops. 2000 sq/ft. Digital xray & PAN.

Eastern GA: Grossing \$600K. 4 ops. FFS/ PPO. RE for sale, lots of parking.

Gwinnett Co Perio: FFS. Grossing \$700K. RE for sale. Strong hygiene.

DeKalb Co: Grossing \$425K. Stand-alone building for sale. PPO/FFS. Digital.

DeKalb Co Perio: 5 treatment rooms. Grossing \$830K. FFS/PPO. Great area.

Baldwin Co: Grossing \$250K. 6 ops. RE for sale. Referrals lots out. No marketing.

NW GA Oral Surgery: Looking for buyer or associate. Grossing \$1M. Very busy.

West Cobb: Collecting \$575K. Paperless PPO. 5 ops. Large lab. Great visibility.

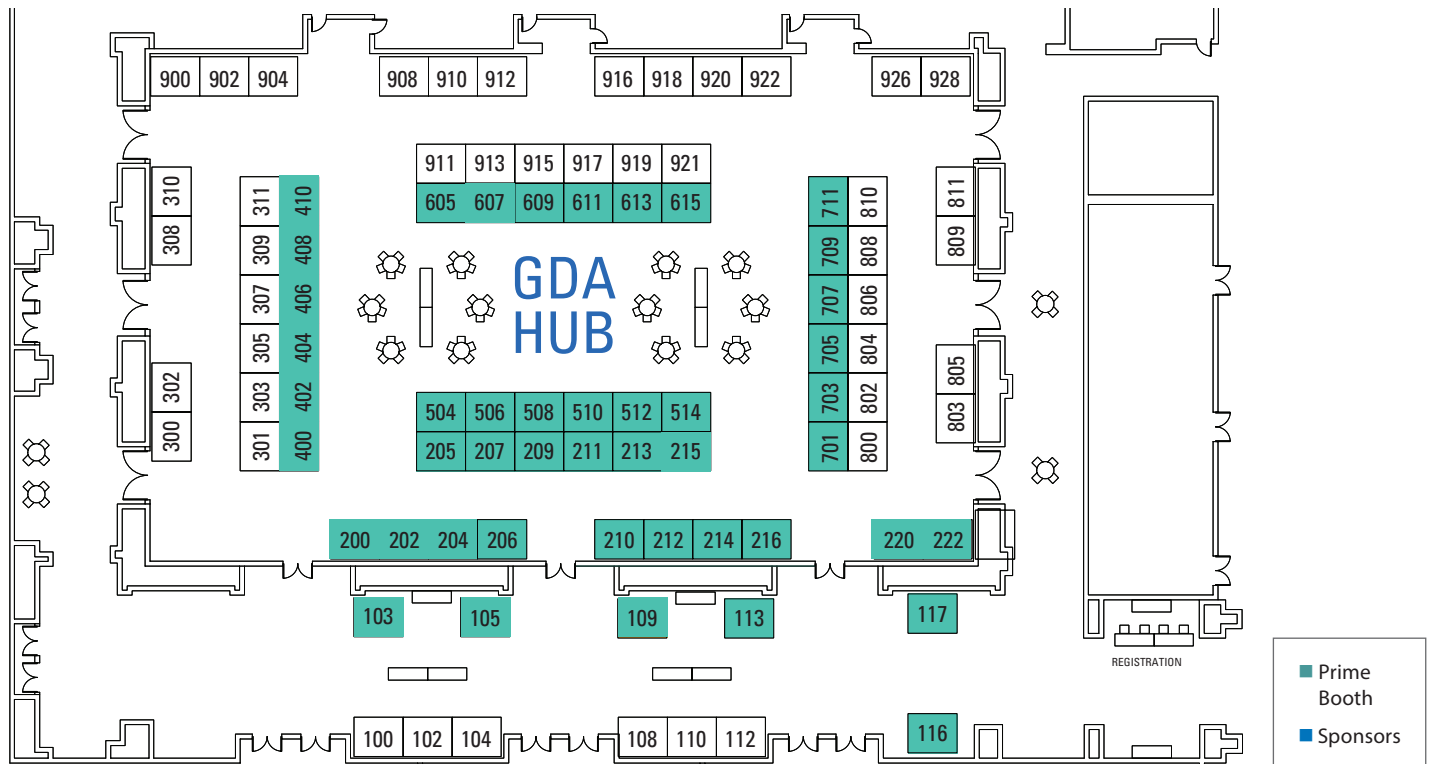
East Cobb: Collecting \$250K. Perfect merger. Close to the Battery. PPO/FFS.

Lawrenceville: Shell practice. Busy shopping center. Hispanic population.

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| Biohorizons..... | 117 | Hartford..... | Hub | The Dentist's Choice | 200 |
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| Bridgeway Practice Transitions..... | 508 | GDA Plus+ Supplies | 806 | The Ledbetter Group..... | 410 |
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Healthy Smiles for Georgians

The Georgia Dental Association Foundation for Oral Health is dedicated to advancing oral health in the state through donated dental care and oral health education programs. The philanthropic arm of the Georgia Dental Association, our programs help create healthier smiles for Georgians.

The Need is Great

- In Georgia, 41% of low-income adults experience pain due to the condition of their mouth and teeth.
- Untreated tooth decay often impacts a person's ability to work, sleep, eat, and even smile.
- With Georgia's limited safety net, low-income adults have few options to get dental care to relieve their pain, infection, and suffering.
- Ensuring that students have preventive oral health education in schools fosters a lifetime of healthy habits.
- Inability to access competent oral health care is the number one healthcare problem of people with intellectual and physical disabilities.

GDA Foundation

MEETING THE NEED!

GDA Foundation for Oral Health programs have provided over \$1.7 million in donated dental care for low-income and vulnerable communities including persons with special needs/intellectual disabilities, veterans, and school children. Equally important, our school-based program provides preventive oral health education that establishes healthy habits for a lifetime of healthy smiles.

Volunteer participation and gifts enable the GDA Foundation to provide vital program.

| Donated Dental Care Programs | Education and Prevention Programs |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Donated Dental Services | Children's Dental Health Month |
| Georgia Mission of Mercy Give Kids a Smile | Community Outreach |
| Smiles for Service Members | Healthy Mouth, Healthy Me! |
| Special Olympics, Special Smiles | |

Bring Smiles to Georgians

VOLUNTEER!

Our dentists donate their time, expertise and personal resources to change lives and make a lasting impact on the individual lives of their patients and the Georgia community. Looking to get involved? Volunteer for the following community outreach events and campaigns:

Children's Dental Health Month: CDHM is a month-long national health observance that brings dedicated professionals, healthcare providers, and educators together to promote the benefits of good oral health to children, caregivers, teachers, and many others. Educational activities are held across Georgia with Pre-K and school-aged children throughout the month of February.



Give Kids a Smile Day: GKAS is held annually on the first Friday in February and serves as the kick-off to Children's Dental Health Month. Volunteers provide free dental health education, screenings, preventive care, and/or treatment for underserved children across Georgia.



Special Olympics, Special Smiles: The GDA Foundation for Oral Health partners with Special Olympics Georgia to provide care to special needs patients across Georgia. Special Smiles offers dental screenings, health education and prevention services, and refers athletes of all ages to potential sources of treatment and follow-up care.



Donated Dental Services: The Donated Dental Service program is a unique program provided year-round that targets vastly underserved and vulnerable populations—individuals with permanent disabilities, the elderly, or those who qualify as medically fragile. Comprehensive dental treatment is performed by volunteer dentists in their own offices utilizing their own equipment and staff.

Through our Healthy Mouth, Healthy Me! program, the GDA Foundation elevates the perception of dentistry and educates the public about the importance of regular dental care and seeing a dentist.



Community Outreach/Health Fairs

Throughout the year, the Foundation attends community outreach events and receives requests from health fairs, schools, and other community events looking for dentists to provide screenings and/or oral health education. 🦷

For more information, visit gadental.org/foundation.



Thank You to Our Legacy Supporters!

The GDA Foundation for Oral Health recognizes the following supporters for their contributions of \$100 or more beyond dues contributions in 2021. Their support made it possible to advance oral health in Georgia through donated dental care and oral health education.

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The Rewards of Special Needs Dentistry



As a young pharmacist working for the VA Medical Center, Deidra Rondeno, DDS, began to realize she didn't feel as passionate as she had hoped about her chosen profession. During that same time, she underwent orthodontic treatment at LSU Dental School. "The student who worked on me was so elated with dentistry," said Dr. Rondeno. "I eventually asked him if he could show me around the school. From there, I decided to see what dentistry had to offer."

A General Practice residency at Illinois Masonic, which introduced Dr. Rondeno to the rewards of working with developmentally disabled patients, changed her life.

Thursdays in the residency program were special needs patient days. She remembers one patient in particular; a young man with cerebral palsy who could only communicate via an electronic keyboard. After the appointment, the patient typed, "Thank you for being so patient in taking extra time to treat me." Dr. Rondeno was struck how such a relatively routine encounter could mean so much to a patient. From that moment,

she knew her true calling—working with patients who have developmental disabilities.

After her 1997 residency, she moved to Atlanta to be near family, and was saddened to learn that the state-run facility providing dental care to thousands of developmentally disabled Georgians was closing due to funding cuts. "My first thought was, where will all these patients go for dental care? My second thought was, maybe I can provide care to these patients who have nowhere else to go." By 1999, The DDD Foundation, Inc. had been approved as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. By 2002, the doors of the clinic were open for patients. For the past 20 years, the DDD Foundation's dental clinic has been the only private dental clinic in Georgia exclusively serving patients with developmental disabilities, and the Atlanta clinic now treats more than 4,800 active patients from 93 Georgia counties.

Providing this specialized brand of dental treatment isn't easy, but there are many rewards unique to serving this underserved population of people. The DDD Foundation employs a team of professionals trained to treat this special population, and

over the past twenty years has developed a system of working together that results in a high level of patient care. “Over time we’ve developed a real cohesiveness, which enhances our ability to read each other and work well as a team,” says Expanded Duty Dental Assistant Darnell Hurt, who has been at the DDD Foundation since 2014. “We’re like family, so every morning I don’t feel like I’m coming to work. I feel like I’m coming to help,” explains Hurt. That supportive teamwork results in very low staff turnover, too, which helps patients who need familiarity and routine in their environment. The average number of years dental staff have been at the DDD Foundation is 10.3 years, so patients know that they’re going to see familiar friendly faces when they come to a dental appointment.

The DDD Foundation’s dental staff is also uniquely rewarded by the fact that they can focus solely on providing dental care. Business operations are supported by a dedicated Board of Directors and an Advisory Council. Both groups are comprised of business and community leaders who support the DDD Foundation with expertise in all aspects of running a successful dental practice. And even beyond the Board and Advisory Council are hundreds of volunteers who support the DDD Foundation’s fundraising events.

An obvious benefit of treating patients with developmental disabilities is the ability to help them feel better. Because of the difficulty in finding a dentist who can treat them, and because it can be difficult to perform proper oral health care at home, there is an increased incidence of oral health problems in patients with developmental disabilities. “Our goal is to preserve teeth and maintain a healthy mouth,” says Dr. Rondeno. That can be difficult to do because some patients have sensory disorders and won’t let anyone near their mouth. Some are nonverbal, and can’t explain when something hurts. “On more than one occasion, a parent has told us that the patient has been ‘acting out’ at home; hitting themselves, or screaming. Once we get into their mouth and start taking a look, we see the problem that’s causing them pain. It’s so fulfilling to be able to treat the problem and see that behavior instantly improve.”

One of the rewards of treating special needs patients that might not be obvious to others is the joy of knowing they’re helping Georgia’s dental community. The DDD Foundation accepts referrals from dentists throughout Georgia who are not equipped to treat a patient due to the patient’s disability, their inability to respond to requests, or an inability to control body movements. Also, the DDD Foundation accepts SSI Medicaid which most developmentally disabled patients use.

The rewards of working with patients who have developmental disabilities are many. It often starts with the first visit, a consultation. Tears of joy are not uncommon when relieved parents realize they can finally stop searching for a dentist to treat their child. There is also the reward of watching patients grow not just in age, but in their confidence and comfort at the dental clinic. The DDD Foundation treats patients of all ages, provided they’ve been diagnosed with a developmental disability. Unlike typically developing children, most developmentally disabled children don’t move out and live independently when they reach 18 years old. Most live

with parents throughout their adult life. DDD Foundation patients are often lifelong patients. Karen, the mother of DDD Foundation patient Alissa, says, “I honestly don’t know of any other place that would take her. Hopefully the DDD Foundation will be around for the rest of her life.” Over time, many patients with extreme fears and sensitivities have become accustomed to the setting, the routine, and the people at the DDD Foundation, and are now cooperative and happy during their dental visits.

There is also the reward of getting to know the families. A dental appointment at the DDD Foundation often require more than one caregiver to get the patient to and from, and through their appointment, so often the entire family comes to the dental appointment. Some DDD Foundation patients live several hours away, so the family spends the night at a local hotel and makes an early appointment the following morning.

Because of the long-term and close relationship between patient families and the dental team at the DDD Foundation, gifts brought by patient families are common. Cookies, flowers, handmade cards, and even Pashmina scarves for the entire staff brought by a patient whose family had just returned from India have been among the many gifts brought to dental appointments. But the best gift of all is the love and affection of patients and parents, and the expressions of gratitude. “For the individuals and families the DDD Foundation serves, their work is more precious than you can imagine. There is no higher calling in life than to serve those who cannot advocate or care for themselves,” said Jen, mother of DDD Foundation patient Hannah. And what better way for a dentist to end a day of work than to say goodbye to a departing patient who responds, “Bye everybody, I had fun! I love you!” 🙏



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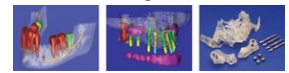
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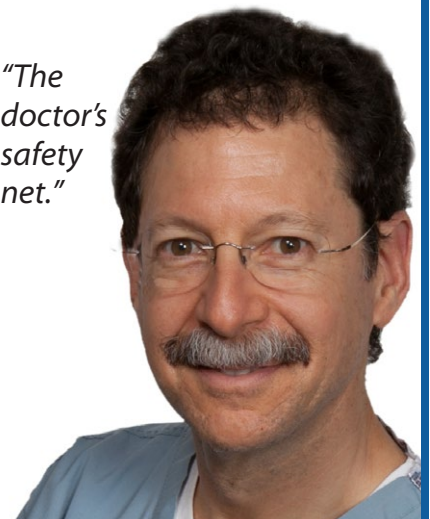
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HIPAA Compliance & Patient Records

By Emma Paris, LMSW, MPH, PMP

One of the most asked questions we get at the GDA from dentists and patients alike relates to healthcare records as they pertain to dentistry: what do they contain? To whom do they belong? How should they be managed? As a healthcare provider, it is the dentist's responsibility to comply with HIPAA, Georgia Code, and any applicable rules established by the Georgia Board of Dentistry.

What is HIPAA?

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, or HIPAA as it is commonly known, are federal requirements that protect the privacy and security of certain health information. Prior to 1996, there were no uniform requirements protecting healthcare information. Any individual, organization, or agency that meets the definition of a 'covered entity' under HIPAA must comply with the requirement to protect the privacy and security of health information and must provide individuals with certain rights with respect to their health information, according to the Department of Health and Human Services. Dentists, as a covered entity, must comply with HIPAA Rules.

What is Included in a Dental Record?

As defined in Title 31 Chapter 33 of Georgia Code, "records means a patient's health record, including, but not limited to, evaluations, diagnoses, prognoses, laboratory reports, X-rays, prescriptions, and other technical information used in assessing the patient's condition, or the pertinent portion of the record relating to a specific condition or a summary of the record."

Because the previous definition covers many professions and practices, the Georgia Board of Dentistry also provides a definition of records with more dental specific terms within their rules and regulations. As stipulated in Rule 150-8-.01 Unprofessional Conduct section of the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Dentistry, "the maintenance of records to furnish documentary evidence of the course of the patient's medical/dental evaluation, treatment, and response" is a requirement. The patient's complete dental records may include, but are not limited to: "treatment notes, evaluations, diagnoses, prognoses,

x-rays, photographs, diagnostic models, laboratory reports, laboratory prescriptions (slips), drug prescriptions, insurance claim forms, billing records, and other technical information used in assessing a patient's condition."

Who "Owns" the Health Record?

Many patients believe that they, as the patient or patient's guardian, and the subject of the records, should have full, unfettered access to their records. However, this is not the case. In the absence of a release of information, the dentist or healthcare provider is the owner and custodian of the patient record. Only after the patient, or authorized individual, has provided a written request for their records is the dentist permitted to provide the patient with the records they have requested.

The release of information for the records serves essentially as documentation of the changing ownership of whatever records were requested, with the patient acknowledging that they now assume the responsibility of safely maintaining their records. As there is no "one size fits all" release of information, it is a best practice to work with your malpractice carrier to understand their requirements and recommendations for all matters concerning the release of records.

What Else Should I Know About Records?

Georgia law requires that patient records be kept for a minimum of 10 years. There are some exceptions to this rule, such as retirement, the inability to provide care due to injury or death, as well as the termination of dentist-patient relationship, which can be found in O.C.G.A. § 31-33-2 of the Georgia Code and the applicable Board of Dentistry Rule 150-8-.01. A provider does not need to maintain tangible copies of records if the record has been converted to an electronic format. Records cannot be withheld from the patient, even if they owe a balance, and the request must be fulfilled within 30 days. However, it is permissible to require the patient to pay the costs of copying, mailing, and other administrative costs related to complying with the request. Medical records retrieval rates can be found at <https://dch.georgia.gov/medical-records-retrieval-rates>. 🦷



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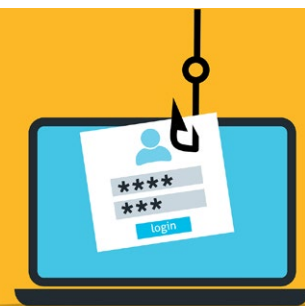


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EMAIL SPEAR PHISHING

A New Level of Scary

By Robert McDermott, President/CEO, iCoreConnect



The American Dental Association (ADA) fell victim to a cybersecurity incident that caused a disruption to certain systems, including Aptify and ADA email, telephone, and Web chat. The attack came on the heels of FBI warnings that cybercriminals exploit events like the crisis in Ukraine in order to steal personal information and money.

You need to be aware of one of the most successful ways cybercriminals target and attack: Your email. There are a couple of primary ways you can be targeted. You may be familiar with the term 'phishing'. This is the general term for a broad-stroke email approach. Typically, these emails arrive in your inbox looking somewhat generic and usually without personal information about you. These emails often contain poor grammar, misspelled words, and other nuances that, upon a closer look, reveal a possible threat.

Spear phishing, on the other hand, takes email targeting to an entirely new level of scary. Hackers are hyper-targeting you by personalizing the content specifically to you, a group, or an organization with which you might have a connection. Cyber Attackers are now collecting information from across the internet and social sites about industries, professional relationships, and even personal details. This level of personalization and familiar tone blur the lines of what's real and what's a sophisticated fake. Sometimes you may be asked to click a link or attachment, or to respond to the email. If it's spear phishing, you've opened the door for malware to get into your practice management system, accounting, and other important applications.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights (OCR) recently released its Q1 2022 Cybersecurity Newsletter. The OCR

Hackers are hyper-targeting you by personalizing the content specifically to you, a group, or an organization with which you might have a connection.

explains, "If an attack is successful, the attacker often will encrypt a regulated entity's ePHI to hold it for ransom, or exfiltrate the data for future purposes including identity theft or blackmail." Let's dive into what you need to know to protect your practice and patients.

Learn to Spot the Trick

The goal is to get you to share things you shouldn't, like passwords, credit card or bank information. Be cautious when you receive an email from the bank, your IT department, or a vendor for example, stating that you need to reset your password or go to a website to update information. There will likely be an urgent tone, indicating you must act quickly or there will be a negative consequence. Reach out to the sender separately to verify it really came from them.

Don't Click the Link

A quick way to see if the link is suspicious is to just hover your cursor over it. The URL should point to the site to which the email claims it will be going. If it doesn't, or you have any doubts, alert your IT team that you think it might be a malicious email.

Limit Cybercrime Access Points

Protected Health Information should not travel in or out of your general email inbox (Gmail, Yahoo!, etc.). Those services exchange email across the public internet, which makes them more vulnerable to phishing attempts. The safest HIPAA-compliant email is

transmitted across a private encrypted network in addition to each message being encrypted. If a cybercriminal can find you, they can try to scam you.

One of the best steps you can take is to use a HIPAA-compliant email with a pre-verified network of providers and associates. If you need to communicate with someone outside the verified network, you initiate the first email communication and they have to verify their identity before accessing the message.

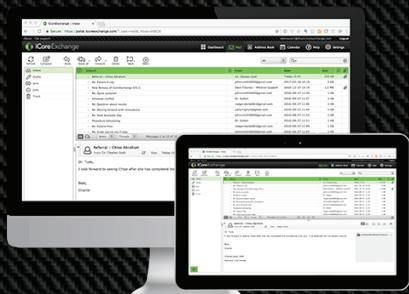
There are five required HIPAA safeguards for email. Among them are ID authentication for message accountability and transmission security, aka encryption. There are big differences between an encryption-only email for general security and a truly HIPAA-compliant email fulfilling every HIPAA security requirement.

No one is inherently immune from cyberattacks. Provide ongoing staff education to prevent these types of criminals from getting in the door. Assess the security of your HIPAA-compliant email. And implement a plan to send the bulk of your emails through a truly secure HIPAA-compliant email. Recovering from an attack is much more difficult and costly than preventing it in the first place. 🦋

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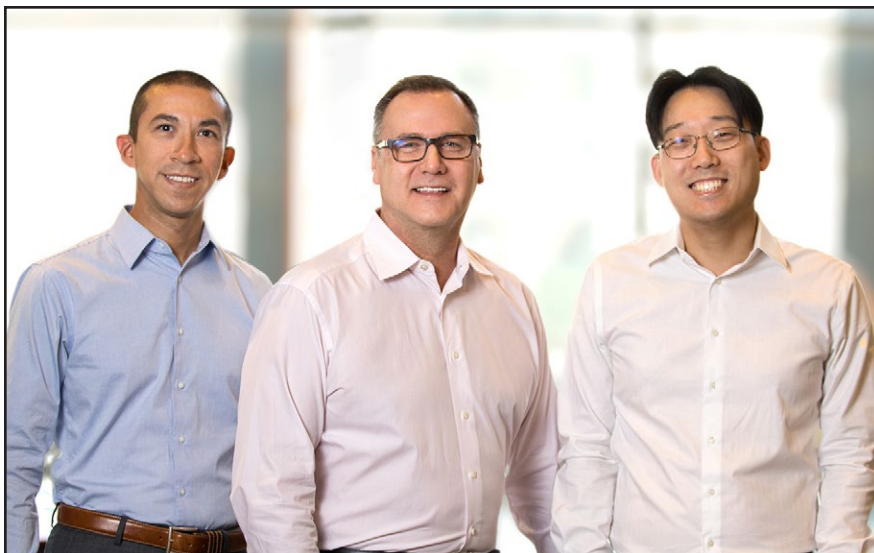


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Meet Dr. Jarrett Manning!

This column highlights GDA members talking about their path to dentistry and the value they find in GDA membership. This month we hear from Northwestern District member Jarrett Manning, DDS, MPH who practices at JLM Dental Studio in Smyrna, GA. Her specialty is General Dentistry.



When and how did you become a GDA member?

I became a GDA member fresh out of dental school once I moved to Georgia.

Why is being part of a professional group important?

The saying that “there’s strength in numbers” holds true when speaking about professional groups. A professional group, such as the GDA, is more powerful collectively than its members are individually. I also believe that it takes a village to succeed. Professional groups provide a sense of community to share ideas and resources and collaborate in order to ensure success.

What is the single most important thing, in your opinion, GDA can do to help members?

The single most important thing the GDA can do is to protect our profession by advocating for its members in every possible way!

What is your most memorable GDA experience?

At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when no one knew what was in store for our profession, the GDA provided valuable resources about things such as PPE, CE, and info about grants and other funding that helped to keep a lot of dentists like myself afloat.



What advice would you give to an aspiring dental student?

Keep pushing because dentistry is a very rewarding career, and it’s worth the time, money, and energy that you will invest. Find a mentor, be a mentor, and give back. Dentistry has opened so many other doors for me, so don’t be afraid to leverage a career in dentistry to explore other passions and opportunities.

What did you want to be when you were growing up?

I switched career goals so many times as a kid. I’ve wanted to be a doctor, lawyer, and nurse, and some of the other typical careers that kids mention, but I’m so glad that I ultimately decided on dentistry.

What was your first job?

My first job was making biscuits and waitressing at a buffet style restaurant named Quincy’s. The restaurant was known for their famous yeast rolls.

Why did you decide to become a dentist?

It wasn’t until my sophomore year at Xavier University that I decided to become a dentist. I’ve always had a passion for helping people, and I wanted to combine that passion with a career that allows flexibility. Dentistry was it for me. As a dental practice owner, I’m able to always put my roles of wife and mom first.



What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

I enjoy traveling, beauty and fashion, food, spending time with friends and family, and not thinking about dentistry on the weekends.

What is your all-time dream vacation?

I’d love to take 2–3 months off to explore Africa—Cape Town, Cairo, Lagos, Stone Town, Johannesburg, Marrakesh, Durban, Benin, and more. The list of cities is so long because the continent is so breathtakingly beautiful.

Without saying, “I am a dentist,” what would you say if someone asked what you do?

I am an artist who transforms lives, smiles, and attitudes. 🦷

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