

ADA Council on Governmental Affairs (CGA) Report to NYSDA CGA  
May 21, 2021

1. I have served as the ADA 2<sup>nd</sup> District Representative to the ADA CGA since 2019 (4-year term to 2023). The Council has an in-person meeting scheduled for 8/20-22/2021 at ADA Headquarters in Chicago. I currently chair the Military Working Groups (WG) within the CGA. This working group is currently working on two primary issues:
  - a. The VA Pilot Project through the Center for Care and Payment Innovation looking to address the unmet dental needs of veterans that are ineligible for care through the VA system. Those ineligible include approximately 92% of veterans.
  - b. Guard/Reserve Panel established to look into issues affecting activated and deployed reservists. The WG hopes to construct a toolkit which will be a go-to information center to provided activated reservist's information regarding rights and benefits established by ADA and component policies, as well as federal and state laws currently in place.
2. The Council did meet virtually January 28-29, 2021. The complete minutes are attached for your review. I plan to highlight for you at our meeting. Upon your review, I will answer any questions to the best of my ability, but if I am unable I will certainly find answers for you.
3. Washington, DC Lobby Day took place virtually on April 25 and 28, 2021. Participating dentists and students were scheduled appointments and meet with representatives or their staff on 4/28. Many of you present on this call participated and represented NYS and NYSDA.

Three primary issues were discussed:

  - i.) COVID Relief
  - ii.) Student Debt
  - iii.) Ever Lasting Smiles Act (ELSA)
4. The following is legislation that the ADA is continuing to advocate in support of:
  - a. Ensuring Provider Relief Fund assistance is not taxable, through the Eliminating the Provider Relief Fund Tax Penalties Act (H.R. 2079) while maintaining that expenses tied to this assistance are tax-deductible.
  - b. The HIV Epidemic Loan-Repayment Program Act, or HELP Act, would offer up to \$250,000 in educational loan repayment to dentists and other health care professionals in exchange for up to five years of service at Ryan White-funded clinical sites and in health profession shortage areas.
  - c. The ADA is supporting legislation, the Military Spouse Licensing Relief Act of 2021 (S.1084) to help military families by giving military spouses with valid

professional licenses in one state reciprocity in the state where their spouse is currently serving on military orders.

- d. The ADA asked Congress to include state and local water fluoridation systems in legislation to revitalize the nation's infrastructure. They urged lawmakers to include a one-time supplemental infusion of funds for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to help states and local municipalities revitalize their water fluoridation infrastructure.
- e. H.R. 1550, the PREVENT HPV Cancers Act. The ADA strongly supports the administration of the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine as a safe and effective way to reduce the risk for oral HPV infections and the cancers they can cause
- f. The ADA supports the Improving the Social Determinants of Health Act (H.R. 379). Social determinants such as access to healthy food, good job opportunities, reliable transportation, safe housing, and educational opportunity can have a large impact on health, including oral health. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted and exacerbated the disparities faced by minority and underserved populations. To help address those disparities, H.R. 379 would create a new social determinants of health (SDOH) program at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Respectfully Submitted,

Raymond G. Miller, DDS  
ADA CGA District 2 Representative  
Chair Military Working Group

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE  
AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION  
COUNCIL ON GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS  
VIRTUAL  
JANUARY 29-30, 2021**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the Council on Government Affairs (CGA) was held virtually and was called to order by Dr. David White, CGA chair, at 9:39 AM CDT on January 29, 2021.

**ROLL CALL**

**Members:** (District 1) Dr. Abe Abdul, 2024; (District 2) Dr. Raymond Miller, 2023; (District 3) Dr. John Reitz, 2021; (District 4) Dr. Mark Vitale, 2022; (District 5) Dr. Greg Goggans, 2024; (District 6) Dr. Leon Stanislav, 2022; (District 7) Dr. Matthew Messina, 2021; (District 8) Dr. Cheryl Watson-Lowry, 2024; (District 9) Dr. David Clemens, 2024; (District 10) Dr. Emily Willett, 2021; (District 11) Dr. John Hisel, 2022; (District 12) Dr. Matthew Cohlma, 2022; (District 13) Dr. John Blake, 2023; (District 14) Dr. David White, chair, 2021; (District 15) Dr. Matthew Roberts, 2023; (District 16) Dr. Mark Crabtree, 2023; (District 17) Dr. Dan Gesek, 2024; (New Dentist Member) Dr. Steve Feldman, 2021.

**Liaisons:** Dr. Jay Harrington, Board of Trustees (District 5); Mr. Sebastian Celis Cifuentes, American Student Dental Association; Dr. Steve Ortego, chair, American Dental Political Action Committee; Dr. Jessica Meeske, chair, Council on Advocacy for Access and Prevention; Ms. Sue Hadnot, Alliance of the American Dental Association.

**Council Staff:** Mr. Michael Graham, senior vice president, Government and Public Affairs; Ms. Roxanne Yaghoubi, director, Legislative and Regulatory Policy; Mr. Robert Burns, manager, Legislative and Regulatory Policy; Mr. David Linn, manager, Legislative and Regulatory Policy; Mr. Christian Miller, senior project assistant.

**Other ADA Representatives Present for All or Part of the Meeting:** Dr. Kathleen O'Loughlin, executive director, ADA; Dr. Daniel Klemmedson, president, ADA; Dr. Cesar Sabates, president-elect, ADA; Mr. Christopher Tampio, director, Congressional Affairs; Ms. Jennifer Fisher, lobbyist, Congressional Affairs; Ms. Megan Mortimer, lobbyist, Congressional Affairs; Ms. Natalie Hales, lobbyist, Congressional Affairs; Ms. Sarah Milligan, director, American Dental Political Action Committee; Mr. Peter Aiello, senior manager, American Dental Political Action Committee and Political Affairs; Ms. Sarah Krejci, senior project assistant, American Dental Political Action Committee; Ms. Jennifer Garvin, Washington editor, Publications; Ms. Katherine Merullo, manager, Public Affairs and Advocacy Communications; Dr. Jane Grover, director, Council on Advocacy for Access and Prevention; Ms. Tooka Zokaie, manager, Fluoridation and Preventive Health Activities; Ms. Kelly Cantor, manager, Community- Based Programs; Ms. Elaine Barone, coordinator, Council on Advocacy for Access and Prevention; Mr. C. Michael Kendall, senior associate general counsel, Legal Affairs; Mr. Chad Olson, director, State Government Affairs; Mr. Paul O'Connor, senior legislative liaison, State Government Affairs; Dr. David Preble, senior vice president, Practice Institute; Dr. Krishna Aravamudhan, senior director, Center for Dental Benefits, Coding, and

Quality; Dr. Elizabeth “Betsy” Shapiro, senior director, Center for Dental Practice Policy; Dr. Marko Vujicic, chief economist and vice president, Health Policy Institute; Dr. Chelsea Fosse, senior health policy analyst, Health Policy Institute; Ms. Kathy Clary, manager, Business Administrative Services; Ms. Mifrah Baqai, intern.

**Federal Dental Services Representatives:** Rear Admiral Timothy Ricks, USPHS; Captain Renée Joskow, USPHS; Colonel Stephen Tanner, USA; Colonel Peter Guevara, USA; Rear Admiral Rick Freedman, USN; Captain Rebecca Lee, USN; Captain Steven Blaustein, USN; Brigadier General Sharon Bannister, USAF; Colonel Ender Ozgul, USAF; Lieutenant Colonel Douglas Grabowski, USAF; Dr. Scott Trapp, VA; Dr. Peter Gerngross, VA; Colonel Christensen Hsu, DoD Health Affairs; Colonel Jay Graver, DoD Health Affairs.

**Guest Speaker on the Biden Administration:** Mr. Bob Hickmott, senior vice president, The Smith-Free Group.

**Chairs of Other Councils:** Dr. Randall Markarian, Council on Dental Benefit Programs; Dr. Ana Bedran-Russo, Council on Scientific Affairs; Dr. Duc “Duke” Ho, Council on Dental Practice; Dr. Sam Mansour, Council on Communications; Dr. Jeff Kahl, Council on Membership.

### **Friday, January 29, 2021**

The meeting was called to order by Dr. White at 9:39 AM CDT.

**Adoption of Agenda:** Upon vote, the Council adopted the agenda.

**Approval of Consent Calendar:** Upon vote, the Council approved the consent calendar.

**Legal Policies:** Mr. Kendall spoke to the Council about the ADA’s confidentiality, copyright assignment, and conflict of interest policies.

**Welcome and Report of the chair:** Dr. White talked about plans for future meetings of the Council. He also discussed the elections for Council chair and vice chair.

**Report of the Board of Trustees:** Dr. Harrington said that, despite the pandemic, the ADA has accomplished most of its operating plan. Top goals for 2021 include increasing membership and gaining financial stability. He also discussed Dr. Klemmedson’s plans for the Board.

**Report of the Council on Advocacy for Access and Prevention:** Dr. Meeske spoke about the priorities of the Council on Advocacy for Access and Prevention (CAAP), including Medicaid, health equity, water fluoridation, safety, and health literacy. She also highlighted ways CGA can collaborate with CAAP on these issues.

**Report of the State Public Affairs Oversight Workgroup:** Mr. Olson updated the Council on the State Public Affairs (SPA) grant program. Mr. Olson also discussed how some states had to shift their strategies due to COVID-19.

**Discussion on State Government Affairs:** Mr. Olson and Mr. O’Connor spoke about state legislation on topics such as workforce, Medicaid, and vaccination. They also discussed message testing on dental insurance reform, as well as the National Conference of Insurance Legislators (NCOIL) model legislation on third party payers. Council members asked about legislation in their states.

**Report of the American Student Dental Association:** Mr. Celis Cifuentes spoke about the work of the American Student Dental Association (ASDA), including its Week of Service and meetings. Council members asked Mr. Celis Cifuentes about how the pandemic has affected dental students, as well as how to engage dental students in advocacy.

**Report of the New Dentist Committee:** Dr. Feldman talked about using advocacy to draw new members into the ADA. He spoke about the concerns of new dentists, including debt and mental health. Additionally, he discussed employment issues and the labor market for new dentists.

**Discussion Led by the Health Policy Institute:** Dr. Vujicic and Dr. Fosse spoke about the polling done by the Health Policy Institute (HPI) since the onset of the pandemic. They presented data on their core measures and Questions of the Week. Additionally, HPI presented on its consumer polling and Council members discussed staffing in dental offices.

**Discussion Led by ADA executive director:** Dr. O'Loughlin spoke about how COVID-19 affected the ADA's membership numbers and financials. Additionally, she discussed the ADA's core values, especially diversity and inclusion. She went over the ADA's strategic plan, including the public goal. Dr. O'Loughlin also emphasized that the ADA's business continuity plan ensured that the organization's work was able to continue during the pandemic, and that such plans should be part of preparing for future pandemics.

**Report of the American Dental Political Action Committee:** Dr. Ortego discussed the American Dental Political Action Committee's (ADPAC) four main functions, including raising money, distributing contributions, grassroots advocacy, and political education.

The Council discussed the incident at the Capitol on January 6 and how it could affect the ADA's lobbying and political giving. Dr. Klemmedson spoke about the Board's discussions on January 6. The following resolution was proposed by the Council:

**Resolved,** CGA to come up with an internal position in terms of lobbying on the current situation concerning our member dentists in Congress and the climate in Washington following January 6th.

Upon vote, the Council agreed to add the following second resolved clause to the resolution:

**Be it further resolved,** that two members of CGA participate in the ADPAC review process.

The first resolved clause was withdrawn.

A motion was made to remove the second resolved clause. Upon vote, the Council agreed to remove the second resolved clause.

Upon vote, the Council agreed to work with staff to come up with a motion or recommendation to be discussed by the Council by the end of the day tomorrow.

**Update on 2020 Elections and Lobby Day:** Ms. Milligan and Mr. Aiello spoke about ADPAC's fundraising during the 2020 elections and the outcome of those elections. They also discussed the ADA's grassroots advocacy during 2020. They said that Lobby Day 2021 will be virtual.

**Update and Discussion on Congress:** Mr. Tampio, Ms. Fisher, Ms. Hales, and Ms. Mortimer spoke about the issues they are lobbying Congress on on behalf of the ADA. Mr. Tampio also discussed next steps for McCarran-Ferguson now that the Competitive Health Insurance Reform Act is law.

**Discussion on COVID-19 and Future Pandemics:** Rear Admiral Ricks gave a presentation on the US Public Health Service's response to COVID-19. He discussed the COVID-19 vaccines, including dentists administering the vaccines and receiving the vaccines. Additionally, he spoke about other issues of interest to the ADA, including Healthy People 2030 and the Surgeon General reports on oral health and smoking cessation.

**Remarks by ADA president:** Dr. Klemmedson had no further remarks to make, and there were no questions for him from the Council. ADPAC agreed to add two members of CGA, Dr. John Reitz and Dr. Matt Roberts, to its Workgroup.

**Federal Dental Services:** Council members discussed dental workforce recruitment and retention issues with the Federal Dental Services.

Colonel Tanner from the Army spoke about changes to the Army Dental Corps, including COVID-19 and the electronic health record. He also discussed the mission of making sure that the Army is ready to deploy. Additionally, he talked about opportunities for members of the Army to participate in a dental residency program.

Rear Admiral Freedman from the Navy spoke about the 4Ps: People, Platforms, Performance, and Power. He also discussed the Navy's response to COVID-19, and thanked the ADA for its support of the Military Spouse Licensing Relief Act.

Brigadier General Bannister spoke about the Air Force Dental Service's mission and how it has been impacted by COVID-19. She discussed recruitment and the training opportunities open to Air Force dentists, as well as the reasons that they stay in or leave the military.

Dr. Trapp talked about the impact of COVID-19 on VA dentistry. He also discussed VA projects, including digital dentistry, medication awareness and stewardship, and dental care for homeless veterans. CGA members asked Dr. Trapp about the VA Innovation Center pilot program and the Community Care Program, as well as eligibility for VA dental care and comprehensive dental care for service connected dental issues or oral trauma.

Colonel Hsu spoke about the Defense Health Agency, including its active duty dental care, family member dental care, adjunctive dental care, and supplemental health care programs. She also discussed the dental contractor's response to COVID-19.

**Update on Public Affairs:** Ms. Merullo spoke about the Oral Health is Health social media campaign. She also discussed earned media coverage for the ADA. She encouraged CGA members to sign up for the ADA's volunteer engagement program on social media.

Ms. Garvin spoke about stories in ADA News on government affairs.

**Update on Action for Dental Health:** Dr. Grover discussed how dentists can help to overcome vaccine hesitancy. She also talked about the Action for Dental Health Act law, which gives the opportunity for grant funding to be used for initiatives such as Medicaid, Emergency Department (ED) referral, Community Water Fluoridation, nursing home programs, and Community Dental Health Coordinators (CDHCs). Dr. Grover spoke on CAAP's Action for Dental Health goals for 2021. Additionally, she presented on the health equity policy being proposed by CAAP.

### **Saturday, January 30, 2021**

**Remarks by Other Council chairs:** Dr. Markarian from the Council on Dental Benefit Programs (CDBP) gave an overview of the Council's work, including a Request for Proposals (RFP) on eligibility verification in real time, code maintenance, Bento and in-office dental plans, the clinical data registry, elder care, and the Affordable Care Act.

Dr. Ortego from ADPAC said that he is excited to have CGA members on the ADPAC Workgroup on January 6, but that is not going to distract ADPAC from its main job which is to raise money and maintain relationships in DC.

Dr. Mansour from the Council on Communications (CC) said that the Council has undergone a transformation in the last three years. It has five Workgroups, including 1) Integrated Marketing, 2) Communications, 3) Digital Marketing Experience, 4) Strategic Communications Research, and the 5) Volunteer Engagement Program.

Dr. Kahl from the Council on Membership (CM) said that the Council knew that, even prior to COVID-19, 2020 was going to be a challenging year for membership recruitment. But by the end of the 2020, the ADA was able to stabilize membership. Advocacy is something that has been highlighted to ADA members and CGA should count on CM to market those achievements. He also discussed CM's work on Dental Support Organizations (DSOs), diversity and inclusion, and the membership engagement grant program.

Dr. Bedran-Russo from the Council on Scientific Affairs (CSA) gave an overview of the Council's work, including caries research, acute dental pain, dental radiographic guidelines, and elder care. She also discussed the ADA Seal Program.

Dr. Ho from the Council on Dental Practice (CDP) said that CDP is working on a policy on artificial/augmented intelligence. He also discussed the development of a protocol on screening for pediatric airway and sleep apnea issues, and said that the Council is reviewing all aspects of the National Elder Care Advisory Committee. The Council is also overseeing the ADA's COVID-19 response team.

**Report of the Alliance of the American Dental Association:** Ms. Hadnot said that the Alliance focuses on oral health outreach to the community, legislative advocacy, and the well-being of the dental profession. She also discussed the wellness resources the Alliance has provided to dentists and their families during COVID-19.

**Presentation and Discussion on the Biden Administration:** Mr. Hickmott spoke about the Biden administration's Cabinet nominees and the President's proposals on COVID-19 and other health care issues. He also discussed the results of the 2020 Congressional elections. Additionally, he briefed the Council on the Congressional Committee leadership and their priorities. Council members asked Mr. Hickmott how the ADA should lobby the new administration and Congress.

**Report of the senior vice president and director:** Mr. Graham and Ms. Yaghoubi spoke about the lobbying accomplishments of the ADA during 2020, including on issues such as COVID-19 and McCarran-Ferguson reform. Mr. Graham highlighted the 700,000 grassroots emails sent by ADA members to Capitol Hill, and the positive impact those messages had on ADA advocacy. Additionally, Mr. Graham answered questions about Congressional proposals on elder dental care.

**Military Workgroup:** Dr. Miller presented to the Council on the Workgroup's activities, including developing a charge statement on supporting the VA Innovation Center pilot program and assembling a toolkit for reserve/guard dentists who are preparing to deploy. Captain Steven Blaustein from the Navy and Colonel Stephen Tanner from the Army joined the conversation about the reserve/guard.

**Discussion on Higher Education Issues:** Mr. Burns and Ms. Mortimer spoke about President Biden's proposals on student loans and discussed Congressional legislation on student loan reform. Additionally, they presented on the work of the ADA Task Force to Study Alternate Student Loan Repayment Strategies.

**Diversity Workgroup:** Dr. Willett presented on the Workgroup's activities, including its charge statement. Dr. Meeske spoke about CAAP's health equity policy and Dr. Willett and Dr. Meeske agreed to have CAAP and CGA work together on this issue. CGA discussed the difference between equity and equality, and how CGA can best help to promote oral health equity. The Council also talked about how the Workgroup should prioritize its work on diversity issues, with the goal of increasing funding for at least one oral health program and achieving at least one regulatory change beneficial to diversity in dentistry.

**Policy Review Workgroup:** Drs. Cohlma, Feldman, and Roberts, and Mr. Celis Cifuentes (ASDA liaison) presented recommendations to retain, rescind, or amend thirteen ADA policies, in accordance with the policy titled Regular Comprehensive Policy Review (*Trans.*2010:603; 2012:370). Upon vote, all thirteen recommendations were adopted. See addendum for more information.

**In-Office Dental Plans Workgroup:** Dr. Messina spoke about the activities of the Workgroup, including a survey of state laws on this topic conducted by Mr. O'Connor. Dr. Markarian discussed CDBP's work on in-office dental plans, including a toolkit for office managers on setting up these plans. CGA members asked about encouraging state dental associations to advocate for laws on in-office dental plans.

**Medicaid Workgroup:** The Workgroup said that it wants to look at issues such as value-based payments, administrative burdens, block grants, rate increases, adult Medicaid benefits, federal funding for state Medicaid programs, and the interaction between Medicaid and Medicare. The Workgroup also discussed its collaboration with CAAP.

**Discussion on Council Priorities:** The Council discussed the results of the September 2020 priorities survey. Council members spoke about whether the priorities have – or should – change. Ms. Yaghoubi spoke about the difference between what the Council decides to prioritize (for its Workgroups, meetings, and other initiatives) and what the ADA lobbies on with the federal government. The Council agreed that, after discussing the issues, another survey is not needed at this time.

**New and/or Unfinished Business and Open Forum:** Dr. Willett spoke about the revised Council orientation process, and solicited feedback from the Council. The Council spoke positively of the virtual orientation. Dr. Reitz said he was not bringing up a motion since ADPAC has agreed to add Dr. Reitz and Dr. Roberts to its Workgroup.

The Council on Government Affairs meeting adjourned at 3:37 PM CDT on January 30, 2021.