

April 23, 2019

Jeffery Goldberg  
Editor in Chief  
The Atlantic  
600 New Hampshire, NW  
Washington, DC 20037

Dear Editor,

On behalf of the Academy of General Dentistry (AGD), I want to express our sincere shock over the alleged unnecessary provision of dental procedures and fraudulent billing practices by Roger Lund, DDS, which served as the anchor for your recent article, "The Truth About Dentistry." As an organization that places the health of patients first and foremost, we are dismayed by Dr. Lund's reported conduct. We also commend Dr. Zeidler's perseverance in unearthing it and undertaking the difficult task of informing the patients.

The truth about Dr. Lund is not the "truth about dentistry." Each and every day, dentists around the world work hard to establish trusting relationships with our patients to maintain their oral health. We partner with a full range of health professionals to ensure our patients' overall health, and we strive to be productive members, advocates and employers in our communities.

The mouth is the gateway to the body, and consequently, very often, the first sign of systemic disease occurs in the mouth. As general dentists, we are attuned to the overall medical condition and total well-being of our patients. Every day, dentists save lives when they identify and treat maladies of the mouth such as gum disease and screen to discover pre-cancerous or cancerous lesions and refer the affected patients to an oral surgeon. We help to prevent cardiovascular problems when we perform routine blood pressure evaluations and find patients with hypertension and refer them immediately to their physicians.

Organized dentistry and its members are working together to advance the profession of dentistry and find answers to difficult questions such as those surrounding access to care issues. We work diligently through partnerships to bridge the gap between the dental and medical communities, because oral health is a definitive medical practice. We utilize clinical guidelines and peer-reviewed research, much of it published in *The Journal of General Dentistry*, to ensure we are practicing to the highest standards.

We want your readers to know that they should be informed decision makers about their oral care and should not be afraid to raise questions or concerns with their dentists as they do with their medical providers. It is important that they fully understand diagnosis and treatment options along with payment and other options. Communication between dentists and patients is paramount in providing care that is excellent and understood. To paint the profession of dentistry in an unfair light does a tremendous disservice to both the dental profession and the patients that we serve. One misguided dentist does not represent the excellent and caring service that is provided each day to our patients across the globe.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Neil J. Gajjar', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Neil J. Gajjar, DDS, MAGD  
President, Academy of General Dentistry