ADVOCATE. INFORM. SERVE

A PUBLICATION OF THE OHIO DENTAL ASSOCIATION FOCUSING ON DENTISTRY IN OHIO.

#### September 2021 | Volume 96, Issue 9

#### **QUICKBITES**

#### **COVID-19 UPDATE FOR ODA ANNUAL SESSION**

All in-person events hosted by the ODA Annual Session will follow any city, county, state, federal and/or CDC COVID-19 mandates in place at the time of the event. All in-person attendees must abide by ODA's policies. Practices currently scheduled to be in place include hand sanitation stations throughout the event venues, the availability of face masks and shields, ticketing/ registration of all in-person courses and events, and classrooms set not to exceed 75 percent capacity.

Visit www.oda.org/events-ce/annualsession-2021/ for the latest information and updates.

## **INSIDE**

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## **EXPERIENCE THE 2021 ODA ANNUAL SESSION IN-PERSON** AND VIRTUALLY—

Annual Session, Events & CE

#### By ODA Staff

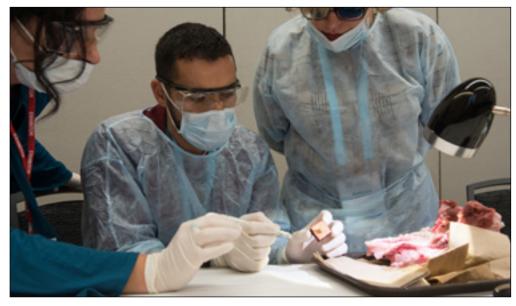
The 2021 ODA Annual Session is Sept. 30-Oct. 2 at the Greater Columbus Convention Center. This year's event features 132 in-person and 33 virtual CE credit hours so there is something for everyone!

"I am very, very excited about ODA's 2021 Annual Session. The last 18-plus months have been very difficult, often depressing. But now, we finally have an opportunity to attend outstanding CE courses and visit with colleagues and friends in one very convenient location," said Dr. Steve Moore, a past ODA president. "As an added bonus, we can enjoy great entertainment. I look very much forward to seeing everyone in Columbus!"

#### SEE NATIONALLY-KNOWN CE **LECTURERS**

The 2021 ODA Annual Session provides attendees the opportunity to see 45 great speakers in their own backyard. This year's speaker lineup features noted nationallyknown lecturers including Dr. Uche Odiatu, Dr. Stanley Malamed, Dr. Josh Austin, Judy Bendit, RDH and Judy Kay Mausoff to name a few.

Courses can be added online throughout Annual Session and at the on-site



Participate in hands-on workshops at the 2021 ODA Annual Session which takes place Sept. 30-Oct. 2.

registration desk. Visit www.oda.org for information about what CE courses are still available.

## REGISTER NOW AT ODA.ORG



CONNECT. LEARN. EXCEL.

#### ATTEND HANDS-ON **WORKSHOPS**

For nearly two years, the ability to participate in hands-on learning has been non-existent. At this year's ODA Annual Session, 10 different workshops are available for dentists and dental team members. From shading to appliances for sleep disorders, Silver Diamine Fluoride (SDF) to CAMBRA integration, and radiography

See ANNUAL SESSION, page 5

## NEW DENTISTS RECONNECT, ENJOY TIME WITH FAMILIES, ANIMALS AT NEW DENTIST ZOO DAY-

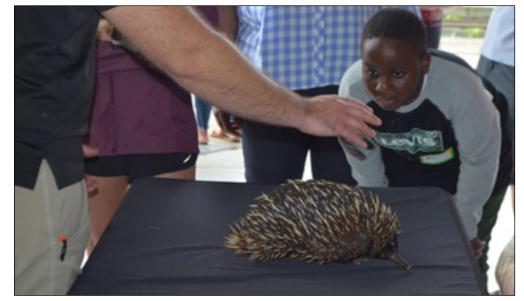
Events & CE, Membership Benefits

#### By ODA Staff

The ODA Subcouncil on New Dentists hosted an event for new dentists and their families at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium on July 17. This was the first in-person event the ODA was able to hold in over a year due to the COVID-19 pandemic and attendees enjoyed being able to reconnect and network in-person again. 148 people attended the event, including 50 new dentists.

"This was my first year attending the New Dentist Zoo Day. A few of my friends in the field have attended before and have always said great things about the event," said Dr. Amar Vagadia, a general dentist in Doylestown and a member of the Subcouncil on New Dentists. "In trying to navigate these last two years, I received a lot of advice from the ODA in general and especially so from other new dentist members, some of whom I hadn't even met in person. It really showed me the importance of networking and being active in the dental community. The zoo event is a great way to do this in a fun and casual way. In addition, meeting everyone's family is a huge plus! I am looking forward to the next New Dentist Zoo Day."

Dentists in practice for 10 years or less were invited to come with their families to the zoo for the day, have lunch with other new dentists and attend a private animal



showing.

During the event, attendees saw a penguin, an armadillo and a skunk.

"I thought this would be a good opportunity to meet other dentists and bring my kids to the zoo! My favorite part was the animal presentation," said Dr. Ashley Briody, an oral pathologist in Westerville. "I think it's a great family friendly activity for new dentists to get to know their peers in the area. My family and I really enjoyed it."

The ODA hosts events specifically for new dentists throughout the year. The 2021 ODA Annual Session features several

events for dentists who have been in practice for 10 years or less. And ODA members who qualify as new dentists will receive a one-time \$50 discount on any paid CE course they add to their registration.

A few highlights for new dentists include:

- The New Dentist Social will be Thursday, Sept. 30 at Denmark from 9-11 p.m.
  - MATCH @ ODA Annual Session is a job match event for those interested selling or buying a dental practice, or looking for an opportunity to become

See ZOO, page 5



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www.oda.org



**REGISTER NOW** WWW.ODA.ORG

## FACT SHEET FOR **DENTISTS IN LIGHT** OF DELTA VARIANT SURGE

Coronavirus/COVID-19

#### By ODA Staff

In light of the recent surges in COVID-19 cases around the country, the American Dental Association recently released a new fact sheet containing information about the Delta variant and why vaccination and masks continue to be recommended by the ADA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The fact sheet states that the ADA and the CDC continue to recommend the use of mitigation strategies, including being vaccinated against the virus, using masks in the dental practice setting and social distancing. The ADA fact sheet also discusses the fact that the Delta variant has become the dominant strain of cases in the U.S. and "appears to be more transmissional than previous strains."

The fact sheet also notes that "vaccinated individuals can still become infected and transmit the virus to others." According to the fact sheet, 95% of hospitalizations and 97.4% of deaths in the U.S. are from the unvaccinated population. Similarly, according to data from the state of Ohio, 98.4% of hospitalizations in Ohio are of unvaccinated people.

The ADA fact sheet also states "given the potential of unvaccinated individuals, including children, as well as vaccinated individuals to be infected with and transmit variants of the virus, the CDC recommends everyone 2 years of age or older in areas of substantial or high transmission, regardless of vaccination status, wear a mask that covers both nose and mouth when indoors and/or in the presence of crowds of people.

The Ohio State Dental Board continues to recommend that dental offices in Ohio follow the ADA and CDC guidelines, including observing social distancing, mitigation strategies and mask wearing.

You can access this fact sheet at http://www.ada.org/~/media/CPS/ Files/COVID/Virus\_Variants\_and\_ Vaccination SARS-CoV-2 Update. pdf.



Let the ODA know!

Online: www.oda.org

Email: membership@oda.org

> Phone: (800) 282-1526

Mail: Ohio Dental Association 1370 Dublin Road Columbus, OH 43215-1098

#### SAVE THE DATE FOR THE 2022 ODA LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Events & CE, Membership Benefits

The 2022 ODA Leadership Institute is scheduled for March 18-19, 2022 at the Hilton Polaris in Columbus.

Leadership Institute is the ODA's award-winning program developed to help all ODA members become more successful and effective leaders in their dental practice and their profession. Attendees consistently rank the event as one of the top leadership development workshops.

This event is free for ODA members as a benefit of membership. Watch your email and future issues of the "ODA Today" for full details on the ODA Leadership Institute and how to register.

#### WATCH OUT FOR IMPOSTERS CLAIMING TO BE FROM OSDB

Please be aware that there continues to be an impostor ring pretending to be the Ohio State Dental Board (OSDB) or a federal enforcement authority and trying to scam dentists of money. They are producing fraudulent documents with the OSDB logo and making threatening calls to dental offices. Additionally, they are threatening to revoke dental licenses and even go to the extent of threatening to issue a warrant for arrest unless they are paid thousands of dollars immediately for a bond. Please use common sense and sound judgement.

If you receive any such threats, please contact the Dental Board at (614) 466-2580 or dental.board@den.ohio.gov and also report the matter to your local law enforcement authority.

#### REGISTER YOUR 2022 GIVE KIDS A SMILE **EVENTS IN OCTOBER**

Events & CE, Give Kids a Smile, Membership Benefits

Dentists, their staff members and others planning to hold Give Kids A Smile (GKAS) events any time in 2022 should plan to register those activities in October 2021. Events registered between Oct. 1 and Nov. 15, 2021 will qualify to receive free products to support their events such as toothbrush and toothpaste giveaways and dental supplies to perform screenings, cleanings, fluoride ap-

Give Kids A Smile is one of the ODA's biggest access to care and oral health education efforts in Ohio, but it is made up of individual events planned by dentists, dental team members, dental societies and others. Events range from oral health education in schools to a free day of preventive care in a private dental office to a large-scale event at a dental school. Most GKAS events had to be canceled in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic but many of these events were able to be rescheduled and held in 2021.

It is now more important than ever to continue to address the needs of the underserved children who require these services with a GKAS event in your

Dentists who already provide free dental care days to children or who send their staff to local schools for oral health education presentations are encouraged to sign up those activities as GKAS events. Registered events benefit from free products, ODA staff support and volunteer CE credit for dentists and hygienists providing free clinical care. The GKAS Ohio program is also stronger when more events are registered and reported.

Registration will open in October and dentists or their staff who are interested in GKAS can contact Carley Circosta, ODA manager of public service, at carley@ oda.org or (800) 282-1526 to learn more about GKAS and to determine if they are already holding GKAS-qualifying events. For more details and to register an event, visit www.oda.org/get-involved/in-your-community/give-kids-a-smile/.

#### AT A GLANCE: **IMPORTANT DATES & EVENTS**

Dates & Deadlines

ODA Office Closed for Holiday

ODA Wellness Trust Open Enrollment 10/15-11/15

Events

9/30 -10/2 ODA Annual Session

3/18-3/19/22 ODA Leadership Institute

#### Meetings

**Executive Committee** 9/20 **Annual Session Committee** 

10/18 Subcouncil on New Dentists

10/29 Subcouncil on Diversity and Inclusion

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The Ohio Dental Association, although formally accepting and publishing the reports of committees and the essays read before it, holds itself wholly free from responsibility for the opinions, theories or criticisms therein expressed, except as otherwise declared by formal resolution adopted by the association. ODA TODAY (USPS# 0009-846) is published monthly for \$15 per year by the Ohio Dental Association, 1370 Dublin Road, Columbus, OH 43215-1098. Periodicals postage paid at Columbus, OH. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Ohio Dental Association, 1370 Dublin Road, Columbus, OH 43215-1098. Inquiries regarding advertising should be directed to the advertising manager, at (614) 486-2700 or (800) 282-1526.



**ODA UPDATES** 

David J. Owsiany, ODA Executive

THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

Annual Session, Events & CE

The last eighteen months have brought a remarkable amount of change and turmoil, including restrictions on dental practices for six weeks in the spring of 2020 and limitations on many other businesses for even longer. In-person meetings gave way to Zoom calls and takeout food replaced eating dinner out. Schools closed their doors for long periods of time and online learning became the norm. Wearing masks and using hand sanitizer became commonplace and many people experienced COVID-19-related sickness and loss either directly or through family and friends

Recent months have brought the beginning of a "return to normalcy" with the lifting of mask mandates and restrictions on businesses, schools and other activities. As vaccines became more widespread and infection rates lessened, people have begun returning to their normal activities of life.

And one of those "normal activities" for Ohio dentists is attending the ODA Annual Session! As you know, last year, we were forced to hold Annual Session as an online only event. And for much of this year, we have been holding meetings virtually. So we are really excited to host the 2021 ODA Annual Session as an in-person meeting. The ODA Annual Session Committee has put an outstanding program together

DDS, MD

## **IN-PERSON ODA ANNUAL SESSION:** A RETURN TO NORMALCY-

for this year's session, which will be held in Columbus from September 30 through October 2.

We are excited to host two im-

portant events - the Celebrating

Women in Dentistry event and the Callahan Celebration of Excellence - both of which will celebrate the profession of dentistry and its outstanding leaders. We will feature two keynote speakers - best-selling author Bertice Berry and comedian Greg Hahn - that will be open to all attendees. You and your staff will have the choice of attending in-person continuing education courses and workshops featuring dozens of high quality presenters, including Dr. Stanley Malamed on dental emergencies, Dr. Josh Austin on dental materials and Judy Kay Mausoff on techniques to enhance

The 2021 ODA Annual Session will also feature an in-person exhibit hall where you can connect with vendors and comparison shop for dental supplies, equipment and other products and services. Of course. throughout the weekend, there will be other exciting events where you can reconnect with your colleagues, including the BASH celebrating ODA President Dr. David Kimberly and the New Dentist Social.

customer service in the dental office.

Moreover, this year, all in-person attendees will also have access to more than 30 hours of virtual CE courses free with registration. For more information and to see the entire program, check out the Annul Session section on www.oda.org.

Come celebrate the "return to normalcy" by attending the in-person 2021 ODA Annul Session!

Throughout my years in organized

dentistry, more than once I have heard



CONNECT, LEARN, EXCEL

The 2021 ODA Annual Session is a hybrid meeting this year with an in-person meeting in Columbus, Ohio from September 30 to October 2, 2021, and a virtual component available from September 30 through December 31, 2021. Attendees have the ability to participate in-person and take advantage of up to 33 hours of free virtual CE courses.

#### REGISTRATION **INCLUDES:**

- Attendance at the in-person Annual Session in Columbus.
- The ability to register for inperson CE courses.
- Access to 33 hours of free CE available online from September 30 through December 31.
- Access to our in-person and virtual Exhibit Halls.

**VISIT WWW.ODA.ORG** FOR FULL DETAILS AND TO REGISTER.

suggested that "The flap of a butterfly's

wings might ultimately cause a tor-

## **BUTTERFLIES AND ORGANIZED DENTISTRY - SUCH STRANGE BEDFELLOWS** David Kimberly,

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE important point here. Real change can be brought about by an almost im-As I sit down to write this, my final perceptible tweaking. In the mid-20th ODA Today President's Message, I'm century, an unknown MIT meteorology struck by how quickly the time passed professor, Dr. Edward Lorenz, was do-NOW. Take a new colleague to a dental and how much more work there is to be ing some weather pattern predictions society meeting. Join a committee or done. I am also struck and wearied by on a computer, which was cutting council at the ODA. Make it a priority to the seemingly unending assault from all edge at the time. While entering data directions on the profession we all love. to rerun and verify some prediction Every day we are confronted with new tests, he rounded one of the twelve regulations, government mandates, variables in the system by a mere one ten-thousandth of a point. The resultchanges in insurance requirements, reimbursement issues, and rising dental ing changes where startling, changing school tuition not to mention the everthe predicted outcomes substantially. present threat of midlevel providers. What Dr. Lorenz found flew in the face And the list goes on. When one looks of the accepted classical understandat the totality of these assaults, the task ing of how the universe worked. With at hand is overwhelming even for the these findings, Dr. Lorenz postulated most hardcore of optimists. In order to that the smallest of changes can have not be paralyzed one must summon large consequences in any given systhe age old adages of "A journey of a tem. These new findings soon worked thousand miles begins with the first their way through the scientific comstep" or "How does an ant eat a whale?" munity. While discussing his findings The answer. "One bite at a time." and trying to illustrate his point, Lorenz

members say "What real difference nado" giving birth to the theory comcan we make?" This brings me to the monly known as the "Butterfly Effect". So my response to those who would ask what difference can we make is this, small acts can change the world in time. The key is to ACT and to act get to know your state representative by name and get them to know you. These are just a few simple ideas, but as Dr. Lorenz postulated, "No act is too small to make a difference."

As I leave my post and look over my shoulder, I am heartened by the faces I see eager to take up the mantle. Our organization has a great depth of talent from which to draw. Many very talented and dedicated professionals are ready to step up as I step down. So I say thank you. Thank you for the privilege of representing such an esteemed

I look forward to seeing all of you, in person, at the ODA Annual Session.



### HAVE A QUESTION?

Contact the ODA first!

Email:

www.oda.org Online: dentist@oda.org (800) 282-1526 (614) 486-2700



## HAVE A QUESTION **ABOUT** COVID-19 **AND YOUR** PRACTICE?

Coronavirus/COVID-19, Membership Benefits

The ODA has been working hard on your behalf and continues to provide resources and information to member dentists during the COVID-19 pandemic.

ODA members have access to a COVID-19 resource page on the ODA website. This member-only information includes:

- · Answers to frequently asked auestions
- Vaccine information.
- Guidelines and standards for dental offices.
- And much more!

Earlier this year, the ODA developed a free member-only CE course that provides an update on practicing dentistry during the COVID-19 pandemic including:

- Oral health issues noted during the pandemic.
- True statements about mRNA vaccines.
- Current data regarding risks for dentists and dental health care personnel to be infected with SARSCoV-2.

Member dentists who take the course and complete an online exam receive two CE credit hours. Dentists can access this member-only information and the free CE course at www.oda.org/member-center/resources/covid-19/.

ODA staff is available to answer questions and provide recommendations for member dentists. Contact the ODA at 614-486-2700 or via email at dentist@oda.org.

**VISIT THE COVID-19 RESOURCE PAGE ON** WWW.ODA.ORG.



Did you know you can download the required employment posters for free from oda.org?

Visit www.oda.org

4 | ODA TODAY | SEPTEMBER 2021



Eric S. Richmond, rvices

**LEGAL & LEGISLATIVE** 

Being a member of organized dentistry provides plenty of benefits. Those benefits range from savings on products and services used in dental offices to continuing education opportunities to legislative advocacy. Along with these benefits, your membership also offers you access to necessary information in the dental community. This information covers almost every aspect of the dental practice, from COVID updates and recommendations that we have seen throughout the last year to other legal and regulatory compliance resources.

In the last year the ODA legal and dental services department has fielded thousands of phone calls with questions from dental offices across the state on a variety of legal and regulatory issues. While a good number of the calls have been COVID specific, the other questions have common themes. In June, July and August this column will address the ten most common legal questions received from dental offices. Last month, the column addressed the issues of: (5) Interacting with Government Entities (4) Advertising and (3) Treatment of Patients with Separated, Unmarried or Divorced Parents. Thank you for following along for the last few months on these important issues. I hope they have been informative and if you have any questions please contact the ODA at 614-486-2700. And now for the last two issues...

#### 2.) EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

Employee problems can disrupt any small business but they have potential to do significant damage in dental practices where employees work closely with the public and in close proximity to other staff members. As a small business owner, one of the most difficult tasks for a dentist is handling employee issues, especially when it is necessary to confront an employee about deficiencies in their work. No matter if it is job performance, tardiness or interaction with the public or fellow employees confronting the issue may be difficult. However, implementing strong policies in your office can make these tasks much easier and make your handling of these issues more effective.

An important thing to remember in the realm of employee law is that Ohio is an employment-at-will state. This means that an employer can hire or fire someone for any reason or no reason as long as they are not doing so in a discriminatory manner. This is the law in Ohio but it is important to have an employee acknowledge that in the signing of your employment manual.

Just because Ohio is an employmentat-will state, doesn't mean that dentists should not keep employment records. It is wise for employers to conduct periodic reviews of all employees' performance and any issue that may arise. Having consistent documentation and using structured, progressive discipline ensures a uniform process that employers can rely on when making

## **TOP 10 LEGAL ISSUES IN A DENTAL OFFICE - FINAL EDITION**

employment decisions.

Implementing periodic performance reviews allows for a dentist to continuously evaluate employees and give important feedback to continue to set expectations. Doing performance tice and for new employees it may be important to conduct a few reviews in the first year of employment. As part of this process, the dentist must document strong and poor performance areas accurately. While accuracy is of the utmost importance in conducting reviews it is also important to be cautious to avoid anything in the review that could be seen as discriminatory.

Once a review is complete, employees should be asked to sign it and it should be maintained in the employee's personnel file. The periodic review process is important, however if a problem arises between reviews it is important to address the issue at that moment and document it in the employment file. Dealing with issues immediately can help cure the defi-

ciency and it will ensure that there are accurate accounts of the deficiency. This also provides accurate documentation if an employment decision needs to be made

Most businesses employ some form reviews at least yearly is common prac- of progressive discipline, including an oral warning, leading to a written warning explaining the potential consequences if the problem is not corrected. Finally, if the deficiency is not cured then formal action in the form of probation, suspension or termination follows. This process varies from business to business but the basic principles remain: the expectations and discipline should be clear to the employee and it should be documented in the employee's personnel file. The process is the important thing in these situations and should be clearly explained in an office employee manual.

Proper documentation of an employee's deficiencies will prove invaluable in the event that termination is warranted. An arsenal of documentation is a great deterrent to potential

#### **AT A GLANCE**

Creating a strong employment manual will allow for clarity in hiring and retaining employees and give you an avenue to follow the procedure if there is an employment issue.

**LEGAL & LEGISLATIVE** 

Consult with your malpractice provider, participating provider agreements, and the Ohio Revised Code when developing your record retention policy.

claims of wrongful termination or employment discrimination.

In addition to containing an employee's periodic reviews and disciplinary history, the dentist may also consider including other items as part of the personnel file. The original employment application and applicant resume, job description, salary history,

See LEGAL, page 13

Dr. Katie Dahlen Dr. Kyle Keller Meet us at the has joined the practice of has joined the practice of **ODA Annual Session** Dr. Andrew Marck Dr. Stephen Fabry September 30 - October 2 Cuyahoga Falls, OH Newtown, OH Booth 513 Dr. Thomas Rouse Dr. Chase Smith has joined the practice of has joined the practice of BridgeWay Dr. Jason Culley Dr. Stephen Huffman Columbus, OH Belpre, OH & ASSOCIATE PLACEMENT

#### **Practices for Sale**

Wayne Co: Grossing \$750K/year. Mostly FFS. 4 ops with 5th plumbled. Real estate available. Highly profitable. Seller retiring. NW OH Endo: Grossing \$1.6M/year. Thriving practice. Associates in place. Very profitable. RE available. CBCT, PBS endo. Butler Co: 5 nicely equipped ops. All

igital. Collecting \$1M/vear Medicaid. Very profitable.

Hamilton Co: Grossing \$650K/year. 4 ops. 3,000 sq/ft. Digital PAN, digital x-ray, Cerec. RE availble. Great visibility.

Toledo: Consitantly collects \$800K/year. 25 new pts per month. 4 ops with room to expand. Seller will stay for transition.

NE Cleveland Suburb: Collecting \$380K/year. Mix of FFS/PPO patients. Low overhead. 3 ops. Eaglesoft. Seller retiring. Columbus: 100% FFS practice. Operating part-time, collecting \$180K per year. Desirable location on west side. 6 ops.

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

NE Cleveland Suburb: Grossing \$400K. 4 ops. Mix of FFS, PPO & Medicaid. 2500+ active patients, 40 new patients monthly. Clermont County: Grossing \$480k. 3 ops

with room for expansion. Paperless with digital x-ray and digital PAN.

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

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

Mix of FFS, PPO and Medicaid. 3 ops, room for expansion. 1400 active pts.

NE of Akron: All FFS. \$350K in revenue. 4 ons 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. West Cleveland: Grossing \$750K per year. FFS/PPO. Paperless. 7 ops, room to

East Cleveland Suburb: 100% FFS, revenue \$1.7M, paperless with CBCT. 5 ops with room to expand.

Lake County: Grossing \$400K on only 18

clinical hours a week. 3 ops with one more

plumbed. FFS/PPO. Merger opportunity.

expand. Real estate for sale.

 Ashland Columbus Cleveland Suburb

Cincinnati

• Lima Mid-Ohio Vallev

Tuscarawas Co: 100% FFS practice with 6

ops. Digital x-ray, digital PAN. Real estate

Springfield: Shell practice with historic

revenue of \$500K. 3 fully equipped ops, 2

East Akron Suburb: 3 ops, room to

expand. Grossing \$250K per year.

Dayton: Grossing \$500K on 3 days/week.

Mix of FFS & PPO. 1700 active patients.

SW Ohio: Holistic practice in desirable

city. Collecting over \$950K per year. Digital

x-ray, digital PAN, Cerec. 5 ops with room.

East Cleveland Suburb: Grossing \$1.1M.

All FFS. 6 ops. Digital x-ray and CBCT.

Looking for a new associateship?

We have opportunities in the following areas:

Paperless. 30 new patients per month.

Digital x-ray, digital PAN, and Cerec.

available. Collecting \$450K per year.

more plumbed. Digital x-ray & PAN.

PPO/FFS. Real estate available.

 E of Columbus • N Canton Pedo

• SE of Cleveland

 NW Ohio Sandusky

SE Ohio

Toledo

N. Akron Suburbs

• W of Cleveland Youngstown

800-516-4640 | www.bridgewaytransitions.com | info@bridgewaytransitions.com

ANNUAL SESSION, from page 1

to endodontics, attendees have the opportunity to dive into learning like never before.

Visit www.oda.org to see what's available and snag a spot before these popular hands-on workshops sell out.

#### **SHOP THE IN-PERSON EXHIBIT HALL**

The Exhibit Hall is rated by ODA Annual Session attendees as one of the top reasons they attend the meeting each year. This year's Exhibit Hall features nearly 150 vendors, where attendees can comparison shop with the help of knowledgeable company representatives

"I always look forward to the Exhibit Hall at the ODA Annual Session because it is the one time of the year that I can compare all of the latest and greatest supplies and technology in dentistry all under one roof," said Dr. Kyle Bogan, senior exhibit chairman. "I am especially looking forward to the LIVE Exhibit Hall this year because it will not only give me a chance to actually visit with our exhibitors in person,

but also because it provides such an amazing opportunity for me to network with my friends and colleagues. I hope you join me at the 2021 ODA Annual Session."

#### **Exhibit Hall hours:**

- Thursday, Sept. 30 from 12 to 6:30
- Friday, Oct. 1. from 10 a.m. to 6:30
- Saturday, Oct. 2 from 9 a.m. to 1

For those who only wish to shop in the Exhibit Hall, ODA Annual Session will feature a free Exhibits Only Pass each day. Any dentist or staff can register in this category for no fee, but it does not include any advantage of other registration categories and can only be used one day.

## **ENJOY FUN SPECIAL**

There is a wide variety of special events at this year's Annual Session for attendees to enjoy. Thursday, Sept. 30 will feature an "Outrageous, Fun and Ridiculous" comedian, Greg Hahn, the

Visit our OhioDDS Vendor

Partners at ODA Annual Session

The OhioDDS group purchasing organization

gives members exclusive access to discounted pricing

on dental supplies, equipment, and services.

always popular New Dentist Social and Hall; The Callahan Celebration of Excela Dinner with the Speakers event. On lence; and The Bash! Celebrating 2021

Shop with nearly 150 vendors live and in-person in the Exhibit Hall at the 2021 ODA Annua

Bertice Berry, Ph.D. and can attend MATCH @ ODA Annual Session; Cel-**REGISTER NOW** 

Friday, Oct. 1, attendees will hear from

ebrating Women in Dentistry Honoring

2020 ODA President, Dr. Sharon Par-

New Dentist Reception in the Exhibit

sons and Other Female Dental Leaders: **ODA Annual Session:** a Dental Student, Dental Resident and Online at www.oda.org/events-

ODA President Dr. David Kimberly.

There are several ways to register for

ce/annual-session-2021/ On-site at Annual Session

#### ZOO, from page 1

an associate or to hire an associate. It will be Friday, Oct. 1 from 12-1 p.m.

- "Dental Compliance: What You Need to Know as an Owner, Associate or DSO-Dentist" will be presented by Mark Alexandrunas, DDS & David J. Owsiany, JD from 3:30-5:30 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 1.
- Dental Student, Dental Resident and New Dentist Reception in the Exhibit Hall will be on Friday, Oct. 1 from 5-6:30 p.m.

For full details on events for new dentists at ODA Annual Session and to register, visit www.oda.org.



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#### Questions? Contact Us!







Booth #340





The ODA Subcouncil on New Dentists recently hosted an event for new dentists and their families at the Columbus Zoo and



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## JOSEPH P. CROWLEY DISTINGUISHED DENTIST AWARD: DR. MARK BRONSON

Awards of Excellence

By Jackie Best Crowe **ODA Managing Editor** 

Dr. Mark Bronson has been involved in organized dentistry throughout his career. In recognition of his efforts he will receive the 2021 Ohio Dental Association Joseph P. Crowley Distinguished Dentist Award on Friday, Oct. 1 at the Callahan Celebration of Excellence, held in conjunction with the 155th ODA Annual Session.

"The Cincinnati Dental Society is proud to nominate Dr. Bronson for the Joseph P. Crowley Distinguished Dentist Award," wrote the Cincinnati Dental Society in its nomination letter. "With his dedication and commitment to organized dentistry as well as his numerous accomplishments, we feel he is an excellent candidate for this prestigious award.

Bronson said he is honored and shocked to receive the award

"I'm thankful that I was nominated and approved for the award, it's a great honor," he said.

Bronson decided to follow in his father's footsteps to become a dentist. He would visit his dad's office as a kid and always saw that his dad worked hard, so when he went to college he decided he wanted to become a dentist as well.

"As a kid he always kind of instilled in us that each generation needs to take things to another level." Bronson said.

Bronson attended Hampton University, which was his mother's alma mater. He credits his mom with helping him learn how to fix things and work with his hands. He then earned his DDS from The Ohio State University in 1991. After graduating, he went into private practice with his father.

Bronson said his favorite part about being a dentist is helping patients.

"Whether a patient is in pain, or it's a patient that needs some assistance with teaching them about oral hygiene, I do all aspects of treatment in my office from children all the way up to seniors that are 99," he said. "Best of all is working with my father."

Bronson has been involved in organized dentistry at the local, state and national levels since he was in dental school.

At The Ohio State University College of Dentistry, he served as the national student representative to the National Dental Association's Board of Trustees for two years.

With the Cincinnati Dental Society. he has served as chairman of the Strategic Planning Committee, Public Relations Committee, Children's Dental Health Committee and on many councils and committees including Finance Committee, Nomination Committee, Honors Committee and Investment Committee. He followed in his father's footsteps to serve as Cincinnati Dental Society president in 2007 and also has served on the society's Oral Health Foundation Board of Trustees and has volunteered at the society's Leave No Vet Behind program and Give Kids A Smile events.

With the Ohio Dental Association, Bronson has served as chairman of the Council on Dental Care Programs and Dental Practice and on the Finance Committee, the Annual Session Committee, ODA Services Corp. Investment Committee, the Ohio Dental Political Action Committee Board and as a delegate, among other positions. He served as president of the ODA in 2011.

With the American Dental Associa-

tion, he has served as a delegate, chair of the State Public Affairs Committee. the Council on Governmental Affairs and the 7th District Caucus, and has served on the ADA Task Force on Governance, among other positions.

He is a candidate for the second vice president position at the upcoming 2021 ADA House of Delegates.

Bronson said organized dentistry is extremely important because it allows dentists to collaborate with their peers.

"Dentistry, with it being such an independent profession with most of our practitioners being in practice by themselves, interaction with our colleagues is important," he said. "We need a support system that helps us develop what we do in our business and how we can be successful. Organized dentistry does a fantastic job assisting us with that."

Bronson said he's had a lot of support and mentorship from those at his local society, including Dr. Joe Crowley, an ADA past president.



Ohio Dental Association Joseph P. Crowley Distinguished Dentist Award.

"His encouragement and support over the years has just been amazing, and then to receive an award that was named after him makes it even more special," Bronson said

Bronson is a board member for the Heart of Gold Foundation and the Dental Care Plus Group and is a member of the International College of Dentists, the American College of Dentists and the Pierre Fauchard Academy.

Outside of dentistry, Bronson enjoys golf and traveling. Bronson said his wife, Donna, and his children, Whitney, Mark and Mara, have always been a source of encouragement and

The Joseph P. Crowley Distinguished Dentist Award is the ODA's most prestigious award. It is given to a leader in the profession committed to the advancement of dentistry who is dedicated and committed to organized dentistry at the local, state and national level. Bronson is one of two recipients of the 2021 Joseph P. Crowley Distinguished Dentist Award.





## JOSEPH P. CROWLEY DISTINGUISHED DENTIST AWARD: DR. THOMAS **PAUMIER**

Awards of Excellence

By Jackie Best Crowe **ODA Managing Editor** 

Dr. Thomas Paumier has been actively involved in all levels of organized dentistry throughout his career. In recognition of his efforts he will receive the 2021 Ohio Dental Association Joseph P. Crowley Distinguished Dentist Award on Friday, Oct. 1 at the Callahan Celebration of Excellence. held in conjunction with the 155th ODA Annual Session

"Dr. Paumier has served with distinction at every level of the tripartite, always with the highest integrity and professionalism," wrote the Stark County Dental Society in its nomination letter. "His vision, leadership and accomplishments have positively changed the profession and lives of dentists in Stark County, Ohio and all over the United States.'

Paumier said he is humbled to receive the award

"I am humbled to be recognized by my peers with an award that has been given to many of my mentors and those who I admire in dentistry," he said.

Paumier said he decided to become a dentist because he always admired his family members who were physicians, and his mom who worked as a dental assistant. He saw that by being a dentist, he could have the opportunity to help people in health care and have a better lifestyle that didn't require him to get called away to the hospital.

He earned his DDS from The Ohio State University College of Dentistry and then went on to a General Practice Residency at St. Elizabeth Hospital Medical Center in Youngstown. He then came to Canton where he worked in a practice with another dentist for two years before buying his own practice.

Paumier said his favorite part about being a dentist is his interaction with his staff and patients. He also enjoys restoring patients' normal function and oral health and improving their esthetics and self-esteem

Because of his experience with a GPR, Paumier set a goal of establishing a GPR at a hospital in Stark County. Under his leadership, a GPR program was established at Mercy Medical Center in 2007. He also started an endowment to support the GPR program and ensure its sustainability

"The GPR program educates future dentists, meets the needs of the underserved, and creates better interactions with our physician colleagues so they understand how oral health impacts overall health," Paumier said.

Paumier's uncle was the first surgical resident at Mercy Hospital in 1933, and a member of his family has been on the medical staff since then.

Throughout his career, Paumier has been very involved with organized dentistry at all levels of the tripartite.

With the Stark County Dental Societv he has served on or chaired several councils and committees. He established the society's University Series of continuing education programs and has been involved in or chaired the Council on Dental Education and Programs since 1990. Paumier has also served as chair of the Council on Membership Services, Leadership Nomination Committee and the Fi-

nancial Review subcommittee, as well as serving on many other councils and committees. He served as president

Paumier has also served on many councils and committees with the ODA. He has served as chair of the Annual Session Committee, ODA Services Corp., Task Force on the Future of Dentistry in Ohio and the DSO Task Force, and as president of the ODA Wellness Trust Board. He has served on nearly every council or committee with the ODA, and served as treasurer in 2007-11 and president in 2014-15.

He has served as a delegate to the ODA and ADA and is a volunteer with the Give Kids A Smile and OPTIONS

He has also been very involved at the American Dental Association, where he has served as chair of the Council on Members Insurance and Retirement Programs, the Reference Committee on Budget and the BOT Workgroup on Busyness Issues. He has served on many other councils and committees including the Strategic Planning Steering Committee; the Council, Committee, Commission Budget Group; the Council on Scientific Affairs Expert Panel to establish Clinical Practice Guidelines for Prosthetic Joint Patients: the ADA/AAOS Voting Panel for Appropriate Use Criteria for Antibiotic Prophylaxis for patients with prosthetic joints and the Dental Practice Recovery Coronavirus Task Force, among others. He also has served as a consultant to the Council on Scientific Affairs.

Because of his involvement with organized dentistry, he had the op-

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Dr. Thomas Paumier is the 2021 recipient of the Ohio Dental Association Joseph P Crowley Distinguished Dentist Award.

portunity to co-author three national guidelines for the profession of dentistry: antibiotic prophylaxis for joint replacement, appropriate antibiotic use for dental infections, and standards on returning to practice after COVID-19.

Paumier has also presented several CE courses for the ODA, including two courses about the COVID-19

Paumier said he thinks organized dentistry is important because it has dentists back and provides a support system for practicing dentists.

"When you get out of dental school, regardless of whether you go to work in large group or small practice, the See PAUMIER, page 10



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## DENTAL INSURANCE CORNER

#### TERMINATING PARTICIPATING PROVIDER CONTRACTS

Dental Insurance, Membership Benefits

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

While there is a clear trend for dentists to join into participating provider agreements with managed care plans now more than ever, the Ohio Dental Association has received a marked increase in the number of member dentists inquiring about how to terminate their contracts with networks they participate in. Some of the callers were just starting to explore their options while others had already terminated their agreements but then encountered problems after they thought they had ended their contracts.

## HOW TO TERMINATE A CONTRACT

Following a planned approach to terminating a contract can help ensure the dentist gets out of the agreement in a manner that is as favorable to the dentist as possible while also minimizing unexpected negative consequences

In determining whether to drop a plan, or join one for that matter, a dentist may want to consider consulting with others to help them make a final decision. Other dentists, mentors, consultants and/or accountants who have been through the process can provide information and guidance that may not be otherwise available.

One factor to consider is the impact leaving a network can have on the desire of affected patients to remain in the practice. A key consideration is if patients may still receive a benefit if they go to an out-of-network dentist and, if they can, will their benefits be the same or decreased in some way.

Generally speaking, patients covered by dental health maintenance organizations (DHMOs) and exclusive provider organizations (EPOs) receive no benefits if they go out-of-network without first receiving permission from the plan. Patients covered by preferred provider organizations (PPOs) will typically still receive a benefit when going out-of-network but at a higher out of pocket expense than had they gone to a contracting dentist. In both cases, the insurance company will almost certainly send reimbursement checks to the patient when they see a non-network dentist regardless of any assignment of benefits agreement between the patient and the non-network dentist.

Contacting the plan directly to confirm and/or verify covered patients' in-network and out-of-network options can prove helpful in producing financial estimates and projections

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 online at www.oda.org, by mail to 1370 Dublin Road, Columbus, OH 43215, by fax to 614-486-0381 or by email to dentist@oda.org. To see past issues of the Dental Insurance Corner, visit oda.org/member-center/resources/dental-insurance-assistance/.

that can help lead to making a final stay or terminate decision and then appropriately following up with affected patients if the dentist decides to end their contract with the plan.

It is also very important to understand what will happen if after terminating their contract the dentist changes their mind and wants to rejoin the plan. It is not good to assume the dentist can simply rejoin and the arrangement with the plan will be exactly the same as it was prior to the dentist's initial termination. Plans change and evolve over time and many times are very different than when the dentist initially joined the network years ago. For instance, some have wait-out periods before the dentist can rejoin while others will only permit the dentist to join at significantly lower reimbursement rates than those they "enjoyed" prior to ending their initial contract.

## TRANSITIONING OUT OF A PLAN

Diligently following the process that is detailed in the actual participating provider agreement is essential to ensuring a smooth transition out of the plan. While it does appear most managed care plans will collaborate with the dentist as they move through the actual contract termination, the ODA has received reports from dentists who did not follow the contractually dictated process exactly and were not permitted to discontinue their contract until they did.

The relevant language for the dentist to follow is typically found in the "term and termination" section of the participating provider agreement. It will state the amount of notice that must be granted before the termination is finalized as well as any relevant time frames

#### AT A GLANCE

- There's more to ending participating provider contracts than simply issuing a termination notice.
- Attention to detail can help minimize unpleasant surprises before, during and after terminating a
- Do not count on a lot of assistance from the insurance company after the contract is terminated.

that must be adhered to. For example, some agreements only permit termination within a certain number of days of

See INSURANCE, page 10



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# ODA WELLNESS TRUST PROVIDES COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH BENEFITS FOR DENTISTS, THEIR FAMILIES AND STAFF

Membership Benefits

Thomas Paumier, DDS
ODA Wellness Trust Chairman

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected each of our members in a variety of ways. The ODA and organized dentistry has responded with support for our members and their offices in unprecedented fashion. Not only has it affected the ability to practice and serve our patients, it has affected the personal well-being and health of many dentists, staff and their families. Fortunately, the ODA Wellness Trust has provided comprehensive health benefits for nearly 600 dentists, their families and staff, covering almost 3.400 lives. As we returned to treating patients there was widespread concern that dentists and staff would be at greater risk for infection due to our close contact and aerosol generation. Thankfully, practicing dentistry during COVID-19 has proven to be safe for dental health care personnel and patients alike. Data from the ODA Wellness Trust through May 2021 has shown a COVID-19 infection rate of between 5-6% for dentists and staff. During this same time period the com-

munity rate of infection was 9.8%.

Not only is the infection rate of the ODA Wellness Trust enrollees being nearly half the national average good for our members health during such an unpredictable pandemic, it also validates the reasons why the ODA has



ODA MEMBER BENEFIT

placed such importance on members having access to a member owned. member run health benefits plan. While other professions have infection rates above the national average and major health insurance carriers are using COVID-19 as a reason to increase rates, the ODA Wellness Trust has been able to pass along the savings from good claims experience to our enrollees. The health plan we have built for our members has continued to incur some of the lowest rate increases in the market over the past several years. all while passing Ohio Department of Insurance and US Department of

Our goal as the Board of Trustees for the ODA Wellness Trust is to continue to grow and provide a valuable member benefit to the ODA membership. For those not currently enrolled in the plan, I urge you to contact the ODA Services Corp. staff and get a quote for the 2022 plan year. For those currently enrolled, I'm pleased you have taken advantage of this excellent member benefit and hope you share your experience with other member dentists. The feedback and support have been amazing and we look forward to this being a long-term health benefit solution for ODA members.

# CONSIDERED BY THE 2021 ODA HOUSE OF DELEGATES

By ODA Staff

The ODA's House of Delegates, which is the supreme authoritative body of the association, will be meeting on September 30, 2021 and October 1, 2021 in Columbus. Nearly 150 delegates from across the state representing all 25 component dental societies, including two student delegates representing the Case Western Reserve University School of Dental Medicine and the Ohio State University College of Dentistry, will gather at the 2021 House of Delegates meeting to deliberate resolutions proposing policies and/or operations of the association. The 2021 House of Delegates will consider the following resolutions at its meeting:

**RESOLUTIONS TO BE** 

- Resolution 01-21 proposes that the Ohio Dental Association opposes the denial of claims for covered dental services based upon a patient's pre-existing condition.
- Resolution 02-21 proposes to amend the Ohio Dental Association's Bylaws to align with the ADA by eliminating the age requirement for eligibility for life membership in the association.
- Resolution 03-21 proposes to amend the Ohio Dental Association's Bylaws to reflect that the Callahan Memorial Award Commission Fund is no longer a donor advised fund of the

Columbus Foundation.

- Resolution 04-21 proposes to amend the Ohio Dental Association's Bylaws and Manual to clarify the term start date for appointed officers, the executive editor, the association's liaison to the Ohio State Dental Board, committee members, council members, subcommittee members, and subcouncil members; and to clarify that subcommittee and subcouncil members must be active, life or retired members in good standing of the ODA.
- Resolution 05-21 proposes to amend the Ohio Dental Association's Bylaws and Manual to charge the Executive Committee with appointing the executive editor and to reflect that the executive editor is a paid position: and removing the executive editor position from the annual ODA officer stipend resolution that the ODA House of Delegates considers, since the executive editor is not an ODA officer, and instead including the executive editor's compensation as a line item in the ODA publications annual budget. Resolution 06-21 proposes to pro-
- vide the ODA officers with an allocation for their 2021-2022 service.



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INSURANCE, from page 8

an annual anniversary of the contract. The contract will also state if one and/ or the other party may terminate the agreement for any reason (i.e., without cause) and/or for certain, specified reasons (i.e., with cause).

This or another section of the contract will also likely speak to the dentist's obligations relative to continuity of care and related financial issues once the agreement is terminated, for example, completion of ongoing dental work, reimbursement and reimbursement levels

In providing the termination notice to the insurance company, it is preferable to use wording that is actually contained in the contract as opposed to coming up with the dentist's own language. Points to consider including in the termination notice include language that specifically:

- States the letter is intended to serve as legal notice that the dentist is terminating their participating provider agreement with the plan
- Cites the section of the contract and gives the insurance company the number of days, as specified in the contract, prior notice of the termination
- Requests the plan provide the dentist with: 1) receipt of the termination notice and 2) confirmation of the contract's termination
- Provides the insurance company with a contact person within the dental office should they have questions or need additional information to effectuate the termination

Unless a delivery method is specified in the contract, the dentist should consider sending the termination notice using certified mail, return receipt requested. The certified receipt serves as the dentist's proof that the termination notice was delivered and received.

If the dentist terminates the contract via email then they should not assume their email was received and the termination notice accepted unless an insurance company representative acknowledges receipt of the email. Consider re-sending the initial email termination notice on a daily basis until the insurance company acknowledges in writing its receipt of the notice.

#### **DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

The dentist should also consider informing patients and referring dentists of their decision to leave the network While this notification would not be a **POST TERMINATION** matter of concern to state regulators or government entities, it is important from the perspective of setting mutual dentist-patient expectations and facilitating the continuity of care for affected patients. It can also help

ease the transition for the practice from network to non-network status and hopefully set the stage to retain as many patients as possible after the termination takes effect.

A communications plan should be developed that includes written communication with affected patients and is reinforced by everyone on the dental team. Sample points, which may not be applicable in all situations, to consider addressing in patient messaging

- A thank you to the patient for entrusting their oral health care
- The fact that dental office is changing its participation status with the dental plan and the effective date of the termination the practice will no longer be a contracted provider in their network.
- An explanation of why the decision to terminate from the network had to be made. For example, it was a necessary but difficult decision that was best for patients and the practice in order to continue providing patients with optimal oral health care.
- The office's commitment to working with the patient and their financial situation, including assisting them to understand and work with their dental benefits plan.
- If applicable, the office's continued willingness to file dental insurance claims on the patient's behalf.
- If applicable, the fact that the patient may continue to come to the practice though the office will provide a copy of the patient's records to a new dentist if they choose to go elsewhere.
- Reiteration of the dental practice's commitment to the patient. their continued oral health and wish that the patient will allow the practice to continue to be of
- Contact information for the appropriate person within the office to answer questions.

Be sure to document the discussion with the patient in their chart and include a copy of the letter notifying them of the change in provider status.

Timing of the termination and already scheduled appointments should be considered in determining how and when to contact affected patients.

It is also important to note that no derogatory or negative comments should be made about the insurance company, plan sponsor (which is typically the patient's employer or union) or other dentists who remain in the

Dentists should be aware that the ODA has heard reports from dentists, primarily in other states, that some plans have sent letters to patients

PAUMIER, page 7

only people who have your back is organized dentistry," he said. "The most important thing is that they are there for us as a group because individually there's no possible way any of us can have an influence on so many different groups and organizations who are trying to change the face of how we practice dentistry - the government, regulatory bodies and insurance companies."

joys golfing, reading and doing yard work. Paumier said his wife, Christy, has enabled and encouraged him to

participate in the profession at the fullest level possible and has always been supportive and encouraging. His uncle and cousin who are physicians have also been mentors to him.

The Joseph P. Crowley Distinguished Dentist Award is the ODA's most prestigious award. It is given to a leader in the profession committed to the advancement of dentistry who is dedicated and committed to organized dentistry Outside of dentistry, Paumier en- at the local, state and national level. Paumier is one of two recipients of the 2021 Joseph P. Crowley Distinguished

informing them that the dentist was no longer in their network and encouraged them to seek services from a contracted dentist by touting the benefits to the patient of seeing an innetwork dentist. While disconcerting, as long as there is nothing in the letter that is false or misleading, there is nothing legally to prevent a plan from doing this. Similarly, some plans have been known to use their Explanation of Benefits (EOBs) to inform patients of non-contracting dentists that they may receive a better savings if they receive services from a network dentist. Knowing that the potential exists for a plan to take these types of actions are other reasons to be proactive in educating affected patients of the dentist's plans and the possible impact on their

Once out of the network, dentists may find that some plans are less then helpful when it comes to providing the dental office with certain information like verification of benefits, claims status, EOBs, etc. The dental office may find it necessary to more fully involve affected patients in their dental benefits and related financial issues. As part of this process it may also prove beneficial to obtain a pre-treatment estimate or predetermination of benefits, via the insurance company's internet portal if possible, to assist the patient in better understanding their financial

Closely monitoring post termination insurance company actions is critical to identifying and responding to problems early on. Issues and/or problems to watch for include such things as:

- Continued use of the dentist's name on the plan's website or network marketing materials.
- Handling claims and reimbursements as if the dentist was still a

network provider

Failure of all affiliated plans to honor the termination. For example, the dentist terminates their contract with a leased network but all of the plans contracted with the leased network do not pick up on the termination and continue to handle the dentist's claims as if they are still in the network.

**CONTINUED** 

Contracts are typically between the individual dentist, as opposed to the practice, and the insurance company and follow the dentist where ever they practice. As such, employee or associate dentists who are required to sign managed care contracts as a condition of employment with a particular dental office should keep a copy of the contract for themselves in case they leave the practice and need to terminate their contracts when they get to a new dental office

"We really don't hear reports from dentists expressing regret over their decision to terminate from this or that managed care plan," stated Dr. Manny Chopra, chairman of Ohio Dental Association Council on Dental Care Programs and Dental Practice. "That may be because the dentist doesn't want to talk about what they think turned out to be a bad decision or because their termination didn't result in adverse consequences for their practice but we know we don't hear negative reports. If we hear anything, it is along the lines that the dentist regrets not terminating sooner.

Dr. Chopra added "it is also important for ODA member dentists to remember that if they have questions or encounter problems, before, during or after terminating their contract with an insurance company that they can bring their concerns to the ODA's Dental Insurance Working Group for assistance."

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partnership are discussed in detail You learn what can and cannot be done and why. Restructuring faulty partnership arrangements and implementing dispute resolution in order to avoid costly split-ups is also considered which will, hopefully, enable partners to work profitably together.



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THE EXPLORER

## DIY **OLYMPIANS**

Opinion & Editorial

The XXXIII Olympiad in Tokyo, Japan has come to an end. The best athletes in the world had to wait an extra year to show off their skills. They did not disappoint. The world watched people run faster, jump higher, lift more weight, and throw objects further than ever before. Elite gymnasts, swimmers, soccer players, volleyball stars and cyclists were on display. We also saw table tennis, badminton, skateboarding, fencing and speed climbing! For just over two weeks every other year, the people of the world feast on a dizzying collection of sporting events.

The network coverage of the Olympics gives us human interest stories of the athletes, often having them talk about a time when they were young and watched a famous Olympic athlete win a medal. This memory inspired them and provided the motivation for them to work hard. Driven by this fire, they became the best they could be and made the Olympic team. That's one of the benefits of high-profile heroes. They give us visible goals and allow us to aspire to success, as the best in the world - and also by delivering their personal best. Often, the more compelling stories are those of personal triumph, even if they didn't win a medal. They showed their grit and determination on the world stage. Imagine my surprise when I saw

that many American adults are so inspired by the Olympians that they are convinced that they could be one! "OnePoll" surveyed 1,000 US residents and found that 40% think they are fit enough to compete in at least one summer or winter sport at the Olympics. That included three times as many men as women (60 % vs. 22%) and almost 70% of people under age 35 who were surveyed. Most of the people surveyed chose basketball, soccer and swimming as their path to personal gold. The new sports to the Olympics this year, skateboarding, surfing, sport climbing and softball also were popular. I would like to believe that this was a skewed survey sample, somehow finding a segment of the population with an inflated sense of their own abilities. But I'm concerned that's not the case

Much as I would love to be on ESPN, realize that I will never play in the NBA. No matter how much I practice. will never be able to dunk a basketball! That's a talent I just don't have. A 'talent' is your natural ability to do something. A 'skill', on the other hand, is something that you acquire after putting in lots of hard work and practice. Unlike talents, skills are not inborn, but developed with time and effort. Skills are far more critical than talent in the vast majority of jobs. It takes all kinds of skill sets to make the world work. Our lives are spent finding our talents and then honing skills that play to our strengths. Combining innate talent with practiced skill gives us abilities that make us valuable members of a team. It didn't take me long to see that I

wasn't going to contribute much on the

basketball court. But playing trumpet in the band on the sidelines was a much better use of my talents! Enhancing my musical talent with practice put me in a position to have success. We all can't be Olympic athletes - and that's a good thing - we don't need to be! Society works when we have many people with a broad variety of skills.

Getting set up for success is often a result of being honest with ourselves. Last week, I saw a report in the news that an orthopedic surgeon had operated on his own hand. With his surgical partner assisting, the surgeon injected himself with local anesthetic and repaired a ligament in his left hand, placing bone screws to anchor the ligament. This wasn't an emergency event, like in a movie, where the surgeon must operate on himself on the space station or in the Antarctic at a remote research camp, because there's no one else who can do it. This was a scheduled and planned procedure. No matter how talented you are, another surgeon with two hands has skills and abilities that times!" you don't have at this moment

This leads me to another word that we need to discuss. Hubris: excessive pride or arrogance. Self-confidence is normally beneficial, especially when it is supported by ability and experience. However, we should critically examine our limits and ensure that we are going about things the best way possible. This surgeon has such faith in his own ability that he doesn't trust anyone (even his own partner) to care for him. To me, this is a classic example of hubris. It appears that the operation went well for the surgeon. He's lucky, as the ancient Greek gods always dealt harshly with hubris in mere mortals! YouTube has added to our inflated

sense of ability. I will admit to watching videos and doing house repairs, but I really try to stay in my lane. I can watch remodeling shows all day on HGTV, but I understand the value of consulting with a skilled architect before taking out walls. I just completed interviews with two reporters who wanted my comments on the TikTok video craze of using Mr. Clean Magic Erasers for tooth whitening. DIY esthetic dentistry at its best! We stress the value of professional skill. We always make the point that our talent, skill and caring create the ability to achieve healthy outcomes for patients.

There was an old ad campaign that had a person saving the day and when asked "Are you a doctor?" They replied, "No, but I did stay at a Holiday Inn Express last night!" The newest variation of this is for Netfilx. The flight attendant asks "Can anyone fly a plane?" A guy in a Hawaiian shirt jumps up, pushes past a man in a pilot uniform, and rushes forward. She asks, "Are you a pilot?" He boldly states, "No, but I've watched that scene where the President flies the plane in Air Force One dozens of

Are we becoming so over-confident that we will push past trained pilots or do surgery on our own bodies? How do we reign in the DIY craze and return to a situation where we can trust each other to do our part in the big picture? From the Lord of the Rings to Ocean's Eleven, the Italian Job to the Dirty Dozen, the Magnificent Seven to the Avengers, our favorite movies told of putting together teams of people with diverse talents and practiced skills to achieve great things. We should respect people who have done the work to develop their skills and seek out their help and advice when we need those abilities. We can't and shouldn't do everything ourselves. We don't all need to be DIY Olympians. That's not the way to the gold!

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



THE HAPPY DENTIST

## **NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY**

Opinion & Editorial

As I have conversations with many colleagues around the country, one thing is absolutely clear: we have a workforce shortage! As the smoke clears from the carnage of the pandemic and we assess the past two years in our sector of health care, most of us reported being busier than ever coupled with having less than the normal number of qualified staff members.

In our practice the pandemic led to us losing and replacing half the staff we started with in January of 2020. Some of the reasons were pandemic related such as lack of child care, but mainly the departure of our staff, some who had been part of our team for more than 5 years, were due to change of life events such as a divorce that led to insecurity in losing health insurance replenish lost talent, we had minimal responses. I would reach out to col- got this".

leagues to find out that everyone was in the same boat. Everyone was having trouble managing the explosion of dental workload with a staff that was less in number and likely not as well trained.

I am absolutely grateful to the staff

that stayed with us. I immediately promoted within, gave everyone pay raises and bigger responsibilities and proceeded to try and hire for the vacant positions. Though I was hopeful that pay raises and promotions would incentivize these loyal pillars of our practice, I also saw the capacity for burnout. I had once heard a statistic from a practice management guru that training a new staff person costs the plus these bright, motivated and verpractice an additional \$75,000. That was about 15 years ago and like everything else, I am sure this cost is more today. I tried to surmise the reason for this purported "cost" to the practice. Firstly there is the inefficiency that comes with some-one being new at their job. The second cause is the time taken away from the person training the new hire which also affects their efficiency. Lastly one cannot discount the social dynamics. If you hire someone experienced, then you risk ruffling the feathers of an established team member. If you hire someone inexperienced, then they are likely to be intimidated by the well-oiled machine and not last. I spent numerous hours this year in private council with many team members individually. It reminded me of a boxing coach with his athlete in the corner massaging benefits. As we placed ads trying to the neck, encouraging, giving tips on strategy and basically chanting "you've

have to be flexible and fluid with job descriptions and duties. Quite rigid before, I pivoted from my antiquated mind-set and found that cross training staff for administrative and clinical became necessary to manage the needs of the practice. With this concept I was able to maximize strengths of individuals and minimize that burnout. These new cross-trained individuals also reported that they loved the opportunity to be up on their feet as well as behind a desk. They were better equipped to understand all facets of the practice. I also found that having team leaders satile people helped with morale and thus the social dynamic of the practice. It created empathy within the group this time. I didn't look at overtime this

one had the hours they wanted and the vacation time they needed. I used to also think that specific skills were necessary to be a good applicant. While there is no question that someone with knowledge of your software or previous experience as a surgical assistant can be helpful, I don't think it is a requirement. The efficiency gained is often dampened by a bias and an "I already know how to do this" attitude that can quickly poison the water. I now find that hiring for enthusiasm and character is likely to lead to a more successful match. As the mantra goes, out of the three A's: Ability, Availability and Affability, you can teach all but the latter two.

Our online ads used to be detailed

and very specific. The other day I was It became clear to me with the void in the "talent pool" that I was going to shocked to see that there were seven openings on the Indeed hiring portal in my area for a clinical assistant. It is definitely an employee market as people can be easily poached from other practices with charming gift baskets and promises of amazing benefit packages to accompany competitive salaries. Beyond offering excellent pay and benefits, I have chosen to look at this dilemma differently. I have chosen to view this as an opportunity to create an environment that is empathetic to the individual needs of my team members. I have chosen to create opportunities for growth with paid continuing education. I have chosen to foster autonomy and leadership. have chosen to focus on maintaining a vibe of patient centered care where that fostered important bonds during my team members feel proud of who and where they work. To meet the year. I just wanted to make sure everypandemic growth and losing staff for change of life issues, I have four new people starting in the next month. I will let you know how it goes!

> Dr. Usman may be reached at usman@ zoominternet.net.

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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Associate Dentist wanted for a busy, well established practice in North Canton, Ohio. This is a full time position with a well-trained experienced staff. Great patient base, fully computerized office, including CAD CAM design. Practice is FFS only and compensation would be a guaranteed minimum plus production. To inquire call (330) 958-6390 or send CV to NorthCantonDDS@gmail.com.

Come join our team here at Advanced Dentistry of Blue Ash where we are a general dental practice that proudly provides the Cincinnati area with exceptional dental services and delivers an extraordinary dental experience focused on excellence. Contact: Sarah, Practice Manager at (513) 891-3333 or sarah@blueash.dental.

We are seeking an ambitious Associate Dentist with strong communication skills who is as passionate about dentistry and patient care as we are. You will be working with a highly trained team that will be dedicated to support you with our well-established and ever-growing patient base. We are a state-of-the-art for ownership in 3-5 years. Our practice Ridge Suite 223, Akron, OH 44312. 847-9069 or cbixler@midwest-dental. office and use advanced technology including digital X-rays/Panorex as well as our CBCT scanner to help increase your case acceptance. We are fully committed to your training and success! If you are interested in a long-term career opportunity and unlimited professional and personal growth look no further. Consider joining Wisconsin's largest family-owned dental organization and becoming the newest member of the 6 Dental Associates' family! With 14 clinics across Wisconsin offering general and 14 specialty dentistry, you will have the opportunity to learn and grow through strong mentorship collaboration, and the most innovative dental technology! Contact us today to learn more! (847) 989-5902 or kdoheny@dentalassociates.

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Expanding non-corporate Pediatric Dental practice in a family-oriented area close to Cleveland/Akron is looking for an energetic compassionate Pediatric Dentist for a P/T or F/T position. Just 25 minutes drive South of Cleveland and an hour and a half drive to Columbus. Modern office, fee for service, some PPO\'s, all-digital, dedicated staff with great clientele and no Medicaid. GA / IV. Willing to mentor new graduates. Great opportunity for someone looking for an associateship position and making good \$. Let's chat and discuss our future opportunity together! Check our office at www.dentist4kidz.com. Apply in confidence at rvij1@hotmail.com.

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was established in 1980. Benefits include,

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Full time Associate Dentist needed for Oral Surgeon with great personality once growing General Dental office in Powell. Competitive pay and benefit package available. No nights or weekends will be required. Opportunity for partnership is a possibility. Contact: (614) 353-4422 or dictates treatment. Contact Denise qvc316@gmail.com

> Fullenkamp Family Dentistry is seeking an family practice, 3-4 days a week (no nights or weekends). Please e-mail CV to info@fullenkampfamilydentistry.com.

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Our North Central Ohio pediatric dental practice is seeking a part-time pediatric dentist to join our busy, but caring team. We pride ourselves in providing stateof-the-art dental care for the pediatric General Dentists wanted for associate/ population of 5 counties. Our most recent associate of 12 years retired to care for her young family due to COVID-related childcare issues. Compensation package includes a daily rate with productionbased bonus. Please contact our office manager via email at Traci@pedotoothdr. com or call Traci at (419) 522-5437.

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LEGAL, from page 4

professional credentials, employment forms, vacation and sick leave requests, notes pertaining to injuries and jury duty notices can all be included as part of the file.

#### 1.) PATIENT RECORDS

First and foremost, dental practices are required by law to maintain adequate patient records. Although Ohio doesn't have a specific statute which requires dental records to be retained for any minimum period of time, there are a number of Ohio and federal statutes which must be considered when determining how long to retain medical records. For example, Ohio Revised Code § 2913.40(D) mandates that a health care provider retain all records dealing with the treatment of a Medicaid patient for a period of at least six years. Provisions of the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA") also require covered entities (most health care providers) to retain the patient's signed HIPAA notice of privacy practices for at least six years. As a condition of participation in the Federal Medicare Program, however, a provider agrees to retain all records dealing with the treatment of a Medicare patient for a period of at least seven years. In addition to considering the

various statutory retention requirements, participating provider agreements generally specify the time following the last patient visit that records must be maintained. Your office's professional liability insurance company will also likely have recommendations about retention. It is important to reach out to your professional liability carrier to get their recommendation on how long to keep patient records. As we all know if there is some question about professional liability your malpractice provider will be intimately involved in defending your practice. Lastly, it is best practice to maintain all medical records for at least a length of time equal to the statute of limitations associated with the treatment which was provided. Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code § 2305.113, an action upon a dental claim must be commenced within one year after the cause of action "accrues." There are limited exceptions to this general one-year statute, however, including a two-year statute of limitations for wrongful death cases and the tolling of the statute until the age of majority for treatment involving a minor child. Moreover, Ohio law provides a four-year statute of repose for certain dental claims. Further, with the exception of minors there is a four year statute of repose which bans claims of malpractice four years after the procedure is complete. Overall it is important to create a retention policy for patient records and look to your provider agreements, malpractice provider, state and federal statutes when creating the policy to fit the needs of your office.



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