



USPHS Chief Dental Officer Newsletter #46: March 14, 2020

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*A newsletter provided to USPHS dentists and key partners
to provide updates of USPHS Dental Category and CDO activities*



COVID-19 and Dental Practice: A Message from the CDC Division of Oral Health

Note: The following message was distributed by the CDC Division of Oral Health on March 10, 2020. Please refer to the CDC website links if you have any questions.

As the expanding global outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) continues, the federal government continues to work closely with state, local, tribal, and territorial partners, as well as public health partners across the globe to respond to this public health threat. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Division of Oral Health (DOH) is diligently working with CDC's Emergency Operations Center to develop tailored COVID-19 guidance for dental health care personnel (DHCP). Once this guidance is available online, DOH and partners will promote these resources as well as any related events (e.g., informational webinar, [Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity](#)) to the dental community.

It's unknown at this time what the full impact of COVID-19 will be in a U.S., however CDC is preparing as if this were the beginning of a pandemic. All healthcare facilities should take steps now to

prepare for the possibility of a widespread and severe COVID-19 outbreak to prepare their practices and protect both their patients and staff. CDC urges providers to be familiar with the information on CDC's [COVID-19](#) website. Specific information is available for [Healthcare Professionals](#), including a [Healthcare Professional Preparedness Checklist](#), instructions on [Evaluating and Reporting Persons Under Investigation \(PUI\)](#), and a page on [What Healthcare Personnel Should Know](#). DHCP can also consider signing up for communications from CDC's [Health Alert Network](#), which is CDC's primary method of sharing cleared information about urgent public health incidents.

Standard precautions, including the use of proper personal protective equipment, should be followed when caring for any patient. These practices are designed to both protect DHCP and prevent DHCP from spreading infections among patients. CDC's guidelines note that, if not clinically urgent, DHCP should consider postponing non-emergency or elective dental procedures in patients who have signs or symptoms of respiratory illness. For procedures which are considered clinically urgent, dental health care personnel and medical providers should work together to determine an appropriate facility for treatment. The urgency of a procedure is a decision based on clinical judgement and should be made on a case-by-case basis.



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Updates on Upcoming Dental Meetings

Note: Many of you have asked me for updates about upcoming conferences and meetings. Below is an update of national dental meetings scheduled for March and April 2020.

2020 ADEA Annual Session & Exhibition cancelled.

On March 9th, the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) made the decision to cancel the ADEA Annual Session & Exhibition and related ADEA events planned for March 14-17, 2020 at the Gaylord National Harbor Resort & Convention Center in National Harbor, Maryland. ADEA leaders explained their decision in a letter addressed to members: "...we feel that it is our responsibility to safeguard the health of all honored guests, students, attendees, presenters, exhibitors and staff who contribute to this important event." For more information, click on this [link](#).

2020 IADR/AADR/CADR General Session cancelled.

On March 10th, the 98th General Session of the International Association of Dental Research (IADR), 49th Annual Meeting of the American Association of Dental Research (AADR), and the 44th Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association of Dental Research (CADR) were also canceled due to COVID-19. In announcing the decision, IADR leaders stated: "Based on the numerous travel bans and advisories implemented by Governments and Governmental agencies, institutions and corporations, and to protect public health, it is clear that canceling is the right course of action." To read more, click [here](#).

2020 Hinman Meeting cancelled. On March 11th, organizers cancelled the 108th Thomas P. Hinman Dental Meeting scheduled for March 19-21, 2020 at the Georgia World Congress Center and Omni Hotel at CNN Center. In cancelling the meeting, organizers said that "in light of factors in the U.S. and around the world, it became very clear that cancelling was the right thing to do." To read the entire statement, click [here](#).

2020 National Oral Health Conference (NOHC)

cancelled. On March 14th, conference organizers from the Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors (ASTDD) and the American Association of Public Health Dentistry (AAPHD) cancelled the upcoming NOHC, the premier dental public health meeting in the U.S., scheduled for April 6-8 at the San Diego Sheraton Hotel & Marina. As you may remember, there was also a Federal Dental Services session scheduled for April 5th. In cancelling the event, ASTDD and AAPHD said: "Please stay safe and healthy during the coming months and take care of one another!" For more information, to to the [NOHC website](#).

American Association of Community Dental Programs (AACDP) moved to virtual.

The AACDP Conference, which was scheduled as part of the NOHC on April 5th, has been moved to a virtual meeting consisting of several sessions. In announcing this decision on March 12th, the planning committee based their decision on guidance from the California Department of Public Health that large gatherings should be postponed or cancelled. More information on this conference and the virtual schedule will be shared in the coming weeks. Go to their [website](#) to check for updates.

Beyond Flexner Conference to be rescheduled to 2021.

On March 13th, it was announced that the [Beyond Flexner Conference](#), originally scheduled for April 20-22 at the Hyatt Regency Phoenix in Phoenix, Arizona, will be rescheduled. According to the website, all registration fees will be automatically applied to the rescheduled conference next year, but for those who did already pay the fee and will not attend in 2021, they can request a full refund. Click on the above link to read the entire statement about this event.

ACL Grants Promote Nutrition Projects

Contributed by Phantane Sprowls, ACL Representative, USPHS Oral Health Coordinating Committee

The Administration for Community Living (ACL) plans to award approximately 10 cooperative agreements to domestic public or private non-profit entities for a 36 month project period, pending the availability of funding. This funding opportunity is for competitive grants to be awarded under the Older Americans Act (OAA) Title IV authority to support the demonstration and documentation of innovative projects that enhance the quality, effectiveness, and other proven outcomes of nutrition programs and services within the aging services network (i.e., State Units on Aging, Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) and local partners).

Applicants must provide measurable project and participant level outcomes. Outcomes can include, but are not limited to; increased collaboration with local health care entities/Indian Health Services, improved well-being in the OAA target population - particularly those that benefit from the senior nutrition program, decreased health care utilization and/or need for costly institutional care, and

increased access to benefits such as food assistance and opportunities for social connectedness.

We invite projects that will look to promote the bidirectional relationship between diet/nutrition and oral health in older adults.

An innovation funded through this announcement must:

- Include the introduction of a new product, service, or process that has strong potential for replication by the aging services network using OAA funding; **or**
- Include the introduction of a significant enhancement to an existing product, service, or process that has strong potential for replication by the aging services network using OAA funding.

Applicants must be an OAA Title III recipient, or have a signed letter of commitment from a key partner that receives OAA Title III funds. The grant forecast can be found by clicking [here](#).

CMCS Launches Childhood Caries Webinar Series

Contributed by Andrew Snyder, CMS Representative, USPHS Oral Health Coordinating Committee

The Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services (CMCS) launched the “Advancing Prevention and Reducing Childhood Caries in Medicaid and CHIP Learning Collaborative” to support state Medicaid and Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) agencies’ efforts to improve children’s oral health. [Learn More: Advancing Prevention and Reducing Childhood Caries in Medicaid and CHIP Learning Collaborative](#).

The Learning Collaborative consists of two parts:

1. A webinar series beginning in March 2020 and
2. An affinity group beginning in May 2020.

CMCS invites you to the first webinar of the Advancing Prevention and Reducing Childhood

Caries in Medicaid and CHIP Learning Collaborative webinar series, “Improving Children’s Oral Health Using Fluoride Varnish in Non-Dental Settings” on **Thursday, April 2, 2020 from 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. EST**. This webinar will introduce successful approaches for using fluoride varnish in non-dental settings to improve the oral health of Medicaid and CHIP-enrolled children. Presenters will share their experiences at the state and practice-levels of using fluoride varnish in non-dental settings and discuss how to leverage fluoride varnish programs as a pathway to connect Medicaid and CHIP beneficiaries to a system of care that addresses their oral health needs.

Click [here](#) to register for this webinar.

Indian Health Service Participates in Give Kids A Smile®

Note: All photos used in this article were accompanied by signed HHS photo consent forms.

The [Indian Health Service Division of Oral Health](#) partnered with the [American Dental Association](#) (ADA) the week of February 3-8, 2020 for the first time to promote [Give Kids A Smile® \(GKAS®\)](#) throughout the IHS. Working under a historic memorandum of agreement between the federal agency and the nation's largest dental organization, 115 different federal and tribal dental programs participated in this first collaboration. The focus of this first-ever effort for the IHS was on prevention and early intervention of dental disease in the 13-15 year-old age group, matching the age group that is the focus of other IHS national oral health initiatives in 2020.

The events kicked off on February 5, 2020 at the [Choctaw Health Center](#) in Philadelphia, Mississippi. As co-lead of the initiative, I was on hand to provide introductory remarks to kick off the national initiative and was joined by Dr. Mark Donald, ADA Speaker of the House of Delegates; Briana Rowland and David Burger from the ADA; Jerry Walters from Henry Schein, Inc., one of two national sponsors of GKAS®, Dr. Angela Filtzen, Mississippi state dental director; Dr. Beverly Cotton, Nashville Area IHS Director; Captain Joe Park, Nashville Area Dental Officer; and the Honorable Cyrus Ben, Chief of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. Following

remarks by the various dignitaries and the tribal chief signing a proclamation for the event, Dr. Park and I joined the Choctaw dental staff including Dr. Philip Evans and Dr. Neva Eklund to screen youth at four tribally-operated middle schools.

Below is a sampling of what some of the IHS and tribal programs did for their GKAS® Day.

Choctaw Dental Program, Philadelphia, Mississippi

Over the course of about five hours spread out over two school days, we – Dr. Philip Evans, Dr. Neva Eklund, CAPT Joe Park, and me, along with Choctaw dental hygienists and dental assistants – provided screenings, fluoride varnish, and oral health education to over 500 tribal youth. “I really enjoyed the experience and was glad to help give youth a smile,” said CAPT Park of his efforts.



Yakama Indian Health Dental, Yakama, Washington

Dr. Evan White and his team provided care to almost 40 children and their families on their GKAS Day on February 7th. Services included open access exams, fluoride varnish applications, sealants, nutritional counseling, oral health education, and silver diamine fluoride treatment to arrest caries. Dr. White summarized his program's participation: “It was a busy and uplifting day for both the staff and



the families! Our clinic was grateful to be a part of the organized national effort.”



Nimkee Memorial Wellness Center, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan.

This tribal program taught children about oral health through a variety of methods including a large tooth model and string as floss, a clay play box, and through a tooth fairy teaching children how to brush.



Tohono O’odham Nation, Sells, Arizona.

This tribal program held their GKAS event on two days starting on February 4th. In addition to screening 25 children, the program staff provided nutritional guidance for health eating habits and food choices, coloring books, face painting, and more. Sylvia Carbajal-Leon, RDH, the lead organizer of the program, said staff were very excited in putting the extra effort to promote GKAS: “Next year we plan to participate again and make this an annual tradition for the Tohono O’odham Nation.”



Jicarilla Service Unit, Dulce, New Mexico

This dental program in northern New Mexico provided screenings, fluoride varnish, and oral hygiene instructions to numerous children. Commander Brian Talley, a pediatric dentist who provides care at three dental programs in the Four Corners area, said that he found participating – and as an Area Dental Officer encouraging other programs to participate – in GKAS to be “rewarding as an oral health professional.”



Quentin N. Burdick Memorial Health Care Facility, Belcourt, North Dakota.

This program participated in GKAS by providing in-classroom oral health care discovery learning activities at a day school on the Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation. Activities included a science experiment where children identified changes to eggs soaks in soda versus a fluoride mouthwash. Children were also provided a toothbrushing calendar to decorate and take home to use during February, National Children’s Dental Health Month.



Fort Belknap Service Unit, Montana.

This dental program had a very successful GKAS Day, providing oral hygiene instructions and fluoride varnish to almost 300 children. Said Michael Moore, RDH, champion of the event: "This event was fun for everyone – children, families, and our staff!"



Acoma-Canoncito-Laguna Hospital Dental Program, San Fidel, New Mexico.

This dental program provided preventive services to almost 1,500 children and youth during their GKAS event, including over 1,000 dental sealants placed! Below is a picture of some of their energetic staff.



While some IHS and tribal programs haven't completed data entry, final numbers show the impact of this IHS-ADA collaboration. At least 3,400 children received diagnostic, preventive, or restorative services from over 250 dentists and volunteers in 115 different federal and tribal programs, with over 2,500 children receiving fluoride varnish, over 3,000 sealants being placed, and almost 3,000 children receiving oral hygiene instructions. Combined, these services totaled approximately a half a million dollars in dental care to this underserved population.

The IHS also used this collaboration to help highlight some of the recent successes of the oral health program: for the first time, in 2018 the IHS showed a measurable decrease in caries experience and untreated decay rates in 1-5 year-old children. Accompanied by a similar decrease in dental disease among 6-9 year-old children, these improvements in oral health among American Indian and Alaska Native children show that the focus on prevention and early intervention of dental disease in this population by IHS, tribal, and IHS-funded urban dental programs has paid off, although there are still significant oral health disparities in this population.



Visits to Nebraska, Missouri Highlight SGROH

On February 10th and 11th I had the pleasure of visiting Nebraska again, this time to highlight the forthcoming Surgeon General's Report on Oral Health (SGROH) at two dental schools and in a meeting with state health officials. On February 10th, accompanied by host CAPT (Ret.) Charles "Fritz" Craft, state dental director of Nebraska, I traveled to Omaha, Nebraska to speak with about 75 students and faculty at [Creighton University School of Dentistry](#). Created in 1904, Creighton SOD has trained more than 5,000 dentists, and students provide care to more than 14,000 patients at the school each year. Following the presentation, Dr. Mark Latta, dental school dean (below) gave me a tour of the brand new school building that opened last year.



Following the Creighton meeting, Dr. Craft and I briefly met with RADM (Ret.) Ali Kahn (below), dean



of the [University of Nebraska Medical Center \(UNMC\) College of Public Health](#) in Omaha. Dr. Kahn shared with me his experiences working in the USPHS and at CDC as well his experiences as part of the WHO Ebola Response Team.

After traveling to Lincoln, Dr. Craft and I visited the [Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department](#), where I held a question and answer session with health department staff on issues related to the Surgeon General's Report on Oral Health and the Surgeon General's priorities, followed by a tour of the facility by Gwendy Meginnis, RDH (below), manager of dental health and nutrition services. This health department, with 11 contract dentists, provided over 13,000 dental visits and is different in that they employ 10 interpreters for Spanish, Kurdish, Farsi, Arabic, Karen, Burmese, and Thai. The health department also has a large community outreach program providing dental screenings and fluoride varnish applications at 47 elementary schools in Lincoln, Nebraska and three rural schools in the county.



On February 11, I spoke at the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services to a multi-disciplinary group of state health leaders. In addition to speaking to the group about the SGROH, I was able to spend time talking about opportunities in integrating oral health and overall health (medical-dental integration). While there, I met briefly with CAPT Bryan Buss, a veterinary officer

assigned to Nebraska DHHS and working as an epidemiologist with the CDC Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS). Below is a picture of us (he is right of me in the picture) along with other Nebraska leadership including Mark Pyle (far left), deputy director of the state office of public health, and Dr. Gary Anthone, state chief medical officer (2nd from left).



Finally, to conclude my Nebraska visit, I visited the [UNMC College of Dentistry](#) in Lincoln. After speaking to about 100 students about the SGROH (picture on top right), the dental school dean, Dr. Janet Guthmiller, provided me with a tour where I experienced advanced technology that the school offers. I was very impressed with some of the high-tech equipment at this school including an amazing interactive computerized wall that displayed multiple documents, projects and websites all at once. I was able to learn about 3-D denture printing as well, and had an interesting experience in using



their virtual reality equipment to prep a tooth, an experience that felt real (below).



On March 5th, I traveled to Jefferson City, Missouri to deliver a keynote on the SGROH to the [Missouri Coalition for Oral Health](#). This statewide network of oral health advocates has made significant gains in improving oral health in the state, from supporting the reinstatement of a state dental director after a 10-year absence to advocating for Medicaid dental coverage for adults, which has benefitted 350,000 Missouri adults in the past four years and greatly reduced the total health expenditures in the state by cutting emergency department visits for dental issues. Thanks to Gary Harbison and his team for inviting me to learn more about this state program. To learn more about this coalition, click on the above link. Pictured below with me at the meeting are RADM (Ret.) Bill Maas, former CDO; Dr. John Dane, MO state dental director, Mr. Harbison; and Dr. Johnny Johnson, president of the American Fluoridation Society.



From the USPHS Dental Professional Advisory Committee (DePAC)

The 20-member Dental Professional Advisory Committee (DePAC) provides advice and consultation to the Surgeon General of the U.S. Public Health Service and to the Chief Dental Officer on issues related to professional practices and personnel activities of Civil Service and Commissioned Corps Dentists.

New DePAC Member Profile: LCDR Sayo Adunola

Lieutenant Commander Sayo Adunola is a new addition to the DePAC team, serving as the Chair of the Minority Issues Subcommittee.

LCDR Adunola received her dual degree, Doctor of Dental Surgery and Master of Public Health from the University of Maryland School of Dentistry and School of Medicine in 2014. In 2015, she completed a Dental Public Health Residency at the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR). She commissioned to the USPHS as a Public Health Analyst at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Minority



Health (OMH), in June 2016. At OMH, LCDR Adunola managed the Oral Health Equity portfolio.

In April 2017, she began her current position as a Senior Public Health Analyst at the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), HIV/AIDS Bureau (HAB), Division of Community HIV/AIDS Program (DCHAP). DCHAP oversees the administration of Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) Parts C, D, and F Dental. The program provides comprehensive HIV related primary care and support services for those individuals with HIV who do not have sufficient health care coverage or financial resources. She currently manages a portfolio of 19 programs, providing care to over 10,000 clients in local communities, totaling over \$7.5 million in federal funds. She is one of two oral health subject matter experts in the Bureau with over 60 RWHAP Part F Dental recipients. LCDR Adunola enjoys reading, traveling, and spending time with her family.

New DePAC Member Profile: LCDR Dane McClurg

Lieutenant Commander Dane McClurg joined the U.S. Public Health Service in 2013 after having worked in an FQHC and being a National Health Service Corps member. He has previously served as the DePAC Executive Secretary and has been a member of the Retention and Readiness and Deployment workgroups. Currently he is serving as the co-chair for the Communication Workgroup.

He graduated from the Loma Linda University School of Dentistry in 2009. LCDR McClurg served as a dental officer for four years at the U.S. Coast Guard Training Center in Yorktown, Virginia. Most recently he has been the Local Dental Unit Chief at the Northwest ICE Processing Center in Tacoma, WA

working with the Immigration Health Service Corps. LCDR McClurg completed his MPH and Dental Public Health Residency at A.T. Still University, graduating in 2019. He successfully challenged the written examination of the American Board of Dental Public Health and is currently Board Eligible. Outside of work, he enjoys scuba diving, tennis and golf.



New DePAC Member Profile: CDR Joseph Collins

Commander Joseph Collins was just elected into the DePAC voting membership as Chair of the Mentoring Workgroup. This group serves the dental community in providing guidance and insight for career progression and matching dentists as



mentors and protégés. CDR Collins enjoyed his experience with mentors who guided him in past years and the opportunity to pass this along to others after becoming a mentor. He appreciated his past experience working as a

volunteer for this and other DePAC workgroups, and he advises anyone interested in taking advantage of this program to [sign up](#).

Like other dentists serving in the United States Public Health Services (USPHS), CDR Collins took interest in serving underserved populations. His

first assignment was in Belcourt, North Dakota. After two years, he was accepted into an Advanced General Practice Residency in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Upon graduation, he remained with the Cherokee Western Band an additional two and a half years. This was followed by an agency change to the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP), where he now serves as Chief Dental Officer in Pollock, LA. While this was very different than his experience with Indian Health Services (IHS), CDR Collins enjoys and recommends both agencies based on his experience. He is also continuing his education primarily through USPHS and the Academy of General Dentistry (AGD).

In his free time, he enjoys gardening, hiking, and activities with his church, where he recently started a monthly program aimed at helping people overcome addictions. He states: “whether serving in a remote location or large city, we can all exert a positive influence in our communities. Dentists are esteemed as leaders, and having this positive stigma improves patient compliance.



NASEM releases report on review of draft NTP monograph. On March 5th, the [National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine](#) (NASEM) released a review of the draft National Toxicology Program’s (NTP) monograph: *Systemic Review of Fluoride Exposure and Neurodevelopmental and Cognitive Health Effects*. NTP asked the National Academies to review the monograph to “ensure the integrity of its report.”

In its draft monograph, NTP had concluded that “Fluoride is presumed to be a cognitive neurodevelopmental hazard to humans. This conclusion is based on a consistent pattern of findings in human studies across several different populations showing that higher fluoride exposure

is associated with decreased IQ or other cognitive impairments in children.”

In its review, NASEM identified several issues associated with the protocol that NTP used in their systematic review. NASEM’s summary, which can be found [here](#), states: “Given the issues raised by the committee regarding the analysis of various aspects of some studies and the analysis, summary, and presentation of the data in the monograph, the committee does not find that NTP has adequately supported its conclusion. That finding does not mean that the conclusion is incorrect; rather, further analysis or reanalysis as noted in the present report is needed to support conclusions in the monograph.”

NIDCR requests input on research initiative on dental fear and anxiety. The National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) requests your input on a proposed concept (research initiative) presented at the January 2020 [National Advisory Dental and Craniofacial Research Council](#) meeting. Please review the [Characterizing Causal Mechanisms to Prevent Dental Fear and Anxiety](#) research initiative for consideration as a Fiscal Year 2021 funding opportunity. NIDCR invites input about a concept's merit, from research and clinical practice communities, industry, interested organizations, and the public at large. To provide input and read the full initiative description, please visit [NIDCR Requests Input on the January 2020 Proposed Research Initiative](#). Comments are due by today, Friday, March 13th.

World Health Organization releases "Ending Childhood Dental Caries" implementation manual. In February, the World Health Organization (WHO) released an implementation manual designed to inform and support chief dental officers and stakeholders about plans for early childhood caries prevention and control. This manual provides guidance on diet, fluoride exposure, arresting carious lesions, health education and community engagement, and involving primary care teams in prevention. Click [here](#) to read this manual.

New study explores overprescribing of opioids. A study published in the January 27th issue of the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* concluded that between one in four and one in two opioids prescribed to adult dental patients are overprescribed. Researchers performed an analysis of 542,958 dental visits between 2011 and 2015. 29% of prescribed opioids exceeded the recommended morphine equivalents for appropriate pain management, and 53% exceeded the recommended days' supply. Patients aged 18-34 years, men, patients residing in the southern U.S., and those receiving oxycodone were most

likely to have opioids prescribed inappropriately. To read more, click [here](#).

Many ED patients are prescribed antibiotics and opioids. A study published in the March 2020 issue of the Journal of the American Dental Association, available online [here](#), concluded that antibiotics and opioids are frequently prescribed during emergency department (ED) visits for dental conditions. Looking at data from 2012 to 2014, researchers concluded that Medicaid beneficiaries were more than three times as likely to have dental-related ED visits (4.9%) compared to those with commercial insurance (1.3%). The authors concluded that improved access to preventive and acute oral health care may reduce unnecessary prescriptions in both population groups.

Website ranks states' dental health. Personal finance website WalletHub recently examined oral health based upon 26 different available metrics including access to care, dentists per capita, sugar-sweetened beverage consumption, and more. According to their rankings, Utah, the District of Columbia, Oregon, Massachusetts, and Montana had the most dentists per capita, while Oklahoma, Mississippi, Kentucky, Idaho, and Louisiana had the fewest dentists per capita. To view the rankings by category or overall, click [here](#).

New DentaQuest report describes impact of out-of-pocket dental expenses in the elderly. A new report published by DentaQuest® Partnership for Oral Health Advancement, using data from the Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS), found that among all Medicare and Medicare Advantage recipients, at least 75% of total dental costs were paid for out-of-pocket, contributing to the financial strain that can force older adults to choose between dental care and other health services they need. Furthermore, only four percent of those covered by traditional Medicare had dental costs covered by Medicare. To read the entire report, click [here](#).

NHSC loan repayment accepting applications until April 23rd. The National Health Service Corps (NHSC) opened its application for three loan repayment programs: the [NHSC Loan Repayment Program](#), the [NHSC Substance Use Disorder Workforce Loan Repayment Program](#) and the [NHSC Rural Community Loan Repayment Program](#). Visit the [NHSC website](#) to review the Application and Program Guidance (APG) documents and learn more about eligibility and specific disciplines. Each program has a different APG with the detailed information you need to apply, including eligibility requirements, site information, documentation, and service requirements.

Perfluorodecanoic acid may be associated with dental caries in children. A study in mid-2019 used serological data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey in examining the relationship between seven perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances and dental caries. One of the substances, perfluorodecanoic acid, was associated with dental caries experience in children, with an adjusted odds ratio of 1.54. Perfluorodecanoic acid is a breakdown product of stain- and grease-proof coatings on food packaging, couches, carpets, etc. To read this study, click [here](#).

New systematic review shows impact of e-cigarettes on oral health. A new systematic review published in *Critical Reviews in Toxicology* in February showed that e-cigarettes do have an impact on oral health. While the majority of symptoms were relatively minor and temporary, “E-cigarette exposure increased the risk for deteriorating periodontal, dental and gingival health as well as changes to the oral microbiome. Extensive dental damage as a result of e-cigarette exposures were described in case reports. Components of e-cigarette vapor have known cytotoxic, genotoxic, and carcinogenic properties.” Authors concluded by saying that more well-designed studies are needed to investigate oral health outcomes of e-cigarette use. To read more about this study, click [here](#).

NASEM releases report on temporomandibular disorders. On March 12th, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine (NASEM) released an interdisciplinary report on temporomandibular disorders (TMDs). According to the report, TMDs are a set of more than 30 health disorders associated with both the temporomandibular joints and the muscles and tissues of the jaw, and they can often overlap with medical conditions including headaches, fibromyalgia, back pain and irritable bowel syndrome. The report describes the impact of TMDs on the individuals and their families: “Everyday activities, including eating and talking, are often difficult for people with TMDs, and many of them suffer with severe chronic pain due to this condition. Common social activities that most people take for granted, such as smiling, laughing, and kissing, can become unbearable. This dysfunction and pain, and its associated suffering, take a terrible toll on affected individuals, their families, and their friends.” Download a free copy of the report [here](#).

Childhood negative experiences increase risk of tooth loss in later life. A 25-year longitudinal study published several months ago in the *Journal of the American Dental Association (JADA)* tied negative dental experiences (NDEs) in childhood to tooth loss in adults. Following 6,154 people over the course of 25 years, researchers found that when compared to those without NDEs in childhood, those with at least one NDE had 2.34 the odds of experiencing tooth loss in adulthood, and those with multiple NDEs in childhood had 8.79 times the odds of experiencing tooth loss as an adult. To read the study, click [here](#).

Severity of dental fluorosis declines during adolescence. A study published in the *Journal of Dental Research* concluded just that. Researchers examined subjects at ages 9, 13, 17, and 23 as part of the Iowa Fluoride Study. Overall, fluorosis severity, which was initially mild to moderate, tended to decline during adolescence and young adulthood. To read this study, click [here](#).

Upcoming Deadlines & Events of Interest

Note: Listing of events and organizational information does not, and should not, imply endorsement of these events or organizations. If you know of other events which should be listed, please let me know. Please understand that some events are subject to change based on the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

NEW: March 20, 2020 – World Oral Health Day. Organized by the FDI World Dental Federation in 2013, World Oral Health Day (WOHD) is an annual event celebrated in multiple countries around the world to raise awareness of issues around oral health. The date of 3/20 is a play on the numbers:

1. Seniors must have a total of 20 natural teeth to be considered healthy;
2. Children should possess 20 baby teeth; and
3. Health adults have a total of 32 teeth and 0 dental cavities (hence, 3-20).

The 2020 theme is “Unite for Mouth Health.” Oral health professionals can get involved in this campaign in one of six ways:

- Promote WOHD by adding www.worldoralhealthday.org to the homepage of your dental practice
- Organize an “open day” and invite people for free dental check-ups
- Submit your event to the [WOHD Events Map](#)
- Print the WOHD Dental Practice [poster](#) and hang it in your office
- Print copies of the [good oral care checklists](#) and distribute to patients
- Use the two campaign hashtags in your promotion and join the global conversation #SayAhh #WOHD20

For more information on WOHD, click [here](#).

NEW: March 2020 – National Nutrition Month. Each March is National Nutrition Month, and the theme of the 2020 celebration is “Eat Right, Bite by Bite.” The overall message is that quality nutrition isn’t and shouldn’t be restrictive and that small changes to diet can have a cumulative effect on health over time. Nutrition and oral health are

intertwined, as diet affects oral health and the mouth is important in how people eat. To learn more about National Nutrition Month, click [here](#), and to learn more about the relationship between nutrition and oral health, click [here](#). This month is a great time for oral health professionals to really focus on nutritional counseling with their patients.

NEW: March 31, 2020 - Healthy People 2030 Launch. On March 31, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will unveil the latest edition of Healthy People! The event is at the George Washington University, and you can attend in person or via webcast. Healthy People 2030 is a set of science-based, 10-year national objectives for improving health and well-being in the United States. At the event, they’ll highlight the new Healthy People 2030 goals and objectives, including the oral health objectives, and provide an overview of the development process. They’ll also feature a panel discussion showcasing how select organizations and communities have successfully used Healthy People to promote health and address the social determinants of health, health equity, and well-being. To register for this important event, which will be held from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. ET, click [here](#)! To re-review the 2020 objectives, click [here](#).

NEW: April 3-May 2, 2020 – National Hispanic Health Conference, Washington, D.C. Conference registration is open for the National Hispanic Health Conference scheduled at the Washington Marriott Wardman Park in Washington D.C. April 30 – May 3, 2020. The conference, a collaboration between the National Hispanic Medical Association and the Hispanic Dental Association (HDA), will feature topics including patient-centered care, the opioid crisis, women’s health, immigration health, and more. I plan to be there to discuss the Surgeon General’s Report on Oral Health as well. Early registration ends March 28th and regular registration ends April 28th; the room block ends March 31st. To learn more about this conference, including a detailed agenda, click [here](#).

Upcoming Deadlines & Events of Interest



NEW: June 15-18, 2020 – 55th USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium, Glendale, Arizona. With a theme of “Advancing the Health and Safety of our Nation,” the 55th annual USPHS Scientific & Training Symposium will be held at the Renaissance Phoenix Glendale Hotel in Glendale, Arizona. The lineup of distinguished speakers includes Admiral Brett Giroir, Assistant Secretary for Health; Vice Admiral Jerome Adams, 20th Surgeon General of the U.S.; and Vice Admiral (Ret.) Richard Carmona, 17th Surgeon General of the U.S. For more information on the overall meeting, click [here](#).

Dental Category Day will be held on June 17, 2020. This one-day Category Day meeting is open to all dentists working in the USPHS and USPHS agencies including Commissioned Corps, Civil Service, and tribal dentists. The agenda for Category Day is as follows:

- Oral Surgery - “Oral Surgery Tips for the General Dentist”
- Periodontics - “The Oral-Systemic Link”
- Ethics - “Ethical Considerations in Dentistry”
- PHS Officer Stories - “Delivering Dentistry in Deployments”
- DePAC CPO - “Update on the Surgeon General’s Priorities”
- Satcher Lecture - Manuel Cordero, DDS, MAGD, Past President, AGD, Executive Director, HDA

Hotel and Symposium registration is available now by clicking [here](#). Those in the local area and Civil Service dentists can register for \$70 for Category Day only by clicking [here](#) and selecting the State/Local Worker rate. Due to high demand for lodging, we encourage everyone to register as soon as possible.

NEW: June 24-27, 2020 – Society of American Indian Dentists Meeting, Portland, Oregon. The Society of American Dentists (SAID) annual meeting will be held in Portland, Oregon June 24-27. The host hotel will be the Residence Inn Portland Downtown/RiverPlace, while the conference will be held at the A-dec Education Center and at the Oregon Health Sciences University. Registration and more information about the room block can be found by going to the conference link [here](#).

NEW: July 15-18, 2020 – Academy of General Dentistry Meeting, Las Vegas, Nevada. Course registration is now open for the Academy of General Dentistry (AGD) meeting to be held at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, Nevada July 15-18. The keynote speaker will be Hall of Fame and former Buffalo Bills quarterback – and oral cancer survivor – Jim Kelly. Early bird registration ends April 1st. For more information about the course agenda, registration, and the lodging information, click [here](#).



Index of Major Topics from Past Issues

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Please stay safe, follow the CDC on all COVID-19 matters, and as always,
thank you for all you do to improve oral health of those you serve.

Rear Admiral Tim Ricks, USPHS Chief Dental Officer
In Officio Salutis ("In the Service of Health")