



USPHS Chief Dental Officer Newsletter Issue #63: Final Issue, July 1, 2022

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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.

New Healthy People 2030 Oral Health Webinar Series to Begin

A new initiative created by the Federal Healthy People 2030 Oral Health Workgroup in collaboration with the Public-Private Partner Oral Health Alliance will feature best practices and strategies for success to improve the nation’s oral health through a series of webinars beginning in August 2022.

“This is a great opportunity for all health care professionals to learn more about the Healthy People 2030 oral health objectives while showcasing unique and innovative programs around the country,” said Dr. Gina Thornton-Evans, a dental officer in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the chair of the Oral Health Workgroup.

The webinar series will begin in late August with a focus on Oral Health Objective 8, which is to increase the proportion of children, adolescents, and adults who use the oral health system. This will align with National Back to School Month, and each of the one-hour webinars will be aligned with one or more national health observances. The August webinar will feature an overview of the objective and will be co-hosted by the Medicaid-Medicare-CHIP State Dental Association (MSDA) and the American Dental Association (ADA), while the CDC will serve as facilitator.

Each of the subsequent one-hour webinars will follow the same format, with a member of the Federal Healthy People 2030 Oral Health Workgroup introducing the objective followed by two organizations (dental and otherwise) who will provide 20-minute presentations to highlight best practices in support of the particular objective being featured, and the webinars will conclude with a

federal agency facilitating a short question-and-answer period. Below is the tentative schedule of these webinars. Details of the August webinar will be shared in late July.

Date	Healthy People Oral Health Objective
Aug 2022	OH-8: Increase the proportion of children, adolescents, and adults who use the oral health care system
Oct 2022	OH-3: Reduce the proportion of adults with active or currently untreated tooth decay
Nov 2022	OH-6: Reduce the proportion of adults aged 45 years and over with moderate and severe periodontitis
Dec 2022	OH-2: Reduce the proportion of children & adolescents with active & currently untreated tooth decay in their primary or permanent teeth
Jan 2023	OH-11: Increase the proportion of persons served by community systems with optimally fluoridated water systems
Feb 2023	OH-1: Reduce the proportion of children and adolescents with lifetime tooth decay experience in their primary or permanent teeth
Apr 2023	OH-7: Increase the proportion of oral and pharyngeal cancers detected at the earliest stage
May 2023	OH-4: Reduce the proportion of older adults with untreated root surface decay
Jun 2023	OH-D01: Increase the number of states and the District of Columbia that have an oral and craniofacial health surveillance system
Aug 2023	OH-10: Increase the proportion of children and adolescents who have dental sealants on 1 or more molars
Oct 2023	OH-9: Increase the proportion of low-income youth who have a preventive dental visit
Mar 2024	OH-8: Increase the proportion of children, adolescents, and adults who use the oral health care system
May 2024	OH-5: Reduce the proportion of adults aged 45 years and over who have lost all of their natural teeth

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FDA issues marketing denial order for JUUL. On June 23rd, the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration](#) issued [marketing denial orders \(MDOs\)](#) to JUUL Labs Inc. for all of their products currently marketed in the United States. As a result, the company must stop selling and distributing these products. In addition, those currently on the U.S. market must be removed, or risk enforcement action. The products include the JUUL device and four types of JUULpods: Virginia tobacco flavored pods at nicotine concentrations of 5.0% and 3.0% and menthol flavored pods at nicotine concentrations of 5.0% and 3.0%. According to the press release, these MDOs only pertain to the commercial distribution, importation and retail sales of these products, and do not restrict individual consumer possession or use—the FDA cannot and will not enforce against individual consumer possession or use of JUUL products or any other tobacco products.

NIOSH researches dental evacuation/ventilation systems. A May 2022 report from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) discusses “[Reducing Hazardous Exposures in Dental Clinics](#).” According to the article, “Workers in the dental field are among those with the highest occupational risk for exposure to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. Dental personnel often work closely with patients who remove their masks for procedures. These dental procedures can produce aerosols, or sprays of liquid, from a patient’s mouth, which could expose nearby workers.” One way of reducing hazardous exposures in dental settings is to reduce potential exposures to harmful aerosols by using engineering controls such as “source controls.” Source controls directly capture and remove aerosols before they can enter the air and be inhaled by nearby workers. In dental settings, dental evacuation systems (suction devices designed to remove fluids during treatment) can work as source controls by capturing aerosols at a patient’s mouth. However, the efficiency of different commercially available systems varies, and

their effectiveness as source controls has not been extensively studied. NIOSH is working to learn more about the efficiency of dental evacuation systems, and aims to characterize ventilation systems and evaluate exposures that could possibly contribute to occupational lung diseases in dental practices.

Monkeypox outbreak climbs to over 5,000. [New data reported by CDC](#) as of June 29th shows that there are now 5,115 reported cases of monkey pox across the globe. Over half of the reported cases are in Western Europe with the United Kingdom, Spain, and Germany having nearly 2,800 cases, while the U.S. has 350 reported cases, with most in California, New York, Illinois, and Florida. The [CDC recommends](#) that anyone with a rash that [looks like monkeypox](#) should talk to their healthcare provider, even if they don’t think they had contact with someone who has monkeypox. People who may be at higher risk might include but are not limited to those who:



1. Had contact with someone who had a rash that looks like monkeypox or someone who was diagnosed with confirmed or probable monkeypox
2. Had skin-to-skin contact with someone in a social network experiencing monkeypox activity, this includes men who have sex with men who meet partners through an online website, digital application (“app”), or social event (e.g., a bar or party)
3. Traveled outside the US to a country with confirmed cases of monkeypox or where monkeypox activity has been ongoing
4. Had contact with a dead or live wild animal or exotic pet that exists only in Africa or used a product derived from such animals (e.g., game meat, creams, lotions, powders, etc.)



CDC extends COVID-19 vaccine recommendation to include young children. On June 18th, the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) announced](#) that it had endorsed the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' (ACIP) recommendation that all children 6 months through 5 years should now receive the COVID-19 vaccine. This expands eligibility for vaccination to nearly 20 million additional children and means that all Americans ages 6 months and older are now eligible for vaccination.

World Health Assembly follows up resolution on oral health. Recognizing the global public health importance of major oral diseases and conditions, in May 2021 the World Health Assembly adopted resolution WHA74.5 on oral health and requested the Director-General to develop, in consultation with Member States, a [draft global strategy on tackling oral diseases](#). The strategy will inform the development of a global action plan on oral health, including a framework for tracking progress with clear measurable targets to be achieved by 2030. The resolution on oral health and the resulting draft global strategy are grounded in the 2030 Agenda, in particular SDG Goal 3 (Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages) and SDG target 3.8 on achieving UHC. They are aligned with the WHO's Thirteenth General Programme of Work, 2019–2023; the political declaration of high-level meeting on universal health coverage adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2019; the Operational Framework for Primary Health Care of 2020; the Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health: Workforce 2030 of 2016; the NCD-GAP; the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control adopted in 2003; resolution WHA74.16 (2021) on social determinants of health; decision WHA73(12) (2020) on the Decade of Healthy Ageing 2020–2030; and resolution WHA67.11 (2014) on public health impacts of exposure to mercury and mercury compounds: the role of WHO and ministries of public

health in the implementation of the Minamata Convention.

Western Pacific Regional Office releases oral health video and infographics. The World Health Organization's Regional Office for the Western Pacific (WHO WPRO) launched an [Oral Health Video](#) and three infographics under the [WPRO Oral Health page](#). The infographics include "Oral diseases in the Western Pacific," "How to prevent oral diseases," and "Major oral diseases in the Western Pacific." WPRO also makes the impactful statement that "Oral health promotion and oral disease prevention should be integrated with other noncommunicable disease prevention programmes that share common risk factors and social determinants. Also, integrating oral health services in primary health care is essential to provide more equitable access to comprehensive care."

New ADA report shows dental offices continue to have staffing struggles. The most recent "[Economic Outlook and Emerging Issues in Dentistry](#)" report released by the American Dental Association's Health Policy Institute (ADA HPI) shows that the dental industry continues to have significant staffing shortages. The biweekly survey ending the week of June 13th showed that 38.8% of the 1,203 respondents were actively recruiting for dental assistants, 38.3% were seeking dental hygienists, 29.8% were seeking administrative staff, and 14.2% were recruiting for dentists.

CDC rescinds order requiring negative COVID-19 test. On June 10th, the [Centers of Disease Control and Prevention announced](#) that the Order requiring persons to show a negative COVID-19 test result or documentation of recovery from COVID-19 before boarding a flight to the United States, was to be rescinded, effective on June 12, 2022 at 12:01AM ET, meaning that air passengers will not need to get tested and show the COVID-19 test result or documentation of recovery from COVID-19 prior to boarding a flight to the U.S.

**Alabama promotes “Watch Your Mouth” campaign.**

Alabama has the 6th highest rate of oropharyngeal cancer and the death rate from this cancer in the U.S. That is what led the Alabama state dental director, Dr. [Tommy Johnson](#), to lead the [#WatchYourMouth](#) campaign, a collaborative campaign between the Oral Health Office of the Alabama Department of Public Health and the University of South Alabama Mitchell Cancer Institute. In 2018, Tommy Johnson, DMD, [Alabama Department of Public Health Oral Health Office](#), and Casey L. Daniel, PhD, MPH, University of Alabama Mitchell Cancer Institute, met when attending an Alabama Comprehensive Cancer Control Coalition meeting. Immediately, the common goal to promote the HPV vaccine, focusing particularly on HPV-related cancers of the oral cavity and head and neck, was acknowledged. The campaign features a multifactorial approach targeting dental and medical providers, as well as the general population. Example components of the campaign include: Proclamation signed by Governor; direct mail-outs to Alabama dentists and hygienists; dental professional CE credit development; *Light Up Alabama Red!*, illuminating buildings and other facilities throughout Alabama in red; statewide Spectrum commercial; “My Story” video by Pat Sullivan, oral cancer survivor; tee-shirts and wristbands for UAB dental students, faculty, and ADPH staff emphasizing HPV awareness; and armbands worn by a Minor League baseball team in Birmingham, Alabama. The campaign garnered the attention of the HPV vaccine manufacturer resulting in national and state organization referrals with whom to share our efforts. *Article contributed by Dr. Johnson.*

Oregon releases new dental focused HPV toolkit.

Similar to the Team Maureen toolkit, a [new toolkit that is dental focused](#) was recently developed by the Oregon HPV Alliance Dental Task Force, and in partnership with the Oregon branch of the American Cancer Society and the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute. It was reviewed by a task force of more than 25 dental

professionals, ranging from researchers to local health department staff, the State Dental Director's office, local Dental Care Organizations, private practice and more.

U.S. overdose deaths increased by 15% in 2021. Data from the CDC's [National Center for Health Statistics](#) indicate that there were an estimated 100,306 drug overdose deaths in the United States during 12-month period ending in April 2021, an increase of 28.5% from the 78,056 deaths during the same period the year before.

FDA revises water fluoride concentration. As published in a [Federal Register Notice](#) on April 20th, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is revising the quality standard for bottled water to specify that bottled water to which fluoride is added by the manufacturer may not contain fluoride in excess of 0.7 milligrams per liter (mg/L), which available data suggests provides an optimal balance between the prevention of dental caries and the risk of dental fluorosis. This final rule revises the current allowable levels, which range from 0.8 to 1.7 mg/L, for fluoride in domestically packaged and imported bottled water to which fluoride is added. This action was taken to make the quality standard regulation for fluoride added to bottled water consistent with the [2015 recommendation by the U.S. Public Health Service](#) (PHS) for community water systems that add fluoride for the prevention of dental caries.

August 18, 2022: The Science of Advocacy, ADA webinar.

Effective public policy advocacy can positively shape the world of dental medicine, health care policy, and public health practice. This webinar will offer potential solutions, stemming from cultural cognition studies as well as time-tested lessons from the discipline of Communication Studies, on how to address and overcome politically motivated thinking. Register for this webinar [here](#).

USPHS Chief Dental Officer Key Events



Latest Chief Dental Officer Events Completed

- 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: Attended National Oral Health Conference, Ft. Worth, TX
- April 25-28, 2022: Co-teaching Concepts in Dental Clinic Management, Albuquerque, NM
- April 27, 2022: USPHS quarterly continuing education webinar, "Easy Molar Endo" presented by LCDR Emily Ikahihifo (moderator); open to USPHS dentists and dental hygienists
- 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
- April 29, 2022: 20th meeting of the COVID-19 Public-Private Partner Dental Coordination Group focusing on Healthy People 2030 future directions and the Ending the HIV Epidemic initiative
- May 10, 2022: Presentation to the University of Buffalo dental school, virtual
- May 14, 2022: Provided greetings at 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: Participating in CareQuest-led Pandemic Response Group
- May 20-21, 2022: Keynote 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 7, 2022: Presentation for ASPR TRACIE Speaker Series, Impact of the Pandemic on Oral Health, along with Dr. Ray Cohlmi (ADA), Ann Lynch (ADHA), and LCDR Sayo Adunola (moderator)
- June 8, 2022: Participated in Pan American Health Organization oral health meeting
- June 10, 2022: Keynote address at the Hispanic Dental Association Meeting, Fort Lee, NJ
- June 13, 2022: Collaborative meeting with other federal partners and the Medicaid-Medicare-CHIP State Dental Association, virtual
- June 17, 2022: Participated in last American Dental Education Association Deans Town Hall Meeting
- June 17, 2022: Presentation to the LSU School of Dentistry, via Zoom
- June 20-21, 2022: Santa Fe Group Business Meeting, Arlington, VA
- June 22-24, 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 24, 2022: Last meeting as CDO with the USPHS Dental Professional Advisory Committee
- June 25, 2022: Presentation on national oral health issues at the American Dental Hygienists Association meeting, Louisville, KY
- June 29, 2022: Last quarterly USPHS CDE webinar featuring CAPT Renee Joskow speaking on Oral Health in America
- June 29, 2022: 21st meeting of the Public-Private Partner Oral Health Alliance, transition meeting

Upcoming Chief Dental Officer Events

- *None; terminal leave will begin July 1, 2022, with an expected retirement date of September 1, 2022*

USPHS Chief Dental Officer External Events



April 2, 2022 – Spring Continuing Education Conference of the American College of Dentists (ACD) and the Pierre Fauchard Academy (PFA) in Asheville, North Carolina.

LEFT: Dr. Armyl Banez, PFA International President; Dr. Theresa Gonzalez, ACD Executive Director; and Dr. Richard Jones, ACD President.

LOWER LEFT: Presenting on multi-directional integrated care.

LOWER RIGHT: Surprise induction as a Fellow of the PFA by Dr. Banez, International President, and Dr. Hal Hale, International President-Elect.



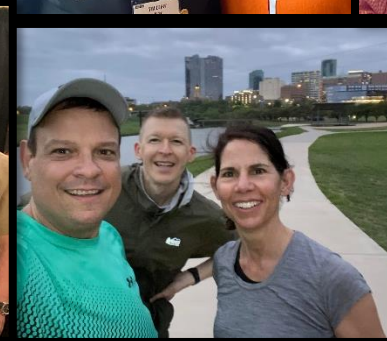
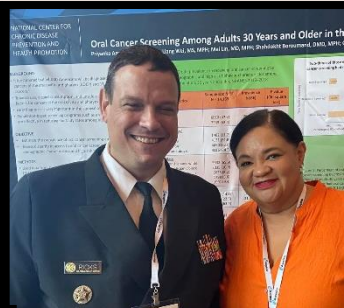
BELOW: April 9th presentation to the mid-year meeting of the American Association of Dental Boards. Pictured with me is Dr. James Sparks, President. Thanks to Dr. Tonia Socha-Mower, Executive Director, for helping set this up.



USPHS Chief Dental Officer External Events



2022 Federal Dental Services Session at the National Oral Health Conference, Ft. Worth, TX: Presenters included Dr. Gretchen Gibson (VHA), Col Scott Irwin (USAF), LTC Peter Drouillard (USA), CAPT Kathi Buss (USN), CDR Tequilla McGahee (USPHS/BOP), and Mr. Casey Hannan, keynote speaker (CDC). Thanks to all of the Services for participating in this annual event!



2022 National Oral Health Conference, Ft. Worth, Texas, April 11-13, 2022

TOP LEFT: I was surprised with a thank you t-shirt from the American Network of Oral Health Coalitions at the conference. I have enjoyed speaking to 26 state oral health coalitions, and thanks to Helen Hawkey, Tanya Dorf Brunner, Gina Sharps, and Bobbi Jo Muto for your support of the USPHS. TOP CENTER: With Dr. Gina Thornton-Evans from CDC, who presented a poster session on oral cancer (April is Oral Cancer Awareness Month). TOP RIGHT: With Dr. Tommy Johnson (Alabama State Dental Director) and Dr. Russ Dunkel (Wisconsin State Dental Director). See Dr. Johnson's article on oral cancer in this newsletter.

BOTTOM LEFT: With the American Dental Association (ADA) Council on Advocacy for Access and Prevention team, the public health arm of the American Dental Association. BOTTOM CENTER: Morning run with CAPT Nathan Mork where we ran into Dr. Patricia Braun, past president of the American Academy of Pediatrics. BOTTOM RIGHT: With Nicole Catral from the ADA, and Annaliese Cothron from the American Institute of Dental Public Health, as we discussed the possibilities of a new initiative called "Give Veterans A Smile" during a roundtable discussion.

USPHS Chief Dental Officer External Events



Concepts in Dental Clinic Management Course, Albuquerque, NM, April 25-29, 2022.

I co-taught a course to new IHS dental directors with CAPTs (Ret.) Steve Tetrev and Rick Champany, two long-time mentors.

American Association for Community Dental Programs, April 29, 2022.

I had the pleasure of participating once again in the annual Federal panel for AACDP, along with Dr. Natalia Chalmers (CMS), CAPT Renee Joskow (NIDCR), and Mr. Casey Hannan (CDC). Thanks to Dr. Myron Allukian for setting up this meeting!



NNOHA Board Meeting, May 14, 2022.

It was an honor providing an overview of the Oral Health in America report to the board of directors of the National Network for Oral Health Access (NNOHA), which represents the nation's safety net dental network. Thanks to Phil Thompson, executive director, for the invitation to speak and to all of these directors for the work they do providing access to affordable dental care for the nation's underserved and vulnerable populations.

USPHS Chief Dental Officer External Events



Tennessee Dental Association Meeting, May 14, 2022, Nashville, TN.

I provided greetings at the annual meeting of TDA on May 14th. BOTTOM: Pictured with Dr. Susan Orwick Barnes, TDA president, and Tennessee state representative Dr. Bob Ramsay.



RIGHT: With Dr. Rhonda Switzer, who leads the Nashville-based Interfaith Dental Clinic, and Dr. Jeannie Beauchamp, president of the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry.



New Hampshire Dental Society Meeting, May 20, 2022.

I traveled to Meredith, NH to provide an overview on current issues in oral health and the importance of bi-directional medical-dental integration. LEFT: With the audience. RIGHT: Pictured with dignitaries from the American Dental Association including Dr. George Shepley, president-elect; Dr. Kathy O'Loughlin, former executive director; and Dr. Richard Huot, former ADA 2nd vice-president.

USPHS Chief Dental Officer External Events



USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium, May 23-26, 2022, Glendale, AZ.

TOP: VIP guests, senior USPHS dental officers, and Category awardees posing with ADM Rachel Levine, Assistant Secretary for Health; RADM Denise Hinton, Deputy Surgeon General; and CAPT Rick Schobitz, Director of Commissioned Corps Headquarters.

TOP RIGHT: With Mary Otto, author of *Teeth: The Story of Beauty, Inequality, and the Struggle for Oral Health in America*, and recipient of the 2022 Surgeon General David Satcher Award.

MIDDLE: Receiving the American Dental Association Presidential Citation on behalf of the Category from Dr. George Shepley, ADA President-Elect.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Speaking with dental hygienist officers who played a key role in the Dental Category Day on May 25th.

BOTTOM LEFT: With my fellow Chief Professional Officers.

USPHS Chief Dental Officer External Events



Hispanic Dental Association Meeting, Fort Lee, NJ, June 10, 2022

TOP LEFT: Providing an overview of Hispanic oral health in America. TOP RIGHT: With leaders from the National Dental Association (LaVette Henderson, Keith Perry, and Cheryl Lee) and Hispanic Dental Association (Anna Munne).

BOTTOM LEFT: With Dr. Manuel Cordero, HDA Chief Executive Officer. BOTTOM RIGHT: With Dr. Neil Gajjar and Dr. Cordero, both past presidents of the Academy of General Dentistry.



Santa Fe Group Meeting, Arlington, VA, June 20-21, 2022

LEFT: With fellow Santa Fe Group Senior Scholars and Fellow and SFG leadership (Dr. Terri Dolan, next to me, president; and Mr. Ralph Fuccillo, far right, vice-president).

RIGHT: Santa Fe Group members, scholars, and fellow present at the meeting.

USPHS Chief Dental Officer External Events



Society of American Indian Dentists Meeting, Isleta Pueblo, NM, June 23, 2022

I had the pleasure of presenting at the annual SAID meeting in New Mexico this past week. Thanks to Dr. Felicia Fontenot, current president, for the invitation to speak.

LEFT: With the iconic RADM (Ret.) George Blue Spruce, the first American Indian dentist.

MIDDLE AND RIGHT: With American Dental Association leaders Dr. Jane Grover and Dr. Steve Geiermann. respectively.



CDO presentations over the past 4 years					
Fiscal Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	Totals
USPHS Agencies	3	7	6	8	24
Organizations	15	23	30	23	91
State Meetings/Coalitions	5	5	9	12	31
Schools/Residency Programs	10	19	17	9	55
Podcasts	0	2	2	0	4
Newspaper Interviews	0	1	1	0	2
Commencement Addresses	0	2	3	1	6
USPHS Agency Site Visits	8	6	0	1	15
Totals	41	65	68	54	228

Above: American Dental Hygienists' Association Meeting, Louisville, KY, June 25, 2022

For my last presentation as USPHS CDO, I presented at the ADHA meeting. I presented ADHA leaders Ann Lynch (thanks for the invitation to speak!), Ann Battrell, and Matt Crespin a USPHS CDO Citation in recognition of their support of the USPHS and of me. I also had a special aide-de-camp for this last presentation, my son Tyler. My very first presentation as CDO back in September 2018 was at Meharry dental school, where my daughter Kristen was a student, so it was fitting that I ended my PHS career with my son.

July 14-17, 2022: National Dental Association Annual Convention, Phoenix, AZ. The 109th annual convention of the National Dental Association will be held July 14-17, 2022 at the Arizona Grand Resort & Spa in Phoenix, AZ. While the room block is now closed, registration is still open. Learn more about this meeting [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](#).

August 26-27, 2022: Southwest Dental Conference, Dallas, TX. This conference hails itself as the premier dental conference in the southwest and is hosted by the Dallas County Dental Society. Up to 16 hours of CDE is available for this conference, held at the Hilton Anatole Dallas. Learn more about this meeting [here](#).

September 14-17, 2022: American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA. The 104th annual meeting of AAOMS will take place at the New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center and Hilton New Orleans Riverside. Learn more about this meeting [here](#).

October 13-15, 2022: SmileCon 2022, Houston, TX. The 2022 Texas Dental Association Meeting, the American Dental Association Annual Meeting, and the 2023 Greater Houston Dental Society's Star of the South Dental Meeting will combine their meetings with SmileCon 2022 in Houston, TX. Learn more about this meeting and register [here](#).

October 27-28, 2022: Annual Mid-Continent Dental Conference, St. Louis, MO. Celebrate 80 years of the Mid-Continent Dental Congress with two days of CE courses and hands-on workshops at this meeting at the St. Louis Union Station. Learn more about this meeting [here](#).

October 27-30, 2022: American Academy of Periodontology, Phoenix, AZ. The 108th annual meeting of AAP will take place at the Phoenix Convention Center. Registration is open now. Learn more about this meeting [here](#).

November 2-5, 2022: American College of Prosthodontists, Austin, TX. The annual meeting of ACP will take place at the JW Marriott in Austin, TX. Learn more about this meeting [here](#).

November 10-12, 2022: Pacific Northwest Dental Conference, Seattle, WA. This conference is hosted by the Washington State Dental Association. Learn more about this meeting [here](#).

November 25-30, 2022: Greater New York Dental Meeting, New York, NY. Registration is now open for the upcoming 98th Annual Greater New York Dental Meeting held at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center. At the 2021 meeting, over 25,000 health care professionals attended. There is no pre-registration fee. Learn more about this meeting [here](#).

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

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Four years ago, I accepted the position of chief dental officer not quite knowing what the job entailed or how involved it would be. It has been quite a ride, and I have enjoyed every minute of it! Along the way, I have met many oral health and public health professionals who have selflessly devoted their time to improve the oral health and overall health of all Americans.

We have all been shaped by the COVID-19 pandemic, natural and human-made tragedies both domestically and abroad, and uncertainties about our own future. We have shown resiliency as oral health professionals by keeping the fight to improve oral health going, whether in our own individual practices/clinics or in other ways such as volunteerism, teaching, research, advocacy, or taking on leadership positions.

But there is much work for us to do. We live in the greatest country on the planet, yet a large portion of our population cannot attain affordable, culturally competent, geographically available, quality oral health care. We must do better and think outside the box about ways to achieve oral health equity for all, integrate oral health and overall health better, and work in unison to achieve our goals to improve health.

It has been the deepest honor of my professional career to serve the past four years as the U.S. Public Health Service Chief Dental Officer. I would like to acknowledge all of you, but I knew that if I tried to list names, it would probably add another 20 pages to this newsletter, so here are broad acknowledgments:

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- Thanks to my IHS team – Dr. Lozon, CAPT Mork – for their unparalleled support over the past 4 years.
- Thanks to all of the members of the USPHS Oral Health Coordinating Committee and the Dental Professional Advisory Committee over the past 4 years for your dedicated service, leadership, and support.
- Thanks to the agency dental leaders who supported and advised me over the past 4 years, and for their outstanding leadership in their respective agencies.
- Thanks to the eight former USPHS chief dental officers, several retired dental officers, the current and former other category CPOs, and those in OSG and OASH for their mentorship and support over the past 4 years.
- Thanks to the many leaders in the profession and in public health, both domestically and internationally, who have worked alongside me over the past 4 years to try to improve oral health in the U.S. and globally.
- Thanks to my senior advisors and all of the USPHS dental officers and to all of those who have selflessly served in some leadership role in the Dental Category over the past 4 years.



Thanks especially to my wonderful family for their support and their sacrifices over the past four years and during my career, including my wife of 31 years, Julie; daughter, Dr. Kristen Ricks Puckett; son, doctoral candidate Tyler Ricks; son-in-law Thurman Puckett; and granddaughter Arabella Rose Puckett. I'm looking forward to spending more time with all of them!