



USPHS Chief Dental Officer Newsletter Issue #61: March 9, 2022

Timothy L. Ricks, DMD, MPH, FICD, FACD
Rear Admiral, U.S. Public Health Service
Assistant Surgeon General, Chief Dental Officer



This newsletter contains references and links to non-federal resources and organizations. These references and links are meant solely for informational purposes and are not intended to be an endorsement of any non-federal entity by the USPHS or the U.S. government.

World Oral Health Day is March 20th

[World Oral Health Day](#) is observed annually on March 20th and is dedicated to raising global awareness of oral health issues. The theme for the time period of 2021-2023 is “Be Proud of Your Mouth.” Global awareness of oral health has been bolstered by such actions as the [World Health Organization’s \(WHO’s\) recent resolution on oral health](#) and the upcoming 2022 [global strategy](#) for tackling oral diseases.



In observance of this annual event, here are some key facts on oral health from a global perspective, courtesy of the [WHO](#):

- Oral diseases pose a major health burden for many countries and affect people throughout their lifetime, causing pain, discomfort, disfigurement and even death.
- These diseases share common risk factors with other major non-communicable diseases.
- It is estimated that oral diseases affect nearly 3.5 billion people.
- Untreated dental caries (tooth decay) in permanent teeth is the most common health condition according to the Global Burden of Disease 2017.
- More than 530 million children suffer from dental caries of primary teeth (milk teeth).
- Severe periodontal (gum) disease, which may result in tooth loss, is also very common, with almost 10% of the global population affected.

- Oral cancer (cancer of the lip or mouth) is one of the three most common cancers in some countries of Asia and the Pacific.
- Treatment for oral health conditions is expensive and usually not part of universal health coverage (UHC). In most high-income countries, dental treatment averages 5% of total health expenditure and 20% of out-of-pocket health expenditure.
- Most low- and middle-income countries are unable to provide services to prevent and treat oral health conditions.
- Factors contributing to oral diseases are an unhealthy diet high in sugar, use of tobacco and harmful use of alcohol.
- Most oral health conditions are largely preventable and can be treated in their early stages.

In this issue:

World Oral Health Day.....	1
World Dental News.....	2
Overview of Oral Health in America report (part 1 of 2).....	3-5
Pandemic News.....	6-7
Healthy People 2030 Updates.....	8
Multi-Directional Integration.....	9-10
News Bites.....	11-12
USPHS Chief Dental Officer Events.....	13-15
Upcoming Events.....	16-18



Canada releases new oral health screening tool for seniors. The Office of the Chief Dental Officer of Canada (OCDOC), along with a team at Université Laval, has released the [Canadian Oral Health Screening Tool for Seniors](#). This tool allows non-dental primary health care providers to assess the oral health status of seniors. In early 2021, OCDOC commissioned Dr. Christian Caron's team at Université Laval to comprehensively explore and report on the global body of evidence on screening for oral abnormalities and the condition of dental prostheses in seniors. From that evidence base, they were then able to develop a plain-language, user-friendly, evidence-based, [rapid screening tool](#) for Canadian non-dental primary health care providers to assess oral tissue abnormalities and the dysfunction of dental prostheses in seniors in Canada. This project commenced with the understanding that there are a number of settings, particularly institutional settings, where non-dental health care providers caring for our seniors may be hesitant to screen for the oral health issues of their clients in the absence of in-house oral health care providers. Pictured to the right is Dr. James Taylor, Canada's chief dental officer, and me in an August 2019 visit I made to Canada.



Australia to launch new integration initiative. In mid-March to celebrate World Oral Health Day, the Network for the Integration of Oral Health (NIOH) – a 120-organization collaborative in Australia – will be launching a new research arm, the [Australian Centre for Integration of Oral Health](#) (ACIOH), which will promote research essential to their aim of “putting the mouth back into the body.” ACIOH is the leading national research center in integrated oral health care – a key focus of Australia's National Oral Health plan (2015-2024). ACIOH is a virtual center led by Western

Sydney University (WSU) in collaboration with various partners including universities, health services and professional organizations. WSU has a strong reputation in this area having co-established an interprofessional oral health research center in 2015.

WHO launches primary health care monitoring framework and indicators. On February 28th, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) [announced](#) the release of the landmark [Primary health care monitoring framework and indicators monitoring health systems through a primary health care lens](#), the first-ever globally normative and endorsed primary health care measurement and monitoring framework, and the official measurement framework in support of the Declaration of Astana and Operational Framework for PHC. As countries strive to reorient their health systems around the principles of primary health care, this Framework responds to Member States' request to monitor primary health care performance to accelerate progress towards universal health coverage and the other health-related Sustainable Development Goals.

BMJ blog highlights oral health inequities in low-income countries. In a February 7, 2022 blog, the *British Medical Journal* (BMJ) highlighted global oral health inequities. “Dental health inequity is disproportionately skewed towards the Global South. According to [WHO oral health fact sheet](#), 44% of the global population (3.5 billion people) are affected by oral diseases; and above 530 million children suffer from tooth decay of primary teeth (milk teeth). However, most oral health conditions are largely preventable and can be treated in their early stages. Prevention and treatment of oral health conditions in resource-poor settings is challenging due to poor availability of dental health practitioners. The [statistics](#) are grim. There is only 1 dentist per 152,721 people in low-income countries; 1 per 13,810 citizens in middle-income countries; and 1 dentist per 1,708 citizens in high-income countries.



Editorial Note: Over the next three issues of the newsletter, I will provide a summary of key concepts arising from Oral Health in America: Advances and Challenges report, which was released by the National Institutes of Health in late 2021. My reflections of key concepts are a condensed version of key facts from the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research along with materials gathered from other sources.

Section 1: Effect of Oral Health on the Community, Overall Well-Being, and the Economy

Key points:

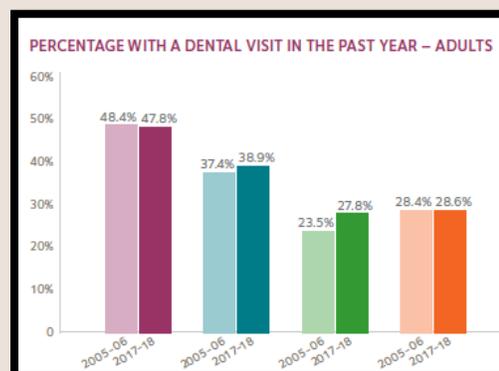
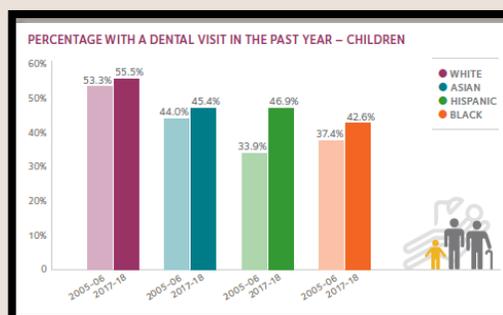
- Good oral health supports overall health and well-being of individuals, families, communities, and the nation.
- Poor oral health reduces the economic productivity of society by limiting participation in the workforce, as well as by increasing health care costs.
- Natural disasters, the emergence of novel pathogens, such as COVID-19, and other large-scale emergencies underscore the need for public-private partnerships that plan and ensure the continued delivery of essential oral health care in times of crisis.

Access to dental care, 1996-2016

One key driver of oral health in this country is access to affordable, culturally-competent, high-quality, and geographically convenient dental care. However, as shown by the table in the next column at the top (from the [Medical Expenditure Panel Survey](#), Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality), more than half of Americans do not visit the dentist each year. In fact, the highest proportion to visit the dentist occurred in 2003 with 45.0%, far lower than the Healthy People 2020 goal of 49.0%. That is one reason that the Healthy People 2030 goal for dental access is 45.0% as we hope to reach that level again.

Year	Dental Access % (>2 years)
1996	44.2%
2000	42.7%
2003	45.0%
2005	44.3%
2010	42.1%
2016	43.3%
HP2020 Goal	49.0%
HP2030 Goal	45.0%

What contributes to this low access to dental care? There are many barriers to access including social determinants of health (food insecurity, housing instability, transportation, oral health literacy, etc.), cost of dental care, geographic location and availability of oral health professionals, and more. Access also differs significantly in both children and adults with regard to race/ethnicity, as shown by the two graphs below from the [ADA Health Policy Institute](#) (zoom to enlarge).



Oral Health in America: Advances & Challenges An Overview



Section 2: Oral Health across the Lifespan – Children & Adolescents

Key points:

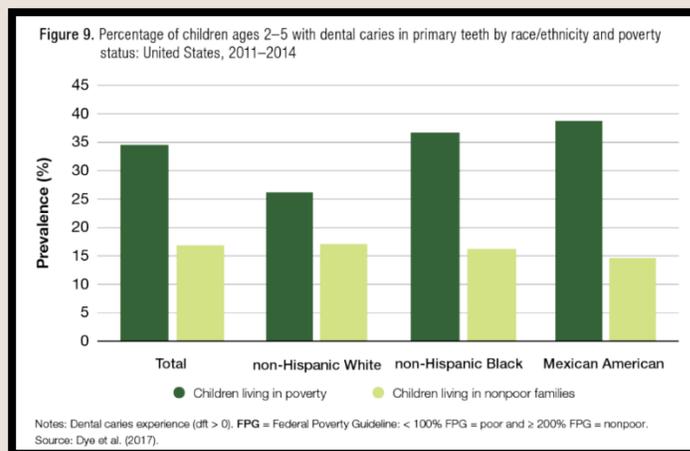
- About half of all American children do not receive regular dental care because of social, economic, and geographic obstacles.
- Nearly 1 in 5 children have special physical or health care needs; providers trained in active prevention and management of these children’s oral health problems help to support their overall health and quality of life.
- About half of all adolescents will experience dental caries; there has been little improvement in the past 20 years.
- Risk-taking behaviors that commonly occur in adolescence, such as tobacco and substance use, as well as the first occurrence of some mental health problems, can affect adolescents’ long-term oral health.

Oral health disparities in children and adolescents, 1999-2004 vs. 2011-2016

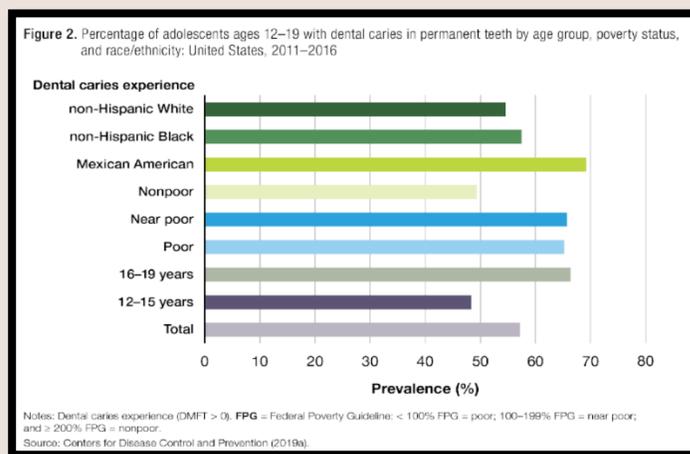
Over the past two decades, dental caries has decreased significantly in children, according to a [CDC report](#) published in 2019. Among children 2-5 years of age, the prevalence of dental caries has decreased from 28% during the time period of 1999-2004 to 23% during the time period 2011-2016, with notable decreases among Mexican American children (31% to 15%) and poor children (31% to 17%). Among children 6-11 years of age, prevalence of dental caries in permanent teeth decreased from 21% during the 1999-2004 time period to 17% in the 2011-2016 period, with the largest decreases seen among older children 9-11 years, non-Hispanic white children, and Mexican American children. Among adolescents 12-19 years of age, the prevalence of dental caries did not change from 1999-2004 to 2011-2016, although untreated decay rates decreased from 20% to 17% over the same time periods, with the most notable

decline seen among Mexican American adolescents, near-poor children, and non-Hispanic black children.

Unfortunately, though, disparities in dental disease among children and adolescents based on income, race, and ethnicity still persist. Among very young children, the differences in dental caries among different races/ethnicities is exacerbated by poverty, as shown by this graph from the *Oral Health in America: Advances and Challenges* report (page 2A-7 or page 165):



Similarly, with adolescents, we see difference in dental caries by race/ethnicity and income status, as shown by this graph from the *Oral Health in America: Advances and Challenges* report (page 2B-3 or page 261):





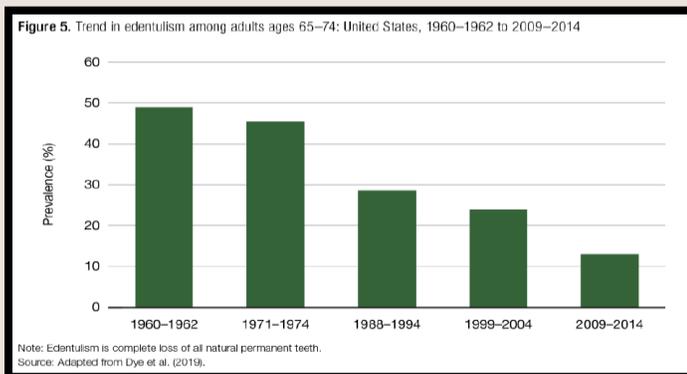
Section 3: Oral Health across the Lifespan – Working-Age Adults and Older Adults

Key points:

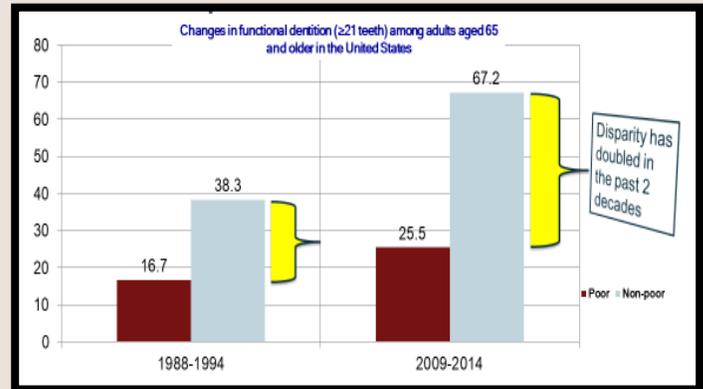
- Although adults now retain most of their natural teeth, many working-age adults continue to experience the same levels of tooth decay, gum disease, and oral cancers that were observed 20 years ago.
- Many working-age adults—especially low income and minority adults—don’t have dental insurance.
- Older adults are living longer than ever before, many with chronic diseases and complex health conditions that would be best managed by medical and oral health professionals working together.
- As working-age adults transition into retirement, most lose their employer-provided dental insurance, and Medicare does not provide an oral health benefit. This puts their oral health at risk.

Improvements made, but still a long way to go

Over the past 50 years, we’ve seen significant improvements in the proportion of Americans retaining their teeth. According to a data presented in the *Oral Health in America: Advances and Challenges* report (page 3B-7 or page 417), there has been over a 30% decrease in the proportion of older adults 65 to 74 years of age who are completely edentulous (zoom to enlarge):



But these changes have not occurred at the same rate for all people. Another [report](#) published in 2007 showed that while more people are keeping more teeth and a functional dentition (as defined by 21 or more teeth), those living in poverty are not experiencing the same rate of improvement (again, zoom to enlarge):



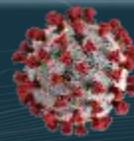
Many other factors contribute to the minimal changes we’ve seen in overall oral health in adults in America, including the lack of dental coverage (74 million Americans lack dental coverage) and only 21 states having extensive dental benefits as part of Medicaid (according to [DentaQuest](#)).

Want to read more on this report?

You can read the entire 790-page report, the 28-page executive summary, snapshots from each of the sections, and fact sheets for each section at:

<https://www.nidcr.nih.gov/oralhealthinamerica>

Next newsletter: summaries of sections 4-6 of the *Oral Health in America: Advances and Challenges* report



Cases, Deaths, and Vaccinations in the U.S. *as of March 6, 2022

Total COVID-19 cases to date:	79,078,932
Total COVID-19 deaths to date:	955,135
Total receiving at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine:	254,071,045
Total fully vaccinated:	216,147,515
Total receiving at least one booster dose:	95,172,197

CDC updates COVID-19 community levels. CDC just updated the COVID-19 Community Level. You can see the new data [here](#). As of March 3 more than 90% of the U.S. population is in a location with low or medium COVID-19 Community Level. Going forward this data will be updated on Thursdays. This data will help counties make informed decisions and take appropriate public health actions.

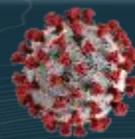
Know your COVID-19 community level. [COVID-19 Community Levels](#) are a new tool to help communities decide what prevention steps to take based on the latest data. Levels can be low, medium, or high and are determined by looking at hospital beds being used, hospital admissions, and the total number of new COVID-19 cases in an area. Take precautions to protect yourself and others from COVID-19 based on the COVID-19 Community Level in your area.

- *Low level:* Stay [up to date](#) with COVID-19 vaccines & [get tested](#) if you have symptoms.
- *Medium level:* In addition to the low level preventive steps, if you are [at high risk for severe illness](#), talk to your healthcare provider about whether you need to wear a mask and take other precautions.
- *High level:* In addition to the low level preventive steps, wear a [mask](#) indoors in public. Additional precautions may be needed for people [at high risk for severe illness](#).

FDA removes EUA, approves Moderna vaccine. On January 31, 2022, the [FDA announced](#) the second approval of a COVID-19 vaccine. The vaccine has been known as the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine, and will now be marketed as Spikevax, for the prevention of COVID-19 in individuals 18 years of age and older. Spikevax has the same formulation as the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine and is administered as a primary series of two doses, one month apart. Spikevax can be used interchangeably with the EUA Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine to provide the COVID-19 vaccination series. The CDC endorsed this recommendation on February 4th. Full licensure means this vaccine meets the FDA's rigorous standards for safety, effectiveness and manufacturing quality required for approval. For some individuals, FDA approval of this vaccine may instill additional confidence in making their decision to get vaccinated.

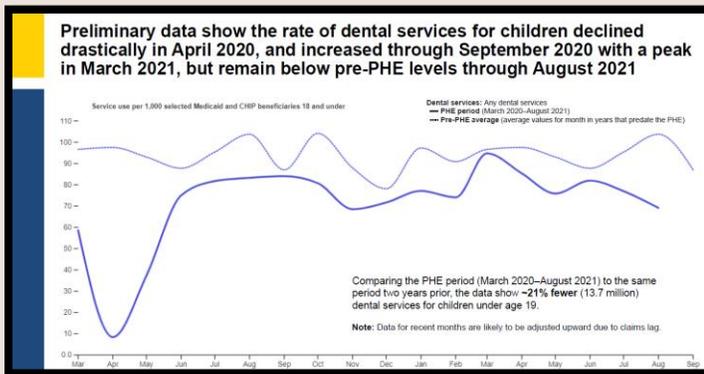
Pandemic disrupts planned oral health for older adults. Nearly 1 in 3 people over 50 with a scheduled procedure, primary care visit or dental visit in 2021 had a COVID-related delay; many haven't gone back yet, especially unvaccinated people. So says new findings from the [National Poll on Healthy Aging](#). Key findings include:

- 18% of all older adults said they had postponed, rescheduled or cancelled a dental appointment in the past year for a COVID-related reason, and 8% said their provider had postponed, rescheduled or cancelled their appointment.
- Among the older adults who had had a dental appointment scheduled in 2021, 31% said they had a disruption to that plan related to COVID.
- The difference in rescheduling between adults of different vaccination status was also seen in dental care. Only 30% of unvaccinated people said they had rescheduled their disrupted dental appointment, compared with 64% of vaccinated and boosted people.



MC children’s dental services still far below average.

A [new data snapshot](#) released by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services shows that dental services for children receiving Medicaid or CHIP dental benefits has not recovered to pre-pandemic levels. Comparing the public health emergency period of March 2020 to August 2021 (the latest date where data are available) to the same period two years prior, the data show that approximately 21% fewer (13.7 million) dental services were provided for children and adolescents under the age of 19 years. Zoom in on the below graph to enlarge.



CDC offers pandemic learning opportunities. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is offering three COVID-19 learning opportunities for providers:

- **MIS-C Updates:** Multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C) is a rare but serious condition associated with COVID-19. Learn about MIS-C surveillance, diagnosis, and data related to COVID-19 vaccination in CDC’s [webinar](#). Earn free CE.
- **COVID-19 Testing:** Hear updates from CDC experts on COVID-19 testing in CDC Foundation’s [webinar](#) for community-based organizations. Find the latest information on CDC’s [Testing for COVID-19 page](#).
- **Data Modernization:** Learn about data challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic and efforts to

improve systems and processes in this CDC Foundation [podcast](#). To learn more, visit CDC’s [Data Modernization Initiative](#) and [Implementation Support](#) websites.

New report shows staffing woes in dental offices. A [newly released report](#) published by the American Dental Association’s Healthy Policy Institute (ADA HPI) shows that dental offices continue to have issues in recruiting staff to provide oral health care to patients. More than 4 out of 10 dentists have recently or are currently recruiting dental assistants, and 35% have recently recruited or are trying to recruit dental hygienists. Below is a graph from ADA HPI that described the increasing staffing issues dental practices are facing across the nation.



The same report also showed that the troubles in filling vacant staff positions was adversely affecting appointment schedules, with over a third of respondents listing that as a major factor in preventing their dental practice from reaching a full schedule in the past week. This factor, along with patient cancellations, demand for dental services, and the COVID safety protocols put in place in dental practices across the country, have all contributed to dental practices operating at about 83% capacity in February, with certain practices – orthodontic, pediatric dentistry, and urban dental clinics – operating at even lower capacity.



Healthy People 2030 webinar series launches March 31st. The Healthy People 2030 Webinars Series will launch March 31, 2022, from 1:00 to 2:00 pm ET. This first webinar, *Bridging Healthy People 2020 and Healthy People 2030*, will feature presentations from HHS’ Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion and CDC’s National Center for Health Statistics. Presenters will explore the Healthy People 2020 Final Review including the end-of-decade progress status of objectives and the transition to Healthy People 2030. Throughout the Healthy People 2030 decade, the Webinar Series will highlight the latest data for the Leading Health Indicators, Overall Health and Well-Being Measures, and Healthy People 2030 objectives. The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion has released a news and announcement post advertising the opportunity to register for the March 31st webinar. Please read [the](#)

[news and announcements post](#) to learn more about the webinar and [register](#) for the event.

Healthy People 2030 oral health workgroup seeks collaborations. As part of our ongoing efforts to promote the 11 Healthy People 2030 core and 1 developmental oral health objectives, the federal oral health workgroup is seeking to collaborate with external stakeholders to develop and sponsor a series of webinars highlighting these objectives. The proposed webinar schedule aligns objectives with national initiatives or health observances as shown below. If your organization is interested in exploring such a collaboration, please contact USPHSCDO@ihp.gov.



Webinar Date	Healthy People Oral Health Objective	Alignment with national initiative/observance
May 2022	OH-4: Reduce the proportion of older adults with untreated root surface decay	Older Americans Month
Jul 2022	OH-2: Reduce the proportion of children and adolescents with active and currently untreated tooth decay in their primary or permanent teeth	None, but preceding National Back to School Month
Oct 2022	OH-3: Reduce the proportion of adults with active or currently untreated tooth decay	Healthy Literacy Month
Nov 2022	OH-6: Reduce the proportion of adults aged 45 years and over with moderate and severe periodontitis	American Diabetes Month
Jan 2023	OH-11: Increase the proportion of persons served by community systems with optimally fluoridated water systems	Anniversary of Grand Rapids, MI Fluoridation
Feb 2023	OH-1: Reduce the proportion of children and adolescents with lifetime tooth decay experience in their primary or permanent teeth	National Children’s Dental Health Month
Apr 2023	OH-7: Increase the proportion of oral and pharyngeal cancers detected at the earliest stage	Oral, Head & Neck Cancer Awareness Month
Jun 2023	OH-D01: Increase the number of states and the District of Columbia that have an oral and craniofacial health surveillance system	Oral Health Month
Aug 2023	OH-10: Increase the proportion of children and adolescents who have dental sealants on 1 or more molars	National Back to School Month
Oct 2023	OH-9: Increase the proportion of low-income youth who have a preventive dental visit	National Dental Hygiene Month
Mar 2024	OH-8: Increase the proportion of children, adolescents, and adults who use the oral health care system	World Oral Health Day
May 2024	OH-5: Reduce the proportion of adults aged 45 years and over who have lost all of their natural teeth	Older Americans Month



ADA offers new HPV cancer prevention series. April is Oral Cancer Awareness Month, a time when dental professionals join with surgeons and other medical professionals to highlight the dangers oral cancer brings, and to call attention to the progress made in fighting this disease. More than ever, there is a need to increase awareness of HPV and of educating the public on the need for HPV immunization. The administration of the HPV vaccine is a safe and effective way to reduce the risk of HPV-related cancers, including certain head and neck cancers. HPV is now associated with more than 20,000 cases of head and neck cancer each year in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). To promote awareness of this critical issue, The ADA’s Council on Advocacy for Access & Prevention (CAAP) is hosting “Preventing HPV Cancers in Action,” a 3-part webinar series, starting in late March.

Part 1: March 23, 12pm-1pm Central, *Preventing HPV Cancers in Action: The Critical Role of the Dentist*

[REGISTER HERE](#)

The dentist plays a critical role in the detection of oral cancers and in educating their patients on the importance of HPV vaccination. Please join Gary Heyamoto, DDS, MAGD, President, Academy of General Dentistry Foundation (AGDF) to discuss the importance of performing a consistent, thorough clinical oral exam, how to discuss HPV vaccination with patients, be able to describe Anterior Mouth and Posterior Mouth from a medical perspective and learn how dentists can participate, as an office, in fighting HPV oral cancers through awareness and promotion of the HPV vaccine.

Part 2: April 6, 12pm-1pm Central, *Preventing HPV Cancers in Action: Dentists As Vaccinators*

[REGISTER HERE](#)

The COVID-19 pandemic has increased awareness of dentists as vaccinators—including the HPV vaccine.

Please join Rosie Wagner DDS, Founder, Smiles By Rosie Family Dentistry and Isaac Zeckel DDS, Chief Dental Director, HealthLinc, to discuss the benefits of dentists as immunizers, steps to becoming a dentist immunizer, medicolegal considerations, and ways to increase access to care by providing a new vaccination setting, with innovative vaccination approaches that utilize on-site interdisciplinary teams.

Part 3: April 20, 12pm-1pm Central, *Preventing HPV Cancers in Action: “Building Blocs”-- Medical-Dental Collaboration Models and More*

[REGISTER HERE](#)

How does a dentist interested in promoting the HPV vaccine build a collaboration with a medical provider? What actions can states take to build collaborative partnerships that increase HPV vaccination? Please join Jessica Jack MD FAAP, Pediatrician, & Scott Hamilton, DDS, Pediatric Dentist, Denver Health, and Tommy Johnson, DMD, State Dental Director, Alabama Department of Public Health, to discuss partnership models and more.

Related: Below is a [table from the CDC](#) showing the prevalence of HPV-attributed oropharyngeal cancers, which has surpassed cervical cancer as the most common HPV cancer. Oral health professionals can learn more about the [vaccine](#) for HPV and how to educate their patients about it through webinars such as the ones described above.

Cancer site	Average number of cancers per year in sites where HPV is often found (HPV-associated cancers)	Percentage probably caused by any HPV type*	Number probably caused by any HPV type*
Cervix	12,143	91%	11,000
Vagina	867	75%	700
Vulva	4,114	69%	2,800
Penis	1,348	63%	900
Anus ^b	7,083	91%	6,500
Female	4,751	93%	4,400
Male	2,332	89%	2,100
Oropharynx	19,775	70%	14,000
Female	3,530	63%	2,200
Male	16,245	72%	11,800
TOTAL	45,330	79%	35,900

*https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/statistics/cases.htm



New consensus statement emphasizes behavioral and social sciences related to oral health. “The behavioral and social sciences are central to understanding and addressing oral and craniofacial health, diseases, and conditions. With both basic and applied approaches, behavioral and social sciences are relevant to every discipline in dentistry and all dental, oral, and craniofacial sciences, as well as oral health promotion programs and health care delivery.” So says a newly released consensus statement from an international committee with over 400 endorsers. The [Consensus Statement on Future Directions for the Behavioral and Social Sciences](#) in Oral Health further describes future directions in understanding the relationships of behavioral and social sciences related to oral health, focusing on the key areas of behavioral and social theories and mechanisms related to oral health, use of multiple and novel methodologies in social and behavioral research and practice related to oral health, development and testing of behavioral and social interventions to promote oral health, and dissemination and implementation research for oral health.

CDC proposes new opioid prescribing guidelines. A [Federal Register Notice](#) posted in early February announced the opening of a docket to obtain comment on the proposed clinical practice guideline, CDC Clinical Practice Guideline for Prescribing Opioids – United States, 2022. The clinical practice guideline updates and expands the *CDC Guideline for Prescribing Opioids for Chronic Pain—United States, 2016*, and provides evidence-based recommendations for clinicians who provide pain care, including oral health professionals. The clinical practice guideline includes recommendations for primary care clinicians (including physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants) as well as for outpatient clinicians in other specialties (including those managing dental and postsurgical pain in outpatient settings and emergency clinicians providing pain management for patients being discharged from emergency

departments). This voluntary clinical practice guideline provides recommendations and does not require mandatory compliance; and the clinical practice guideline is intended to be flexible to support, not supplant, clinical judgment and individualized, patient-centered decision-making.

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. Each March, the [National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities](#) (NACDD) and partners work together to create a social media campaign that highlights the many ways in which people with and without disabilities come together to form strong, diverse communities. Numerous [studies](#) have shown that those with intellectual and



developmental disabilities suffer disproportionately from poor oral health and lower access to dental care. Read the article from issue #60 of the CDO Newsletter for a more in-depth look at the subject.

USPSTF seeks comments on recommendation statement on statins. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) seeks comments on a draft recommendation statement and draft evidence review on statin use for the primary prevention of cardiovascular disease (CVD) in adults. This is another opportunity for oral health professionals to provide input in the larger picture of overall health given the relationships we understand between oral disease and systemic disease processes such as cardiovascular disease. The Task Force recommends people ages 40 to 75 at high risk for CVD take a statin to prevent a first heart attack or stroke. People ages 40 to 75 at increased risk, but not at high risk, should decide with their clinician whether to take a statin. More research is needed on whether people 76 years of age or older should start taking a statin to prevent a first heart attack or stroke. The draft recommendation statement and draft evidence review are available for review and public comment from February 22, 2022 to March 21, 2022 [here](#).



ACL Celebrates the Senior Nutrition Program's 50th Anniversary. Nutrition is a vital component of our health and well-being, especially as we age. But in communities throughout the U.S., older adults sometimes lack access to the high-quality, nutritious food they need to remain healthy and independent.

Since 1972, the national Senior Nutrition Program has been there to support older adults by providing nutrition services across the country. Funded by the Older Americans Act, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) – an operating division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – provides grants to states to support a network of local programs that deliver nutrition services to older adults.

Good nutrition is essential for good oral health. Senior Nutrition Programs promote healthy eating, decrease social isolation, and support better health. They also provide a gateway for older adults to access other home and community-based services such as falls prevention programs, chronic disease management services, and more.

The Administration for Community Living is proud to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the national Senior Nutrition Program with others across the country during March. The theme for the 50th anniversary celebration is *Celebrate. Innovate. Educate.* ACL and the aging network will be:

- Celebrating the many accomplishments of senior nutrition programs over the past 50 years.
- Highlighting innovative approaches that have been used to support seniors.
- Educating communities so that they can understand and use nutrition services.

Ensure all seniors are aware of their local senior nutrition program and benefit from the nutritious meals available. Use the Eldercare Locator at www.eldercare.acl.gov or call 1-800-677-1116 to locate the Senior Nutrition Program in your

community. Visit ACL's [Senior Nutrition Program 50th Anniversary website](#) to learn more about this important milestone and join the conversation on social media using hashtag #SNP50 or contact Kathy Wilson-Gold, MS, RDN, LD, FAND at kathy.wilson-gold@acl.hhs.gov.



DQA webinar focuses on quality improvement. The [Dental Quality Alliance](#) (DQA), which was established to develop performance measures for oral health care, has announced the sixth installment in their Quality Measurement in Dentistry Webinar Series. The goal of this webinar is to provide an overview of the DQA Open School Course of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's (IHI) Model for Improvement and share an ongoing example of this approach. This course is a first step to understand where we are and where we need to go to improve oral health care and, ultimately, health outcomes. The webinar will be held on March 30, 2022 at 12:00 p.m. Central Time; to register, click [here](#).

ADA releases dental sealant guidance for providers. The American Dental Association's Advisory Committee of Dental Sealants, part of the Council on Advocacy for Access and Prevention, recently released a new document, "[Dental Sealants and Disease Prevention Points for Providers](#)," a one-page quick reference sheet that shows the importance of dental sealants in preventing and arresting dental caries in primary and permanent teeth and provides several suggested actions that oral health professionals can take to incorporate sealants throughout their practices. Learn more by clicking the hyperlink above.



New CDC report highlights need for preventive dental care in children with heart conditions. A new study, [“Preventive Dental Care and Oral Health of Children with and without Heart Conditions — United States, 2016–2019,”](#) was recently published in CDC’s Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR). Healthy teeth and gums are important for everyone, but especially for children with heart conditions, as children living with heart defects are more likely to develop infective (bacterial) endocarditis. During 2016–2019, only 83% of persons aged 1–17 years with heart conditions received preventive dental care. However, 17% had symptoms of poor oral health during a 12-month period, and 10% had teeth in fair or poor condition. Those with lower household incomes and intellectual and developmental disabilities had worse oral health. Public health practitioners and health care providers can implement strategies to improve oral health and care among children with heart conditions, especially those with fewer resources and intellectual or developmental disabilities.

Colgate-Palmolive introduces new OQ campaign. Colgate-Palmolive Company [announced](#) on February 8th it is launching a public health initiative to empower people to [Know Your OQ™](#) to understand—and improve—their oral health quotient (OQ). Just as people may know their IQ or EQ, which measure cognitive and emotional intelligence, Colgate wants people to know their oral health quotient and understand the links between oral health and overall health and wellbeing. In total, the Company will commit more than \$100 million over the next five years to address a global health crisis affecting nearly half the world’s population and ensure oral health is incorporated into broader public health strategies.

Article highlights importance of dental health and military readiness. *Oral Health in America: Advances and Challenges* states (pg. 83) that “Maintaining the health status of members of the armed services is

critical for ensuring an effective military force. Each branch of the armed services maintains a dental component charged with ensuring that dental conditions do not degrade military readiness. From this perspective, providing oral health care is essential for maintaining military readiness because service members are not deployable until they meet dental readiness criteria.” A [new article](#) published at Health.mil highlights why dental health is essential for military readiness. Dental fitness is one of eight domains in the Department of Defense’s [Total Force Fitness](#) framework. The framework builds healthy habits and improves the military’s mission capabilities. Although dental issues make up less than 20% of patient visits, service members’ medical readiness depends on healthy teeth.

USPSTF seeks comments on food insecurity. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPHS) posted a draft research plan on preventive services for food insecurity on February 24th. The draft research plan is available for review and public comment from February 24, 2022, through March 23, 2022. To review the draft research plan and submit comments, go [here](#).

Lessons in a Lunch Box cited in dental school application. Begun in 2008 by Dr. Winifred Booker, [“Lessons in a Lunch Box: Healthy Teeth Essentials & Facts About Snacks”](#) was designed as a creative way for parents, teachers, and children to learn about oral health and prevention of dental disease. A [press release](#) in February from the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) reported that a dental school applicant cited this innovative program in their dental school application. 2022 is the year when the first youth who were exposed to Lessons in a Lunch Box qualify to apply to a dental school or a dental hygiene program. According to the article, nearly 65,000 children and families have been impacted by this initiative. Learn more by clicking the above hyperlinks.

USPHS Chief Dental Officer External Events



Latest Chief Dental Officer Events Completed

- February 2, 2022: 3rd Global Informal Experts Group: Monitoring Framework of the Global Oral Health Action Plan, participant
- February 3, 2022: American Dental Association Federal Dental Services Advisory Committee
- February 10, 2022: Meeting of the U.S. Public Health Service Oral Health Coordinating Committee (chair)
- February 10, 2022: Presentation to USPHS retired dental officers' group, virtual
- February 15, 2022: Moderator for panel discussion on medical-dental integration as part of the American Institute of Dental Public Health Transforming Veteran Oral Health Colloquium
- February 24, 2022: Presentation on bi-directional medical-dental integration and moderate Q&A session at the Association of Military Surgeons of the U.S. Annual Meeting Oral Health Session, virtual
- February 24, 2022: Meeting #19 of the COVID-19 Public-Private Partner Dental Coordination Group, presented on the *Oral Health in America* report
- February 26, 2022: Presentation to the American Dental Association Council on Advocacy for Access and Prevention Health Equity Meeting, virtual
- March 3, 2022: West Virginia School of Dentistry student presentation, Morgantown, WV
- March 4, 2022: Presentation on current issues in oral health and fireside chat at the West Virginia Oral Health Summit, Roanoke, WV

Upcoming Chief Dental Officer Events

- March 10, 2022: Meeting of the U.S. Public Health Service Oral Health Coordinating Committee (chair)
- March 19-22, 2022: Attending American Dental Education Association Annual Session, Philadelphia, PA (delegate)
- April 2, 2022: Presentation on the oral health pandemic response at the American College of Dentists meeting, Asheville, NC
- April 9, 2022: Presentation on medical-dental integration at the American Association of Dental Board mid-year meeting, virtual
- April 10, 2022: Presentation on the *Oral Health in America* report and moderator of the Federal Dental

- Services session at the National Oral Health Conference, Ft. Worth, TX
- April 11-13, 2022: Attending National Oral Health Conference, Ft. Worth, TX
- April 28, 2022: Panel presentation (presenting on oral health equity, Healthy People 2030, and the pandemic as it affects oral health) at the American Association of Community Dental Programs, virtual
- May 11-12, 2022: Presentation on key oral health issues at the Oregon Health Authority Meeting, Portland, OR
- May 14, 2022: Attending Tennessee State Dental Association Meeting, Nashville, TN
- May 14, 2022: Presentation on *Oral Health in America* report at National Network for Oral Health Access leadership meeting, Nashville, TN
- May 18, 2022: Presentations on *Oral Health in America* report, emerging public health threats, and bi-directional integration of oral health and overall health at the Federal Bureau of Prisons annual meeting, now virtual
- May 20-21, 2022: Presentation on current national oral health issues at the New Hampshire Dental Society meeting, Meredith, NH
- May 22-26, 2022: USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium, Glendale, AZ, including Dental Category Day on May 25th
- June 10, 2022: Keynote address at the Hispanic Dental Association Meeting, Fort Lee, NJ
- June 20-22, 2022: Santa Fe Group Oral Health Equity Summit, Arlington, VA
- June 22-25, 2022: Presentation on key oral health issues affecting the Native American population, and attend parts of the Society of American Indian Dentists annual meeting, Isleta, NM
- June 25, 2022: Presentation on national oral health issues at the American Dental Hygienists Association meeting, Louisville, KY
- July 1, 2022: Expected date to begin terminal leave, leading to retirement on or about September 1, 2022
- July 14-15, 2022: Attend and provide presentation on USPHS to the ADA Council on Advocacy for Access and Prevention, Chicago, IL

USPHS Chief Dental Officer External Events



February 24, 2022: The Q&A discussion following the day-long oral health session at the annual Association of Military Surgeons of the U.S. (AMSUS) Meeting. Thanks to LCDR Rachel Rachuba and CAPT Vicky Ottmers for helping coordinate this session for the USPHS (we have hosted this session for multiple years). Thanks also to all of our great presenters: LCDR Amy Respondek (U.S. Coast Guard Oral Surgeon), CDR Catlin Darcey (U.S. Navy), LCDR Melissa Reyes (USPHS Medical Officer), Dr. David Stanczyk (Veterans Health Administration), MAJ Jenny Stevens (U.S. Air Force), and MAJ Francisco Flores Gallardo (U.S. Air Force Prosthodontist).



February 15, 2022: It was an honor moderating a panel on Advancing Medical-Dental Integration for Veterans as part of the 2022 American Institute of Dental Public Health (AIDPH) Colloquium on Veteran's Oral Health Care. Thanks to the distinguished panelists - Dr. Hugh Silk, Dr. Michael Jacques, and Ms. Sarah Holland - for informing us of the need for multi-directional integration and advising us all on definitive action steps that can be taken by all medical and oral health professionals.

USPHS Chief Dental Officer External Events



TOP LEFT: March 3, 2022: On March 3rd, I had the opportunity to speak to dental and dental hygiene students and faculty at West Virginia University in Morgantown, West Virginia. I talked to them about the USPHS, loan repayment/forgiveness options, the new Oral Health in America report, and opportunities in the future for multi-directional integrated care. Thanks to Dr. Foti Panagakos, Associate Dean for Research and Postdoctoral Affairs, and RADM (Ret.)/Dr. Steven Pachuta, Dean, for the invitation to speak and the tour of the facilities.

TOP RIGHT, BOTTOM: On March 4th, I had the opportunity to speak at my 26th state oral health meeting with the West Virginia State Oral Health Meeting in Roanoke, WV. After delivering a keynote on current issues in oral health, I was able to listen to great presentations from such distinguished speakers at Dr. Foti Panagakos, Ann Lynch from the American Dental Hygienists Association, and Dr. Marcia Brand from CareQuest Institute for Oral Health. At the end of the day, I answered questions from the audience through a fireside chat with Ms. Kim Tieman, president of the West Virginia Oral Health Coalition (TOP RIGHT). BOTTOM LEFT: With Dr. Jason Rousch, WV state dental director. BOTTOM RIGHT: With the leaders of the WV Oral Health Coalition (Ms. Gina Sharps and Ms. Bobbi Jo Muto with Ms. Tieman and me).



March 6-12, 2022: Dental Assistants Recognition Week. Each year we celebrated Dental Assistants Recognition Week (DARW). The theme for the 2022 event is “Dental Assistants: Passionate about Our Patients, Dedicated to Our Profession,” as designated by the American Dental Assistants Association (ADAA). Take time to recognize these hard-working members of the oral health team this year. ADAA has an [array of tools](#) to help promote DARW.

March 17-19, 2022: The Hinman Dental Society, Atlanta, GA. Sponsored by the Hinman Dental Society, the 2022 meeting will be held at the Georgia World Congress Center and Omni Hotel at CNN Center, and it offers world-class continuing education and all-inclusive technical exhibits. To learn more or to register, click [here](#).

March 19-22, 2022: American Dental Education Association Annual Session & Exhibition, Philadelphia, PA. The 2022 annual ADEA meeting, with a theme of “Lifting as We Rise,” will bring together dental, allied dental and advanced dental educators and students for four days of world-class educational sessions and an exhibit hall filled with dental education’s leading partners. To learn more, click [here](#).

March 23-26, 2022: AADOCR/CADR Annual Meeting & Exhibition, Atlanta, GA. The 2022 meeting of the American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research (AADOCR, formerly the American Association of Dental Research) and Canadian Association of Dental Research (CADR) will be a hybrid meeting, in person in Atlanta and virtual. Online or onsite, present your cutting-edge research and view top-notch scientific programming, including poster presentations, oral presentations, symposia, and Distinguished Lecture Series plenary sessions. To learn more, click [here](#).

March 28-30, 2022: Beyond Flexner Conference, Phoenix, AZ. A.T. Still University of Health Sciences (ATSU), Beyond Flexner Alliance and Arizona State

University (ASU) Edson College of Nursing and Health Innovation will co-host the [2022 Beyond Flexner Conference](#) in Phoenix, Arizona, March 28-30, 2022. The conference theme is “Moving the Dial on Social Mission: Ensuring Health Professions Education Meets the Challenges of Today, Accountability | Policy | Community Outcomes.” Click on the above hyperlink for additional information and registration.

April 8-9, 2022: AADB Meeting, virtual. The [mid-year meeting](#) of the American Association of Dental Boards will be held virtually again this year. It provides an forum for keeping up-to-date with state board concerns. Programs are designed to allow opportunities for interaction among all participants, including board members, dentists, dental hygienists, dental assistants, educators, board attorneys, and dental specialty associations. Panels and small discussion groups exchange ideas and information. Participants take away valuable information on current issues and all aspects of dental and dental hygiene regulation. Early registration is until February 28th, with rates of \$475 for members and \$699 for non-members. Click [here](#) to register.

April 10, 2022: Federal Dental Services Session at NOHC, Fort Worth, TX. As part of the National Oral Health Conference, the Federal Dental Services (FDS) will once again host a weekend workshop prior to the conference, led by the U.S. Public Health Service. Registration to NOHC is required, but this is a great opportunity for anyone – this session is not restricted to just the Federal Dental Services. Click [here](#) to learn more about the conference. Up to four hours of CDE credit will be available. Here is the planned lineup for the session from 12:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.:

- *Lessons Learned: Preparing for the Next Pandemic*, Casey Hannan, Director of the CDC Division of Oral Health (Keynote Address)
- *Challenges & Opportunities in the Era of COVID* by COL Scott Irwin (USAF), COL Paul Colthirst (USA),
- LTC Peter Drouillard (USA), CAPT Kathleen Buss (USN), and CDR Tequilla McGahee (USPHS)

- *Using Data to Drive Antibiotic and Opioid Stewardship in Dentistry*, Dr. Gretchen Gibson (VHA)
- *Oral Health in America: Advances and Challenges, Key Messages*, RADM Tim Ricks (USPHS CDO)

April 11-13, 2022: NOHC, Fort Worth, TX. The 2022 23rd National Oral Health Conference (NOHC), co-sponsored by the Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors (ASTDD) and the American Association of Public Health Dentistry (AAPHD), will be held in Fort Worth. NOHC offers educational sessions on a diverse array of topics by leaders in the field and is designed for dentists, dental hygienists, health researchers, dental/health educators, legislators, public health officials, Medicaid/CHIP dental program staff or consultants, state/territorial dental directors, county/city/local dental directors, community health center personnel, students, school-based and school-linked health center personnel, federally-employed dental personnel, as well as dental manufacturers/distributors and dental insurance companies – in short, anyone interested in engaging in collaboration to improve the oral health of the public. [Registration](#) is open until February 21st at a cost of \$645 for members, \$850 for non-members, \$300 for students, and \$390 for one-day attendance. Click [here](#) to learn more about the conference.

May 23-26, 2022: USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium, Glendale, AZ. The 55th annual conference of the U.S. Public Health Service will be held in person May 23-26 at the Renaissance Phoenix Glendale Hotel in Phoenix, Arizona. The theme of the meeting is “Preparing for the Future.” Attendees generally include USPHS officers, officials from agencies served by the USPHS, military personnel, public health officials, and sometimes health professions students. Key speakers include USPHS Commissioned Corps leaders. Early bird conference rates are \$355 for members of the Commissioned Officers Association, \$595 for non-members, and \$70 for state/local/federal civilian or college/university

faculty. You can view the conference brochure [here](#), or register [here](#). On May 25th, the USPHS Dental Category will hold its annual “Category Day” and will feature:

- *Bisphosphonates and the Anticoagulated Patient* by CDR Justin Sikes
- *Establishing a Culture of Safety in Dentistry* by Dr. (CAPT, Ret.) Steve Geiermann from the ADA
- *Surgeon General David Satcher Keynote Lecture* by acclaimed medical journalist and author Mary Otto
- Presentation of annual USPHS Dental Category Awards
- *Endodontics and Traumatic Injuries* by LCDR Terryl Petropoulos
- *Oral Health in America: Advances and Challenges* by CAPT Renée Joskow
- *Current and Future Issues in Oral Health* by RADM Tim Ricks

June 10-11, 2022: Hispanic Dental Association Annual Meeting, Fort Lee, NJ. The annual meeting of the Hispanic Dental Association will be held at the DoubleTree by Hilton Fort Lee-George Washington Bridge in Fort Lee, NJ from June 20-11, 2022. With a theme of “Bridging the Gap for Hispanic Oral Health,” the conference will include HDA chapter meetings, an exhibit floor, and mentoring activities for students and international graduates. Hear from national experts on patient-centered care, medical education training, research, prevention, behavioral health, e-health and cultural competence for the growing Hispanic populations. To learn more about this meeting or to register, click [here](#).

June 16-18, 2022: OSAP Annual Conference, Minneapolis, MN. The annual meeting of the Organization for Safety, Asepsis and Prevention (OSAP) will be held at the Hyatt Regency Minneapolis. Registration is not yet open. The target audience for this conference includes clinicians, educators, infection control coordinators, infection control companies, community health centers, and more. To learn more about this meeting, visit the [OSAP website](#).

Upcoming Meetings & Events



June 22-25, 2022: Society of American Indian Dentists Annual Meeting, Isleta, NM. The annual conference of the Society of American Indian Dentists (SAID) will be held June 22-25 at the Isleta Resort in Isleta Pueblo, New Mexico. The conference has a pre-conference workshop, Native cooking demonstration, a 5K walk/run at Isleta Lakes, a tour of the Isleta health center, and multiple continuing education courses. The conference schedule and registration link are not yet available, but you can learn more about the meeting [here](#).

June 24-26, 2022: American Dental Hygienists Association Meeting, Louisville, KY. The annual meeting of the ADHA will be held June 24-26 at the Kentucky International Convention Center in Louisville, KY. The Annual Conference reflects the core issues of dental hygiene – seamlessly blending inspiration and practical application with an expert conference program boasting more leading oral healthcare minds focused on dental hygiene than anywhere else, along with hands-on workshops, awards and networking opportunities. The conference is open to everyone, including students, with early bird rates until March 18th at \$349 for ADHA members, \$549 for non-members, \$150 for students, and day and guest passes also available. To learn more about the meeting, click [here](#).

July 27-30, 2022: AGD Annual Meeting, Orlando, FL. The 2022 annual conference of the Academy of General Dentistry will be held at the Rosen Shingle Creek July 27-30, 2022. Presenters include a keynote

address by former NBA player Walter Bond. To learn more, click [here](#). Registration is now open for this meeting [here](#).



Congratulations!

Congratulations to the U.S. Army Dental Corps, which celebrated their 111th anniversary on March 3, 2022. It has been an honor working alongside all of the military Corps chief dental officers and VHA dental director over the past four years:

- U.S. Air Force Dental Corps Chief:
 - MG Sharon Bannister (2019-2021)
 - BG Bob Bogart (2021-present)
- U.S. Army Dental Corps Chief:
 - BG Shan Bagby (2018-present)
- U.S. Navy Dental Corps Chief:
 - RADM Gail Shaffer (2017-2020)
 - RDML Rick Freedman (2020-present)
- Veterans Health Administration Dental Director:
 - Dr. Patricia Arola (2005-present)

We are America's Health Responders.

We are the first in line to defend our nation's public health against threats large and small.

We are the USPHS Commissioned Corps. Visit us at www.usphs.gov.

***In Officio Salutis* ("In the Service of Health")**

