



QuickBites

Renew your Ohio Dental Association membership!

ODA membership dues were due Jan. 1, 2021 for the 2021 membership year. If you have not paid your dues, you are considered past due.

Members can renew online at www.oda.org/joinandrenew, by fax at (614) 486-0381, by mail to Ohio Dental Association, P.O. Box 734508 Chicago, IL 60673-4508 or by phone at (800) 282-1526.

Renew your membership to continue receiving access to all the Ohio Dental Association has to offer. The ODA is here for you – if you have a question, we have the answer!

If you have already paid your dues, thank you! You do not need to take any action.

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COVID-19 vaccine update for dental providers

By ODA Staff

Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine recently outlined guidance on individuals who should be prioritized by local health departments during Phase 1A of COVID-19 vaccine distribution.

According to the Ohio Department of Health, local health departments should coordinate the vaccinations of congregate care residents and staff, such as those at nursing homes and assisted living facilities, who are not enrolled in the federal long-term care pharmacy programs or are not registered as vaccine providers themselves. This includes people with developmental disabilities and those with mental health disorders, including substance use disorders, who live in group homes, residential facilities, or centers, as well as staff.

In addition, the state's guidance to local health departments suggests prioritizing vaccinating other health care providers who are not being vaccinated by hospitals and health systems and are not enrolled as vaccine providers themselves. These providers could include:

- Home health workers
- Hospice workers
- Emergency medical services responders
- Primary care practitioners
- Free-standing emergency department, urgent care, pharmacy, and dialysis center providers not vaccinated by hospitals or healthcare systems

- Dental providers
- Public health employees who are at risk of exposure or transmission, such as vaccinators
- Mobile unit practitioners
- Federally-qualified health center providers
- High-risk ancillary health care staff members

ODA President Dr. David Kimberly, an oral surgeon from Akron, issued the following statement:

"The ODA is pleased to see that Gov. DeWine is recommending to local health departments in Ohio to give vaccine priority to dentists and their staff. This is consistent with the recent recommendations from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine.

These recommendations recognize that dentistry is essential health care and that dentists and their staff are essential health care workers. We have consistently educated Ohio policymakers that by keeping the dental workforce healthy, Ohioans will continue to secure treatment for oral pain and infection in dental offices, thereby keeping them out of hospital emergency rooms.

We have also stressed that oral health is essential to overall health because we know that undiagnosed and untreated dental disease has been associated with a number of systemic health conditions including heart disease, diabetes, stroke and pregnancy complications. By ensuring Ohio has

AT A GLANCE

COVID-19 VACCINE

Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine has asked local health departments to prioritize dental providers during Phase 1A of COVID-19 vaccine distribution.

Dentists and local dental societies should work with their local health departments to coordinate receiving the COVID-19 vaccine.

INSIDE

See "Dentists receive COVID-19 vaccine priority" on page 2 for more details.

a healthy dental care delivery workforce, we will ensure Ohioans maintain strong oral health and overall health."

The ODA encourages its members and local dental societies to work with their local health departments to coordinate receiving the COVID-19 vaccines. Please be aware that the health departments around the state are at different points relative to the amount of doses that have been delivered to them and their ability to administer the vaccine.

The ODA will continue to provide additional information as it becomes available.

ODA looks ahead at 2021 benefits for members

By ODA Staff

After a difficult 2020, the Ohio Dental Association has a lot in store for 2021. As 2021 kicks off, we are continuing to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic as well as regulations in Ohio that impact dental officers as well as gatherings. Here's a glimpse of what you can expect from the ODA this year.

\$100 PPE credits for Ohio dentists

The ODA is continuing to distribute \$100 PPE credits for dentists in Ohio. DentaQuest, LLC has made a \$200,000 donation to provide much needed personal protective equipment (PPE) to Ohio dentists. Working with OhioDDS partner Midway Dental Supply, DentaQuest is providing Ohio dentists with the opportunity to request a credit of \$100 to order a selection of popular PPE. Midway has added an additional \$100,000 to DentaQuest's donation to allow a total of 3,000 dentists to receive the \$100 credit. Look for an email from the ODA with details on how to sign up for the PPE credit.

COVID-19

The ODA will continue to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and how it affects dental offices and provide up-to-date, reliable information as it becomes available. We will also continue to advocate on behalf of your best interests during the pandemic. Additionally, local health departments have begun administering COVID-19 vaccines to



ODA Staff

Save the date for the 2021 ODA Annual Session, which is scheduled for Sept. 30-Oct. 2.

MEMBER BENEFIT BUZZ

dental professionals, and we expect more dentists and staff to receive the vaccine in coming months.

Legislative advocacy

With the start of the 154th General Assembly in Ohio, we'll be working to develop relationships with new legislators and continue to communicate our messages to all legislators

in Ohio. We will continue to support legislation that would prohibit dental insurance companies from setting fees for non-covered services, and we'll work to prevent any progress on the creation of dental therapists. We'll also continue to monitor legislation at all levels of the government, and provide updates about legislation affecting dentistry.

Dental insurance issues

The ODA will continue to work with den-

See BENEFITS, page 2



Renew your membership!

www.oda.org/joinandrenew



The Director's Chair

David J. Owsiany, JD
ODA Executive Director

Dentists receive COVID-19 vaccine priority

As I write this column in the middle of December, Ohio has experienced another spike in COVID cases and the Christmas holiday is just a few days away. Like the Thanksgiving spike, experts are expecting another spike in cases due to Christmas and New Year celebrations despite pleas to limit such celebrations to immediate family.

While the COVID cases in Ohio and across the country continue to surge, the first shipment of the Pfizer vaccine has arrived in Ohio and the Moderna vaccine is expected to arrive soon. Ohio expects to have 500,000 doses of the vaccine by the end of December and at least that same amount in January. Both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines require two doses.

Gov. Mike DeWine is also expressing optimism that the FDA will give emergency use authorization for additional COVID-19 vaccines in the near future to add to the stream of vaccine doses coming to Ohio.

Throughout the months of November and December, I have been on several Zoom calls with state leaders, including DeWine, Lt. Gov. Jon Husted, public health physicians and hospital officials.

They are cautiously optimistic that the arrival of the vaccine is "the beginning of the end" for the COVID pandemic. They also recognize the logistical challenge of trying to get the vaccine to as many of the more than 11 million Ohioans as possible. They stress that the arrival of the vaccines may mean that there is a light at the end of the tunnel but that light is still quite a distance away. In the meantime, state officials urge Ohioans to continue their vigilance in mask-wearing and social distancing.

In preparing for the arrival of the vaccines, state and local officials have been identifying priority populations, including front-line health care workers, nursing home residents and staff and others in congregate care settings.

The ODA advocated for dentists and their staff to be given priority as well. We made clear that "we fully recognize the state's need to give first priority for vaccines to those health care providers who are in constant contact with those who are known to be infected with the virus, and other first responders and high risk populations in congregate care settings."

We also pointed out that dentists ought to be included in the early phase of vaccine priority as well. Our point was not that dentists were necessarily high risk. In fact, the evidence indicates that dental offices largely remain safe for dentists and their staff and patients due to the efforts dentists have taken related to PPE, infection control and appropriate patient screening and distancing strategies during the pandemic.

Our case for dentists receiving vaccine priority is that dentistry is essential health care and that dentists and their staff are essential health care workers. We have consistently educated Ohio policymakers that by keeping the dental workforce healthy, Ohioans will continue to secure treatment for oral pain and infection in dental offices, thereby keeping them out

of crowded hospital emergency rooms.

We have also stressed that oral health is essential to overall health because we know that undiagnosed and untreated dental disease has been associated with a number of systemic health conditions including heart disease, diabetes, stroke and pregnancy complications.

By providing vaccine priority to dentists and their teams, state and local officials will ensure all Ohioans have access to a healthy dental care delivery workforce so they can maintain strong oral health and overall health.

Government officials in Ohio have heard our message. On Dec. 15, Gov. DeWine issued guidance to local health departments. He wrote that "local health departments should coordinate the vaccinations of congregate care residents and staff, such as those at nursing homes and assisted living facilities. He also advised that "local health departments should prioritize vaccinating other healthcare providers who are not being vaccinated by hospitals" and included in the list of priority health care workers "primary care practitioners" and "dental providers."

We were pleased that Gov. DeWine recognized the importance of dental care and dentists and their staff during this public health crisis. Ultimately, local health departments will receive the vaccine doses and will be coordinating with their local health care providers on providing vaccines. We encourage local dental societies and dentists across the state to work with their local health departments to ensure that dentists and their teams receive their vaccines in the coming weeks and months so that Ohioans have access to a healthy dental workforce to ensure continuity in their dental care.

Editor's Note: at press time, we have received reports that several county health departments in Ohio have begun vaccinating dentists and certain dental staff members.



President's Message

David Kimberly, DDS, MD
ODA President

2020 good riddance

It is human nature to assume the experiences, good and bad, of current circumstances are paramount in human history. That makes sense, as our own experiences are what we relate most strongly.

One must wonder if the population of Europe, Asia and the Middle East felt the

same when a volcanic eruption caused massive, sudden climate change resulting in the starvation of millions of people in 536 A.D. Soon after in 541, the bubonic plague struck throughout Europe. It would continue to be a scourge on the continent intermittently through the middle of the 14th century. 1601 marks another devastating volcanic eruption causing extreme famine in Russia. As a result, one in three Russian citizens died of starvation over the next two years. As the timeline of history continued, humanity faced flu pandemics, world wars, stock market crashes, terrorist attacks and now 2020's COVID-19.

Reviewing what has been written here, one may surmise that my perspective is skewed. Nothing could be further from the truth. Personal friends have been lost; business associates have been financially devastated and the fabric of our civil society has been stretched to the point of ripping at the seams. No one has been

beyond COVID's grasp. The effect of this virus has not only been illness, or financial constraints but also social upheaval. Our personal interactions, already challenged in a digital age, are further constrained by the ubiquitous mandated facial coverings.

As for these mandatory facial coverings, there is an unintended consequence. In my surgery practice fewer patients are concerned with the perfect two week temporary for that missing tooth. I frequently hear, "I'm ok Doc." "I'm wearing a mask." And there it is; the silver lining. Thin though it may be. But the principle remains. Find the positive and build on it. There is always something if one looks hard enough. If history has shown us anything, it has shown us that we will come through this. This too shall pass. And when it does, we will be wiser and more prepared for whatever challenges lie ahead.

Wishing you a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

BENEFITS, from page 1

tists to address dental insurance and third-party payer issues. The ODA Dental Insurance Working Group will meet with dental insurance companies to address issues as they come up. For more details on current discussions with DentalQuest, see the Dental Insurance Corner on page 8.

Opioid CE

Last year, the ODA began offering an online Opioid CE course free to ODA members. This course meets the Ohio State Dental Board requirement of Continuing Education in opioid prescribing and addiction awareness that must be met by the end of this year for licensure re-

newal. Access the course at www.oda.org.

Regulatory compliance guide

The ODA will continue to update the "Ohio Dentist Advisor: Your Guide to Regulatory Compliance" as new laws and regulations go into effect. This guide is free for ODA members and includes summaries, checklists and fillable forms to help you ensure your office is compliant with regulations. We'll send notifications to ODA members when updates are made to the guide.

ODA events

We're continuing to plan for ODA events like Leadership Institute, Day at the Statehouse and ODA Annual Session.

We're monitoring current limits on large gatherings in Ohio, and hope to be able to begin hosting in-person events later this year. Stay tuned for more details as the year progresses, and save the date for the ODA Annual Session, which is Sept. 30-Oct. 2.

Give Kids A Smile

Although events will likely look a little different this year, we're working with dental offices to plan COVID-friendly Give Kids A Smile events. The ADA has created a guide to help dentists plan safe events, including Zoom presentations and providing care for individual children in your office. For more details and resources on planning an event, visit www.oda.org.

ODA TODAY

Member of the American Association of Dental Editors

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Eric S. Richmond, Esq.
ODA Director of Legal &
Legislative Services

New year, new General Assembly

This is the first article of 2021 and an opportunity to bid farewell, I mean good riddance, to the crazy year that was 2020. With all of the unforeseeable hurdles that appeared in 2020, we are hopeful that 2021 will edge closer to normal at some point. The end of 2020 marked the end of the 133rd General Assembly. The start of 2021 will begin the 134th Ohio General Assembly. A fresh legislative slate will be opened and any bill that was not passed into law in 2020 will need to be reintroduced to be considered in the new assembly.

In the 134th General Assembly the Republicans hold a majority over the Democrats in both chambers with a 64-35 majority in the House and a 25-8 majority in the Senate. The new session will begin with 19 freshman legislators and 23 total legislators holding new office positions. With the addition of these 19 new legislators to the 30 plus freshman legislators from the 133rd General Assembly there are plenty of newer faces around Capitol Square and some that are only one term old. In the last General Assembly the lobbying team met with each new legislator to discuss dental issues and priorities. In the coming months the ODA lobbying team will again meet with all of the members of the General Assembly to ensure that we are their resource for dental issues and that our policies are fresh in their minds. Whether these meetings

take place in person or on the phone it is very important that contacts are made early in the session to continue to build relationships with legislators. Also, through communication and support the ODA has built relationships with both leaders in the House and the Senate. Speaker Bob Cupp in the House and President Matt Huffman in the Senate have proven to be great legislators and have been chosen to lead their respective chambers by their peers. Throughout their careers the ODA has worked to build a positive relationship with both leaders and we look forward to continuing those connections.

A new year with a new General Assembly brings excitement to the Statehouse. It is more important than ever to ensure that the voice of dentistry is unified and heard in Columbus. For the ODA to be an effective advocate for dentistry it will be important to continue our strong three prong approach. Those three prongs are grassroots advocacy, a professional lobbying team, and a strong political action committee.

The grassroots advocacy portion of the approach comes directly from member dentists building relationships with their legislators. Speaking of this, if any mem-

ber has or would like to be a contact for their legislator please reach out to me. Due to COVID-19, our flagship advocacy event, Day at the Statehouse, was canceled in 2020. We are working this year to have an event in May. This may end up being a virtual event, but we hope to have an event where legislators are speaking directly with dentists.

Secondly, the professional lobbying team will continue to work around the clock to enhance relationships with legislators and ensure that ODA policies are presented to policymakers.

Lastly, and most importantly, we need to continue to build a strong political action committee. The last year was difficult on everyone and ODPAC contributions were understandably down. However, the need to support candidates who support dentistry did not stop. The election this past November went forward and contributions were needed to support candidates. So I urge you in this new year to make an ODPAC contribution and help dentistry continue to strengthen its relationships with elected officials.

The year of 2020 will be one that is not easily forgotten. However, I think that if we have learned anything in the last year it is

CONTRIBUTE TO ODPAC

Support our efforts in the political arena by making a contribution to ODPAC!

Contribute online:
www.oda.org/advocacy

Mail a check:
1370 Dublin Rd.
Columbus, OH 43215



that dentistry is resilient. Each and every one of you has overcome many things in the last year, and I hope that 2021 brings good things ahead. I have spoken with many of you on the phone in the last 12 months and I am hopeful that sometime in the next 12 months I will get to see you all face to face. Until then, please reach out to me if you have any questions about advocacy, ODPAC or the legislature at eric@oda.org or 614-486-2700.

Numbers to know

American Dental Association
(800) 621-8099 or (312) 440-2500

Ohio Department of Health
(614) 466-3543

Ohio Dental Association
(800) 282-1526 or (614) 486-2700

Ohio Dental Association Services Corp. Inc. (ODASC)
(800) 282-1526 or (614) 486-2700

Ohio State Dental Board
(614) 466-2580

Staffed Dental Societies:
Akron Dental Society
(330) 376-3551

Cincinnati Dental Society
(513) 984-3443

Cleveland Dental Society
(440) 717-1891

Columbus Dental Society
(614) 895-2371

Corydon Palmer Dental Society
(330) 719-1297

Dayton Dental Society
(937) 294-2808

Stark County Dental Society
(330) 305-6637

Toledo Dental Society
(419) 474-8489



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ODA offers several ways for members to pay their dues

ODA Staff

Membership dues statements and electronic renewal notices were recently sent out to ODA members. Members who indicated previously that they prefer to receive membership communications electronically will not receive a paper statement in the mail and will only receive e-notifications.

Dues were due Jan. 1, 2021, for the 2021 membership year.

Renew your membership

Members can renew online at www.oda.org/joinandrew/, by mail to Ohio Dental Association, P.O. Box 734508 Chicago, IL 60673-4508, by fax at (614) 486-0381 or by phone at (800) 282-1526.

Pay your dues using the installment payment program

The ODA will be offering an installment payment program, where dentists can pay their 2021 membership dues over the course of several months. Payments will be divided into monthly payments concluding in April 2021. To utilize this payment option, dentists need to complete an in-year dues installment payment program form, which is included with dues statement mailings or can be found at www.oda.org.

Recently retired? Update your membership status

Ohio Dental Association members who have retired from the practice of dentistry can receive ODA benefits at a fraction of the cost of active membership.

ODA members with Retired Membership status pay 25 percent of ODA active dues but receive 100 percent of the benefits. To qualify for Retired Membership, dentists must no longer earn an income of any kind by means of their dental license. Dentists must also submit an Affidavit for Retired Membership, which is then reviewed by the dentist's local component society, the ODA and the American Dental Association.

Dentists who are interested in obtaining Retired Membership status should contact the ODA Membership Department at (800) 282-1526 or membership@oda.org.

Update your contact information

Any members who have moved, changed their email address or changed any other contact information should inform the ODA by visiting www.oda.org calling (800) 282-1526 or emailing membership@oda.org to ensure they receive their dues statements.

Renew your membership at www.oda.org/renew

Change of address?

Contact the ODA Membership Department if you have moved your home or practice, changed your phone number, changed your name or changed your email address.

Online: www.oda.org
Via email: membership@oda.org
By phone: (800) 282-1526

ODA Foundation awards 2020 grants, scholarships

By ODA Staff

The ODA Foundation recently awarded its 2020 grants and scholarships.

"Though we were unable to hold the ODA Foundation raffle in 2020, we were able to stay true to our mission of improving the oral health of the citizens of Ohio and enhancing the dental profession in the state," said Dr. Jennifer Kale, ODA Foundation chair. "Even with the loss of revenue from the raffle, we were able to award grants and scholarships to deserving students and access to care programs with the generous donations received from our members."

Grants

The ODA Foundation awards grants for access to dental care initiatives to nonprofits in Ohio.

The premier access to care award is the Callahan/Henry Schein Cares Award for Improving Access to Care, awarded from the Callahan Memorial Award Fund of the ODA Foundation. The 2020 recipient of the award was the Good Samaritan Free Health Center in Cincinnati.

The Foundation also awarded a grant to Miami Co. Dental Clinic.

Scholarships

The Foundation awards scholarships to dental students to help decrease their student loan debt, allowing them to worry less about the cost of their education and focus more on learning needed skills. In 2020, scholarships were awarded to six dental students from Case Western Reserve University School of Dental Medicine and The Ohio State University College of Dentistry.

This year's scholarship awards included the ODA Foundation's three memorial scholarships. The Dr. E. Karl Schneider II Humanitarian Scholarship is awarded in memory of Schneider who passed away in 2017 while serv-



FOUNDATION
ODA MEMBER BENEFIT

ing as the ODA Foundation's chairman. The 2020 Dr. E. Karl Schneider II Humanitarian Scholarship was awarded to OSU dental student Savanna Craig. The Darryl Dever Advocacy Scholarship is awarded in memory of the ODA's longtime lobbyist and was awarded to CWRU dental student Nisha Maheshwari. And the Forward Ever Scholarship is awarded in memory of Dr. R.E. "Jim" Snelson for his leadership in organized dentistry and was awarded to CWRU dental student Alisha Jimenez-Thompson.

The Dr. James F. Mercer Leadership Scholarship was awarded from the Mercer Fund, a designated fund within the ODA Foundation. The Mercer family selected OSU dental student Scott Balzer to receive the award.

The Foundation also awarded a 2020 scholarship in honor of Dr. Thomas Paumier, an ODA past president, for going above and beyond the call of duty during the COVID Pandemic for ODA members. The scholarship was awarded to OSU dental student Amber Dalal.

"We rely on the support of our donors to sustain our mission and I hope our members consider a donation to the Foundation in 2021, either on their dues statement or by donating at one of our Annual Circles of Impact levels," Kale said. "COVID will most likely continue to impact the revenue of the Foundation and we need the support of our members more than ever to help sustain our ability to support Ohio programs and scholarships."

Donations make scholarships and grants possible!

The ODA Foundation is supported by the donations of ODA members. To help ensure that the Foundation can award even more grants and scholarships in 2021, consider supporting the Foundation

2020 Annual Circles of Impact levels are comprised of gifts between Nov. 1, 2019 to Oct. 31, 2020 to the ODAF general and endowment funds.

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Dr. James H. Cottle
Dr. Sam Fick
Dr. Bruce D. Grbach
Dr. Burton Job
Dr. James A. Karlowicz

Philanthropist (\$500 - \$999)

Southern Ohio Dental Society
Dr. Joseph J. Baytosh
Dr. Jennifer A. Kale
Dr. Thomas M. Paumier

Humanitarian (\$170 - \$499)

Dr. Canise Y. Bean
Dr. Michael A. Blum
Dr. Kenneth C. Brandt
Dr. Kathryn J. Elia-Aptosos
Dr. Joel R. Koch
Dr. Kevin M. Laing
Dr. Melissa S. Meier
Dr. Kara Morris

in one of the following ways:

- Mail a donation to the Foundation at 1370 Dublin Rd., Columbus, OH 43215.
- Make a donation at www.oda.org.
- Give to the Foundation when renewing ODA membership for 2021.
- Give a donation in honor or memory of a friend or loved one.
- List the ODA Foundation in estate plans and for memorial contributions, when the time comes.

Donate to the ODA Foundation at www.oda.org.

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- ✓ **Marketing Experts**—We advertise your practice in more places.

ODA seeking nominations for council positions

The Ohio Dental Association seeks members to fill potential upcoming at-large positions on ODA councils. The ODA is seeking nominations for at-large positions on the association’s Council on Access to Care and Public Service, Council on Dental Care Programs and Dental Practice, and the Council on Membership Services. Nominations for these at-large council positions are open to all ODA members. The term of office for at-large council members is two years and the terms for these at-large council positions to be filled will be effective from October 2021 to September 2023.

At-large council members may be nominated by individual ODA members, component societies, subdistricts or councils (and may include former council members) and will be appointed by the ODA’s Ad Interim Committee.

The at-large council positions include:

Council on Access to Care and Public Service

- The Council on Access to Care and Public Service develops and implements public service programs of the association and develops and implements ODA sponsored access to dental care programs.
- There are two at-large positions available on the Council on Access to Care and Public Service in October 2021. The members to fill the at-large positions would have a term of office from October 2021 to September 2023.
- Nominees for the at-large position(s) on this council should have an interest in access to care.

Council on Dental Care Programs and Dental Practice

- The Council on Dental Care Programs and Dental Practice assists the membership in addressing issues related to regulatory compliance, dental insurance, managed care, dental practice and risk management.
- There are two at-large positions available on the Council on Dental Care Programs and Dental Practice in October 2021. The members to fill the at-large positions would have a term of office from October 2021 to September 2023.
- Nominees for the at-large position(s) on this council should have knowledge of and interest in third-party reimbursement issues, managed care and dental practice management issues.

Council on Membership Services

- The Council on Membership Services coordinates and implements member recruitment and retention activities for the association.
- There is one at-large position available on the Council on Membership Services in October 2021. The member to fill the at-large position would have a term of office from October 2021 to September 2023.

Submit a nomination

Nominations for the council at-large positions are due by April 1, 2021 and should include a letter of nomination and the nominee’s curriculum vitae. Please submit nominations to: Ohio Dental Association, Attention: David Owsiany, Executive Director, 1370 Dublin Road, Columbus, OH 43215, or to michelle@oda.org.

Download and print employment posters online

ODA members can download and print employment posters from the ODA’s website for free. All employers are required to post numerous employment posters in their offices.

To download the posters, visit oda.org/member-resources/employment-posters/. These posters are only available to ODA members.

2021 ODA member logo now available for members to download

The 2021 Ohio Dental Association member logo is now available for members to download.

The ODA member logo can be used by dentists on their websites, electronic communications and e-newsletters to highlight their membership in the ODA.

To download the member logo, visit www.oda.org/member-center/news-media/oda-logo/. After logging in and agreeing to the terms of use, members will be able to download the logo.

Using the ODA member logo on websites and other electronic communications is a members-only benefit that allows dentists to showcase their membership in the ODA.

Make sure you’re up to date with CDT 2021

The American Dental Association has released the CDT 2021, which took effect Jan. 1, 2021.

The new “CDT: 2021 Current Dental Terminology” is the HIPAA-recognized code set for dentistry.

The ADA offers several CDT coding products, including books, training tools and an app, which can be found at adacatalog.org or by calling the ADA Member Service Center at (800) 947-4746.

ODA Meeting & Event Calendar

Jan.

- 1 ODA closed for holiday
- 15 Council on Access to Care and Public Service
- 18 Executive Committee
- 18 Subcouncil on New Dentists
- 26-27 Council on Dental Care Programs and Dental Practice
- 29 Executive Committee
- 29 Leadership Development Committee

Feb.

- 3 Dental Education and Licensure Committee
- 12 Council on Membership Services
- 19 Finance Committee
- 19 Council on Access to Care and Public Service
- 25-26 Annual Session Committee

In order to limit personal contact, these meetings are tentative and will likely be conference calls if they are held.

Looking to hire a new staff member? Post an ad on our new Jobs & Ads Board

The Ohio Dental Association is excited to announce a new section of our website to place job postings for dental staff members. We recently updated our online classified ads section as our new Jobs & Ads Board and made it easier to find and navigate. Along with this change, we have launched a new section for dentists to post ads for staff member positions.

This new section of our site is available for dental staff members to search for job postings. Staff job postings will be available online only.

Members can place a 40-word job posting on the site for one month for a discounted rate of \$55 (compared to \$88 for non-members), with each additional word costing \$1.

The ODA plans to market the postings on Facebook and to Ohio dental hygiene and assisting schools.

To place a text ad on our Jobs & Ads Board, visit www.oda.org/jobs-ads/place-an-advertisement/text-ads/ or contact Amy Szmania at (800) 282-1526 or email amy@oda.org.

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ODA seeking nominations for Awards of Excellence

By ODA Staff

The Ohio Dental Association is seeking nominations for its 2021 Awards of Excellence program.

The ODA's Awards of Excellence program recognizes those who offer distinguished service to dentistry and improve oral health care by offering treatment, outreach or education.

Members and local dental societies are encouraged to nominate those they know who have made extraordinary efforts to improve the dental profession.

The Awards of Excellence program includes the following five award categories:

- **Joseph P. Crowley Distinguished Dentist Award** – the most prestigious of the ODA's awards, is presented to an ODA member who has demonstrated service, commitment and dedication to the profession throughout his/her career. Nominees should display leadership, dedication, commitment and outstanding contributions at the local, state and national levels.
- **Achievement Award** – is presented

to a dentist or an individual who has made outstanding contributions to the dental profession and to oral health. Nominees are not required to be dentists, but should display a personal and professional commitment to the profession and the public's oral health. These individuals are honored as ambassadors for the profession to the community.

- **Marvin Fisk Humanitarian Award** – honors ODA members who offer dedication to improving oral health care in at-risk communities. Nominees may have served overseas or closer to home, spending time and often their own finances and other personal resources to help improve oral health care and fight illnesses.
- **N. Wayne Hiatt Rising Star Award** – is presented to an ODA member in practice 10 years or less who has demonstrated outstanding leadership and commitment to organized dentistry. ODA members who began to practice Jan. 1, 2011 or later are eligible. Past award honorees have shown outstanding initiative, a strong commitment to

volunteerism and promise for continued accomplishment within the profession.

- **Access to Dental Care Program Award** – honors an outstanding program (not an individual) that helps reduce the access to care problem in Ohio by offering free or reduced fee dental care to underserved populations.

Nominations for the 2021 Awards of Excellence are now being accepted. To submit a nomination, please review the

entry guidelines and submit all required documentation along with an Awards of Excellence nomination form, which can be found at <https://www.oda.org/get-involved/in-your-profession/awards/> or you may contact Michelle Blackman at michelle@oda.org or at 800-282-1526.

The deadline to submit nominations for the Awards of Excellence is April 26, 2021.

The ODA will present the awards during the 2021 ODA Annual Session.

Receive a \$100 PPE credit thanks to generous donation

By ODA Staff

DentaQuest, LLC has made a \$200,000 donation to provide much needed personal protective equipment (PPE) to Ohio dentists. Working with OhioDDS partner Midway Dental Supply, DentaQuest is providing Ohio dentists with the opportunity to request a credit of \$100 to order a selection of popular PPE. Midway has added an additional \$100,000 to DentaQuest's donation to allow a total of 3,000 dentists to receive the \$100 credit.

The \$100 credit can be used toward

PPE including face masks, gowns, anti-septic spray, head coverings and more offered on Midway's PPE website. The program will be available to the first 3,000 Ohio dentists who sign up.

The program launched in December, and additional credits will be issued this year.

Look for an email from the ODA with details on how to sign up for the PPE credit.

If you have any questions, please contact Carley Circosta, manager of the ODA Foundation and public service, at (800) 282-1526 or carley@oda.org.

ODA launches new e-newsletter for new dentists, dental students

By ODA Staff

The Ohio Dental Association recently launched a new publication for dental students and dentists in practice for 10 years or less.

NewDentNews is a monthly e-newsletter overseen by the ODA's Subcouncil on New Dentists.

Last year, the ODA conducted a survey on how dental students and new dentists would like to receive news. Based on those results, the ODA Subcouncil on New Dentists decided to rename, reformat and relaunch the ODA's e-newsletter for new dentists, dental students and dental residents.

The ODA also held a contest to name the publication.

The Subcouncil on New Dentists voted to choose the name NewDentNews – Guiding the new generation of dentists. Congratulations to Mona Jabari, a dental student at CWRU, who came up with the title, and Dr. Kartheek Dobbala, a new dentist in Sandusky, who came up with the tagline.

If you are a new dentist and have a topic you would like to see covered or would like to write for NewDentNews, email ODA Managing Editor Jackie Crowe at jackie@oda.org.

www.oda.org

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Dr. Frank R. Recker practiced general dentistry for 13 years and served as a member of the Ohio state dental Board before entering the legal profession, where he has been serving dentists exclusively for over 25 years.

Dr. Thomas J. Perrino has been a practicing dentist for over 30 years and was admitted to the Ohio Bar in 2014. Actively involved in organized dentistry, Dr. Perrino assists in the representation and defense of dentists in all practice related matters.

Areas of practice include:

- Administrative Law before State Dental Boards
- Dental Malpractice Defense
- Practice-related Business Transactions

Individual dentists and dental organizations are also represented in various matters including First Amendment litigation (i.e. advertising), judicial appeals of state board proceedings, civil rights actions against state agencies, and disputes with PPOs and DSOs.

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2021 Continuing Education course listing

The following is a list of continuing education (CE) courses, as provided by Ohio component dental societies. For a more comprehensive roster of available CE opportunities, including ongoing opportunities, visit www.oda.org. To sign up for any of the CE classes listed below, use the contact information included with each course listing.

The information contained below was provided by outside third parties. The ODA is not responsible for the accuracy of the information, and individuals are encouraged to contact CE providers directly in order to verify information regarding these CE courses, including qualification for Ohio State Dental Board credit. A CE program or provider's inclusion in this list does not constitute an endorsement by the ODA.

The Ohio State Dental Board requires 40 hours of CE every biennium in order to renew a current dental license, including at least two hours in opioid prescribing.

Member education opportunities are available to help dentists discover new products, new delivery systems, and how to keep up with new rules and trends. There are many ways dentists, and in some cases, auxiliary staff, can earn CE credits.

For more information on free and discounted CE courses offered for dentists and staff members through the ODA, opportunities to earn CE online at a special member price, special video taped courses offered to members at discounted rates and member discounted CE courses during ODA Annual Session please visit www.oda.org.

2021 Continuing Education Courses

January

- 13 **"ODA, Regulatory Compliance and Dental Practice Update" & "Marketing on Google"**; Speakers: Course 1 - Mr. Christopher Moore and Mr. David Owsiany Course 2 - Ms. Kristi Simone & Mr. Sean White; CE: 6; Location: Youngstown; Contact: Corydon Palmer Dental Society email: director@corydonpalmer.org.
- 22 **"HIPAA/OSHA"**; Speakers: Diane Evans / Karen Daw; CE: 6; Location: Dayton; Contact: Dayton Dental Society @ (937) 294-2808 *Tentative and subject to change due to the Pandemic currently.

February

- 5 **"Red, White, and Ulcerative Lesions of the Oral Cavity. What are they? How to treat?"**; Speaker: Susan Muller, DMD; CE: 6.5; Location: Cincinnati; Contact: Cincinnati Dental Society email: vicki@cincinnatiadental.org or www.cincinnatiadental.org.
- 12 **"Offensive Dentistry"**; Speaker: Dr. Brian Novy; CE: 6; Location: Youngstown; Contact: Corydon Palmer Dental Society email: director@corydonpalmer.org
- 24 **"OSHA/Cyber Security & HIPAA"**; Speakers: Karen Daw and Russell Howell; CE: 2 each; Format: Virtual live lectures via Zoom; Contact: Stark County Dental Society - Laura @ (330) 719-1297 or mail@starkcountydentalsociety.org.

March

- 3 **"Cracking the Millennial Code"**; Speaker: Ryan Vet; CE: 6; Location: Dayton; Contact: Dayton Dental Society @ (937) 294-2808 *Tentative and subject to change due to the Pandemic currently.
- 4 **GM#1 "The Anterior Perio Implant Controversy"**; Speaker: Dr. Constantin Farah; CE: 2; Location: La Pizzeria Restaurant in Canton and Zoom availability; Contact: Stark County Dental Society - Laura @ (330) 719-1297 or mail@starkcountydentalsociety.org.
- 26 **"What every dentist needs to know about TMD and occlusion – The facts and the fantasies"**; Speaker: Jeffrey Okeson, DMD; CE: 6.5; Location: Cincinnati; Contact: Cincinnati Dental Society email: vicki@cincinnatiadental.org or www.cincinnatiadental.org.

April

- 23 **"Differentiate Yourself: Clinical & Marketing Tips to Generate New Patients!"**; Speaker: Josh Austin, DDS; CE: 6.5; Location: Cincinnati; Contact: Cincinnati Dental Society email: vicki@cincinnatiadental.org or www.cincinnatiadental.org.
- 30 **University Series I "Treating Older Adults"**; Speaker: Dr. Randy Huffines; CE: 7; Location: La Pizzeria Restaurant in Canton and Zoom availability; Contact: Stark County Dental Society - Laura @ (330) 719-1297 or mail@starkcountydentalsociety.org.

May

- 4 **Mercy GPR Clinical Presentations**; Speaker: Dr. Constantin Farah; CE: 2; Location: Mercy Medical Center in Canton; Contact: Stark County Dental Society - Laura @ (330) 719-1297 or mail@starkcountydentalsociety.org.
- 7 **"ENDOS for GPs: Better Faster & Safer Root Canals" & "ENDO for GPs: Treating Pediatric and Geriatric Patients"**; Speaker: Manor Haas, DDS; CE: 6.5; Location: Cincinnati; Contact: Cincinnati Dental Society email: vicki@cincinnatiadental.org or www.cincinnatiadental.org.
- 13 **GM#2 "General in Command"**; Speaker: Dr. Michael VanNess; CE: None (general interest); Location: MAPS Museum in North Canton; Contact: Stark County Dental Society - Laura @ (330) 719-1297 or mail@starkcountydentalsociety.org.
- 19 **"Differential Diagnosis of Oral Lesions" & "Medical Emergencies in the Dental Office"**; Speaker: Dr. John Alonge; CE: 6; Location: Youngstown; Contact: Corydon Palmer Dental Society email: director@corydonpalmer.org.

June

- 4 **USII "Dental Sleep Medicine"**; Speaker: Dr. Eugene Santucci; CE: 7; Location: La Pizzeria Restaurant in Canton and Zoom availability; Contact: Stark County Dental Society - Laura @ (330) 719-1297 or mail@starkcountydentalsociety.org.
- 18 **"There's no Me in Team..... Wait! Yes, There is!"**; **"I've Got a Few Tricks up my Sleeve"**; **"Drill, Fill & Bill"**; **"Navigating into the World of Biofilm: Are you Ready?"**; Speakers: Jeffrey Horowitz, DMD, FAGD; Timothy Bizga, DDS, FAGD; Caryn Tierney, RDH, BSDH, MA; CE: 3 each; Location: Canton; Contact: Stark County Dental Society @ (330) 305-6637.
- 19 **"Defensive Practice of Dentistry" & "Financial Strategies for your Dental Practice"**; Speakers: Attorney Scott Sandrock & 415 Group; CE: 3 each; Location: Canton; Contact: Stark County Dental Society @ (330) 305-6637.

September

- 9 **GM#3 "The Genesis of the Mercy GPR"**; Speaker: Dr. Andrew Wojtkowski; CE: None (general interest); Location: Alliance Country Club in Alliance and Zoom availability; Contact: Stark County Dental Society - Laura @ (330) 719-1297 or mail@starkcountydentalsociety.org.
- 17 **USIII Specialists Day** (7 specialists to present 45 min segments); Speaker: various; CE: 7; Location: La Pizzeria Restaurant in Canton; Contact: Stark County Dental Society - Laura @ (330) 719-1297 or mail@starkcountydentalsociety.org.

October

- 15 **"Pharmacological Considerations in Dental Practice: Are You Up to Date?"**; Speaker: Dr. Daniel Becker; CE: 6; Location: Dayton; Contact: Dayton Dental Society @ (937) 294-2808.
- 29 **"The 4 P's of Pediatric Dentistry: Physiology, Pharmacology, Psychology and Phamily" & "You Want to Do What to My Child?"**; Speaker: David Rothman, DDS; CE: 6.5; Location: Cincinnati; Contact: Cincinnati Dental Society email: vicki@cincinnatiadental.org or www.cincinnatiadental.org.

November

- 4 **"Phantom of the Opera-tory" & "Take It on the Run Baby"**; Speakers: Dr. Thomas Viola; CE: 6; Location: Youngstown; Contact: Corydon Palmer Dental Society email: director@corydonpalmer.org.
- 5 **US IV TBD**; Speaker: Dr. John Svirsky; CE: 7; Location: La Pizzeria Restaurant in Canton; Contact: Stark County Dental Society - Laura @ (330) 719-1297 or mail@starkcountydentalsociety.org.
- 19 **"Being All That We Can Be: Changing Perspective to Change Reality"**; Speaker: Kirk Behrendt; CE: 6.5; Location: Cincinnati; Contact: Cincinnati Dental Society email: vicki@cincinnatiadental.org or www.cincinnatiadental.org.



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Dental Insurance Corner

DentaQuest provides answers to frequently asked questions

By Christopher A. Moore, MA
ODA Director of Dental Services

Effective May 1, 2020, CareSource transitioned the administration of the dental component of its Medicaid HMO product to DentaQuest. A number of issues have emerged as a result of this transition. Representatives of DentaQuest and the Ohio Dental Association, through the ODA Medicaid Working Group, have been working together to identify and then address issues of mutual concern as a result of the transition.

DentaQuest has provided the following information based on feedback and the most asked questions it has received from the ODA and practicing dentists.

The ODA will provide updates in the future as additional information is developed and/or outstanding issues are resolved.

GENERAL

Who do I contact if I have any questions regarding the administration of Ohio Medicaid for CareSource?

Please email Ohproviderengagement@Dentaquest.com. Be sure to include your business TIN and county in the subject line.

CLAIMS

I previously was receiving Rural Rates in my county; does this continue with DentaQuest?

If your office is in one of the counties listed below, you will be paid the Rural rate differential of 5% above standard Medicaid rates.

My claims are being paid with URBAN rates and my office is in a RURAL county?

DentaQuest made an update on 9/17/20 as urban rates were not being paid correctly. All claims impacted were identified and reprocessed for dates of service prior to this update. Providers were paid the difference between the Ohio standard rates and the rural rates which was a 5% increase. All claims processed since the change have been processed correctly.

I am an Out of Network provider and it appears as though my reimbursement rate is paid less than the Ohio Medicaid Rates.

DentaQuest made an update on 9/10/20 as Out of Network providers should have been paid 100% of standard Ohio Medicaid. If you have claims that paid at 98% and never corrected, please send an email to: OHProviderEngagement@DentaQuest.com

OHIO RURAL COUNTIES

- Adams
- Ashland
- Ashtabula
- Athens
- Auglaize
- Champaign

- Clinton
- Columbiana
- Coshocton
- Crawford
- Darke
- Defiance
- Erie
- Fayette
- Gallia
- Guernsey
- Hancock
- Hardin
- Harrison
- Henry
- Highland
- Hocking
- Holmes
- Huron
- Jackson
- Knox
- Logan
- Marion
- Meigs
- Mercer
- Monroe
- Morgan
- Muskingum
- Noble
- Ottawa
- Paulding

- Perry
- Pike
- Preble
- Putnam
- Ross
- Sandusky
- Scioto
- Seneca
- Shelby
- Tuscarawas
- Van Wert
- Vinton
- Washington
- Wayne
- Williams
- Wyandot

CLINICAL/AUTHORIZATIONS

Will DentaQuest use the same clinical criteria as CareSource (e.g., multiple surface restorations and composite vs. amalgam fillings)?

There are some differences with how these benefits are handled under DentaQuest. Refer to the Office Reference Manual (Section 14), which will help to standardize criteria between various plans.

See DENTAQUEST, page 9

ODA members who would like to submit a dental insurance related question, problem or concern may do so by sending the appropriate information to the ODA Dental Insurance Working Group, 1370 Dublin Road, Columbus, OH 43215, or 614-486-0381 FAX, or chrism@oda.org. To see past issues of the Dental Insurance Corner, visit www.oda.org/news and choose the category "ODA Today" and subcategory "Dental Insurance Corner."



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Please contact us if you have started a new practice or have a group renewal that is off-calendar year to discuss special enrollment qualifications.

Questions? Contact Us!



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insurance@oda.org

DENTAQUEST, from page 8**What is the difference between a prior authorization and a pre-payment review?**

Please refer to the Office Reference Manual to determine if a prior authorization or pre-payment review is required for the services being requested.

Prior authorizations are recommended for multiple procedures and are outlined in the plan benefit grids. Prior authorizations are required for all ortho codes and inpatient or outpatient treatment in any hospital or surgery center. All other services that say "yes" in the authorization column are subject to pre-payment review (Benefit table A).

There are some CDT codes that do not require Prior Authorization but may require Pre-Payment Review such as codes D7220 and D7230. Some providers may refer to Pre-Payment Review as a Post Service Review. This review requires the provider to submit supporting documentation (i.e. pre-operative x ray(s)) relative to the procedure for claims payment consideration. It is important to understand that documentation must support the charges billed. DentaQuest utilizes this

best practice to ensure all providers are in alignment with billable services.

How does a provider submit a Prior authorization?

Send the prior authorization through your clearinghouse to DentaQuest at Payor ID CX014; enter the prior authorization on DentaQuest's Provider Web Portal at <https://govservices.dentaquest.com/>; or fax the request to 262-241-7150

For expedited requests where the patient's condition warrants immediate care (appointment scheduled immediately), please mark urgent or expedited on the prior authorization form in the notes section.

In instances where there is no time for a prior authorization and the services are not ORTHO, or operating room services, please submit a claim with supporting documentation as outlined in the ORM.

Does DentaQuest require a prior authorization for D7220 (removal of impacted tooth on the soft tissue) or 7230 (removal of impacted tooth partially bony)?

DentaQuest does not require a prior authorization for this code. However, Den-

taQuest does require a pre-payment review. A pre-payment review (or post service review), requires the provider to submit supporting documentation (i.e. pre-operative x ray(s)) relative to the procedure for claims payment. By requiring a prepayment review, this in no way delays any sort of member treatment. DentaQuest utilizes this best practice to ensure providers are in alignment with billable services.

If providers want D7220/D7230 reviewed prior to services being rendered, they have the ability to submit these codes for a prior authorization. This is not a required authorization but is an option for those needing clinical support prior to services being rendered.

Please remember that extractions of an asymptomatic tooth is not a covered benefit. Symptomatic conditions would include pain and/or infection or demonstrated malocclusion cause a shifting of existing dentition. Evidence of such will need to be provided during the pre-payment review process.

Always refer to the Ohio Reference Manual for an outline of limitations, required documentation, etc.

Callahan Memorial Award: Dr. Anthony R. Volpe

By ODA Staff

The late Dr. Anthony Volpe was a pioneer in clinical dental research and preventive dentistry. In recognition of his efforts, he received the 2020 Callahan Memorial Award from the Ohio Dental Association.

Volpe received his Bachelor of Science Degree in chemistry from Seton Hall University in 1954 and then went on to serve in the military as a lieutenant in the U.S. Army. He received his DDS degree from Seton Hall College of Medicine and Dentistry in 1960 (now Rutgers School of Dental Medicine), and a Master of Science Degree in Biological Sciences from Rutgers in 1966.

After dental school, Volpe opened a dental practice in New Jersey and then went on to join Colgate-Palmolive where he worked for 52 years. He retired as Colgate's vice president of scientific affairs in 2013, but remained active until recently.

During his career at Colgate, he established the company's first dental clinic and co-created the Volpe-Manhold Index, a method of measuring dental calculus. He also studied the efficacy of fluoride and other compounds, which eventually became active ingredients in Colgate's toothpaste.

Volpe published more than 200 scientific publications, gave presentations worldwide, and holds many U.S. patents.

Volpe served as a clinical professor of pharmacology at the Fairleigh-Dickinson University School of Dentistry and a clinical professor of periodontics at the University of Medicine and Dentistry New Jersey Dental School.

At Rutgers University, Volpe helped create educational programs and fund the construction of several capital projects. He also established several scholarships for dental students.

Volpe served as president of the American Dental Association Foundation, and the ADA and ADA Foundation named a research center in his honor in 2012. He also served as president of the Essex County Dental Association, vice president and trustee of the Academy of Medicine of New Jersey and editor of the Journal of the New Jersey Dental Association.

Volpe served on technical committees of several worldwide dental organizations,

See VOLPE, page 13

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NE Cleveland Suburb: Collecting \$380K/-

year. Mix of FFS/PPO patients. Low overhead. 3 ops. Eaglesoft. Seller retiring.

N. Central Ohio: Small but profitable practice in great downtown area. Grossing \$150K. Motivated seller.

Columbus: 100% FFS practice. Operating part-time, collecting \$180K per year. Desirable location on west side. 6 ops.

NE Cleveland Suburb: Grossing \$220K/- year. Mix of FFS/PPO patients. Paperless. Digital PAN. CBCT. Recently remodeled.

NE Cincinnati Suburb: Collecting \$530K+ per year. Mix of FFS/PPO. 1200 pts, 15 new pts./month. Paperless & digital.

Dayton Area: General practice with 2 locations. Mix of FFS and PPO with collections over \$750K. 4 ops per location.

North Central Ohio Orthodontic: Started from scratch in 2015. Revenue over \$300K on 10 days a month. 100% FFS. 4 chairs.

Butler County: Primarily FFS with over 1000 active pts. \$185K in collections. Digital Pano. Real estate available.

Cincinnati: Over \$430K in revenue. 2500

active patients; 40 new patients a month. 5 ops, room to expand. Building for sale.

NE Cleveland Suburb: Grossing \$400K. 4 ops. Mix of FFS, PPO & Medicaid. 2500+ active patients, 40 new patients monthly.

Stark County: Grossing over \$600K. Mix of FFS and PPO. Digital with 7 ops, room to expand. 1400 active patients.

Clermont County: Grossing \$480k. 3 ops with room for expansion. Paperless with digital x-ray and digital PAN.

NW Ohio: Collecting \$325K per year on 3 days/week. Paperless and digital. Refers many procedures out. Very low overhead.

Columbus: Grossing \$325K/year on 3 days a week. Mix of FFS & PPO. 4 ops with room to expand.

SE Ohio: Mostly FFS. \$188K in revenue. 2200 active pts, 20 new patients a month. Located on busy street.

Dayton: Grossing \$360K on 2 days/week. Mix of FFS, PPO and Medicaid. 3 ops, room for expansion. 1400 active pts.

North of Columbus: \$300K/year in revenue. 1500 active patients, 28 new patients/month. 3 ops, room to expand.

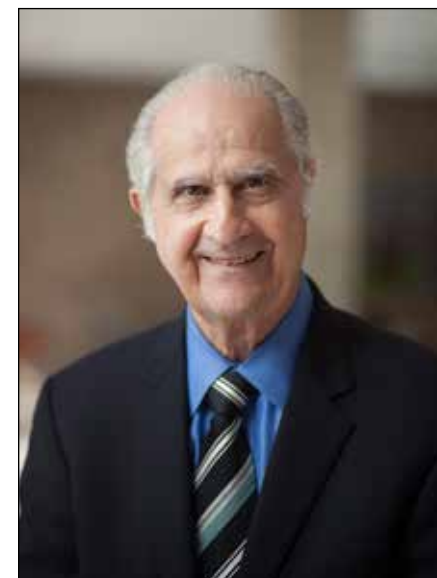
NE of Akron: All FFS. \$350K in revenue. 4 ops with room to expand. Real estate available. Located on busy road.

SE of Toledo: Revenue of \$700K. Free standing building, high visibility. 3100+ active pts, 50 new pts/month. 5 ops.

Stark County: Collecting \$480K/year. Mix of FFS and PPO. Eaglesoft. 4 ops. Digital xray & PAN. Great visibility. Seller retiring.



Dr. Chester Torkonoo
has acquired the practice of
Dr. Theresa McKinney
Troy, OH



The late Dr. Anthony Volpe was the 2020 recipient of the Callahan Memorial Award from the Ohio Dental Association.

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The Explorer

Matthew J. Messina, DDS
Executive Editor

The great reset

Welcome to 2021. New year. Same virus. New vaccine. New hope!

Many people loudly expressed that they wanted to bid adieu to 2020. As “adieu” is French for “goodbye forever,” I can certainly empathize with that emotion. Living on the west side of Cleveland for 30 years, I’ve become accustomed to the “Irish Goodbye” as an excellent way to move on, as well.

For those of you not familiar with the concept, an Irish Goodbye is leaving quietly out the side door of a party or bar without formally saying goodbye to the hosts. The Irish understand what can often be an awkward process of leaving a crowded party. Irish Goodbyes are the opposite of an Irish welcome; they are fast, quick and final. One moment you’re there, the next moment you’re in a speeding Uber. *Fait accompli* ...

Rather than just racing to put as much distance as possible from 2020, I have been thinking about how we can find a way to generate more positive momentum.

COVID-19 has shown us that the fabric of society is thin and subject to wear and tear. It has forced us to slow down and re-consider priorities and relationships. To see what really matters. One thing I keep hearing is that “the vaccine will allow us to return to normal.” It saddens me to admit it, but I think that’s a myth. I don’t see any value to a discussion that begins with “return to normal” or even “a new normal.” We have moved well beyond that.

If anything, the vaccine gives us a chance to change our thinking. We have the opportunity at a “great reset.” We get a do-over and can start again. People want to “get back” but we must seize the opportunity of a way forward. Please allow me to forego a discussion of the virology and search for herd immunity, while focusing only on the psychological aspect of the arrival of the vaccine. I have faith in the protective value of the vaccine in reducing the spread of the virus as we work to reach herd immunity. I also believe that we need to embrace the value of the positive energy that comes from faith in the protective value of the vaccine.

As a society, we have invested in science and technology. Science comes from the Latin word for “to know” and

technology comes from the Greek word meaning “to make.” In the past, science was about learning why things were, developing understanding and finding answers. Technology empowers us to make things new, which brings responsibility to make things better.

Medicine isn’t static. It’s dynamic. Dentists can speak to whole body health and mindfulness in lifestyle and habits. Discussions about the virus mean that the average patient has heard the word “comorbidities” and is open to a better understanding of what that may mean. We talk about life being a work in progress. It takes work to achieve progress. It takes time, effort and energy. How can we make things better? Not by going back to where we were before.

Time is a continuum, relentlessly moving forward. We find ourselves now in the depth of the valley. We shouldn’t try to go back the way we came and find where we were. Good leadership seeks a path forward that climbs the other side. We need to see what the view looks like from the far ridge and into a brighter future.

We can enter 2021 with more optimism, less COVID, excellent opportunities for economic growth and more dental need. Leadership finds the opportunities in a crisis and develops plans to capitalize on them. Our patients are more ready to listen to our recommendations about the value of dental health as a pillar of overall

body health and wellness. We understand the interrelations of oral and systemic disease. We need to promote overall health and wellness, since we have everyone’s attention. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 60% of American adults have a chronic disease, 70% of American deaths are caused by a chronic disease, and 72% of our population is overweight. A body that is physically unhealthy is at greatly reduced capacity to fight infection. Whether it’s COVID or another pathogen, an unhealthy population is at risk. COVID-19 put a name and a face to an ingoing danger in the American public. It is in everyone’s benefit to use that heightened attention to produce change for the better.

The great reset comes when we move beyond the fear of the virus to the realization that we can navigate the world that is, not as it once was. It may not be a world that we would want, but we can design a future that works. We have the chance to make our future be the best that it can be, by embracing change and supporting each other. We can identify risks and suggest solutions, finding a path to a new and better day. If we accomplish this task, then we have taken a horrible year and done more than just survive. Turning the page has value when we can write a new and better ending to the story!

Dr. Messina may be reached at docmessina87@gmail.com.



Just Think About It

Paul S. Casamassimo, DDS, MS,
FAAPD, FRCSEd, Guest Columnist

It’s a great state and country we live in!

Had enough of politics and COVID-19? This column is a little different. I hope after reading it, you’ll feel better about the state and country we live in. My wife, Maureen, and I volunteered to be poll workers after reading pleas from election officials that fear of COVID-19 had diminished the ranks of those willing to work. It turned out to be an experience of a lifetime and one I’d highly recommend to anyone who’s soured on our democracy. S selfishly, as a schoolkid who wanted JFK to win, a twenty-something who marched to bring my friends back from Viet Nam, and now just an angry gray baby-boomer, I wanted to be a part of the most momentous election of my life.

The first thing that strikes you about the poll-people is that this is citizen-soldiering in peace time. People of every persuasion, color, age and economic appearance work our elections. We joined retirees, single parents, homemakers, teachers, veterans and persons with disabilities – learned with them and were taught by



Headed to poll worker boot camp.

them. No strutting or shaming here, just a commitment to do the best possible job and follow the rules. And a belief in the right of Americans to vote. It occurred to me during this process that while I didn’t know someone who has died from COVID-19, I knew of several who died defending our right to vote.

You learn it’s hard not to have your vote count in Ohio. Our state gives everyone a fair shot at proving Ohio citizenship and placing a vote. Whether maskless, ID-less, adorned in political garb, disabled, or fearing the pandemic at home, you still get to complete a vote one way or another and have it count if it clears all the hurdles to validation. Drive-by, mail-in, in-person, and absentee – all of us count if we should, and don’t if we shouldn’t. Anyone can complain about it, but in our little Ohio precinct and likely across the state, the election was fair.

I was struck by the organization of the



On the frontlines of Election Day 2020

system, its ability to manage every contingency, and train even the most novice of volunteers (which we were)! Like the health of our people, the health of this democracy is in the hands of professionals. For us, the Franklin County Board of Elections was a source of reassurance that in spite of months of political bickering, baseless statements, false news and threats of fraud, the system works. I ven-

ture to say this was the case throughout our state and country. In Ohio and probably other states, every action, change and poll decision on Election Day had to have agreement of both a Republican and Democrat poll leader, one of the few times both parties have to agree for the

See GREAT, page 13

The views expressed in the monthly columns of the “ODA Today” are solely those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the view of the Ohio Dental Association (ODA). The columns are intended to offer opinions, information and general guidance and should not be construed as legal advice or as an endorsement by the ODA. Dentists should always seek the advice of their own legal counsel regarding specific circumstances.

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including the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, the American Dental Association, the International Association for Dental Research, the World Health Organization and the Federation Dentaire Internationale.

He also served on many boards, including the Foundation of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey and the National Foundation of Dentistry for the Handicapped.

Volpe received many honors and awards, including an honorary degree in dentistry from the Dental Faculty of the University of Rome, the ADA Distinguished Service Award, the American Association of Public Health Dentistry's Special Merit Award and the Hadassah Special Award from the Hebrew University in Israel. He was inducted into the Rutgers Hall of Distinguished Alumni in 2015.

The Ohio State University named the Volpe prize in his honor, which is presented for the best clinical research in periodontology by students in dentistry.

Outside of dentistry, Volpe and his wife, Marlene, supported many cultural organizations including art galleries and children's programs at museums.

Volpe was notified of this honor prior to his passing away on Oct. 8, 2020 at the age of 87.

The Callahan Memorial Award recipient receives a \$5,000 gift to be donated to a charity of their choice. The Callahan Memorial Award Commission has donated the gift to the Anthony R. Volpe, DDS, MS Endowed Scholarship Fund at Rutgers School of Dental Medicine.

The Callahan Memorial Award Commission was established in 1920 by the ODA to honor the work of John Ross Callahan, one of Ohio's noted dental researchers and a leader in organized dentistry. Since its establishment, the award has continued to grow in prominence in the dental profession.

GREAT, from page 11

good of the country!

It's a long day at the polls – starts at 5:30 a.m. and runs until after 8 p.m. with only sparse rest. Running up to Election Day are several hours of on-line training and two on-site practice sessions to make the process run smoothly. The night before, you set up the polling location and at the end of the day, workers gather to count, recount and observe the counting of the day's votes and those are certified at the site before everything is taken down and locked up. You can add secure to fair when describing our Ohio elections.

COVID-19 made the job a little more complicated but once again, our state protected all of us and our vote with mail-in options, drive by voting and PPE available at sites. My job early in the day was to wipe down the cafeteria tables we used to hold voting machines and voter registration books. If my kids' former middle school where our poll was located is any indication, we ought to be more concerned about the safety of lunchtime than a rigged election! I'm sure some of the yuk I wiped from tabletops had Casamassimo DNA mixed with long ago tuna salad! Now add safe to fair and secure!

The excitement of the day revolved around the failure of the electronic voter registration system we had been trained on and seeing neighbors and friends who had been hunkered down amidst COVID-19 precautions or drifted out of our lives as kids grew up and families downsized. Our registration machines eventually were shelved and replaced with signature books. Point goes to the late Hugo Chavez of Venezuela, I guess, who somehow influenced U.S. elections from the great beyond, according to election conspiracy theorists. (My wife and I suggested that the state just do what every senior citizen knows to do when electronics fail – turn it off and on again! Apparently, it was a bit more complex ...) Once we went to human contact in registering voters now lining up, my wife quietly reminded me of who was whose parent, ex-spouse, child's teacher, or their role in the last 30 years of our lives ... as child's coach, know-it-all, or their location on her cerebrally indelible "naughty-and-nice" list! Her ability to see through masks amazed me!

Regrets on the day? Well, there was one violation of Ohio "law" as the volunteers' buffet lunch was canceled due to COVID-19, in direct conflict with a little known Ohio Constitutional amendment that says that two or more Ohioans cannot meet without food (yeah, I'm making that up, but I was really looking forward to the buffet shown prominently in training videos). The traditional PTO bake sale table, unavoidable on the way to voter registration, was also noticeably absent, a victim of COVID-19, and in my humble opinion, an energy bar is not the same as a gooey breakfast bun!

By the time this goes to press, (hopefully) the election and its messy aftermath will be history, Ohio people will be moving toward a maskless, vaccinated and more intimately distanced new normal, and we'll look back on 2020 as a bump in life's road. To be totally transparent, volunteers do get paid nominally for working the polls, but our reward was the chance to serve our state and country in a time of turmoil.

I felt our 2020 election was safe, secure and fair and you should too!

Dr. Casamassimo may be reached at casamassimo.1@osu.edu.

ODA Today Jobs & Ads Board

Text ads appear in each issue of *ODA Today*. The cost is \$55 for members (\$88 for non-members) for the first 40 words. Each additional word is \$1. Ads may be submitted via mail or fax to the attention of Amy Szmania, advertising manager, or by email to amy@oda.org. The deadline to place, cancel or modify text ads is the 1st of the month prior to the month of publication.

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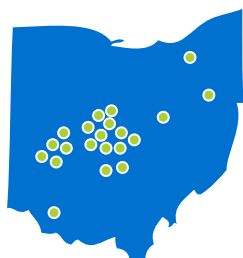
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