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- Practice Evaluation and Sale. Credentialing and accounts receivable challenges.
- Prepare your practice for sale. Prepare to purchase a practice.

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Asking for Help



By Todd L. Beck, DMD

The following is a guest editorial from ODA Trustee Dr. Todd Beck. All members are welcome to submit guest editorials via email to ODA Editor Alayna Schoblaske (aschoblaske@gmail.com).

“I NEED SOME HELP.” FOUR OF THE most difficult words to string together for many of us. To ask can lead to feelings of inadequacy, failure, fear, shame, and weakness. I mean, no one else is asking. Everyone else is doing just fine. I’m convinced I am the only one who is struggling with my emotions, mental health, finances, anxiety, physical health; and the list goes on. The reality is, we are all struggling to some degree.

Practicing dentistry is a stressful job. We work on anxious (sometimes obnoxious) wiggly patients in the most sensitive area of the body. Success comes down to the millimeter, and most of the people we are trying to help would rather be anywhere else, a fact that they repeat overtly or with body language every few minutes. We are bombarded with staff shortages, increasing wages, and overhead costs that are out of control. And that’s just at work. Add to all that a spouse, kids, college tuitions, lifestyle creep, physical health, and you start to see why mental health is such an important issue for those of us taking care of others.


When I started practicing nearly 30 years ago, there was little understanding of mental health and few resources to find help. Thankfully, times have changed. Gone (mostly) is the notion that mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and alcoholism are merely defects of character. We now understand that these are real medical issues that can be diagnosed and treated. Gone are the days when seeking help triggered the wrath of the Board of Dentistry and judgment by our peers. Almost 20 years ago, the Diversion Program was created by the Board of Dentistry, which enabled a way

for our colleagues suffering from these issues to be treated while protecting their licenses and reputation. It was a huge step forward from the days of discipline and public scorn. Recently we took another giant step forward when the liability question for initial licensure and license renewal was changed so that anyone suffering from a mental health or substance abuse issue can answer without the fear of being investigated. This, we hope, will allow more of our colleagues to feel safe when reaching out for help.

Early on in my career, I suffered from substance abuse. The stress of life and work got to me, and I turned to narcotic pain meds for relief. The shame and humiliation I went through on my road to recovery was intense. I wish I would have had the resources, understanding, and compassion for mental health issues that we have today. I have dedicated most of my career to helping our colleagues who suffer from these issues. I can’t even begin to express my gratitude to all those who have worked so hard to help remove the stigma and judgment surrounding mental health issues. The work done by our Wellbeing Committee, ODA Staff, Board of Dentistry and countless others is to be lauded.

If you or anyone you know is suffering and needs help and understanding by compassionate and loving colleagues, please reach out to the Wellness Hotline, or contact the Oregon Dental Association for more confidential information.

We are here. We care deeply for you. We are ready to help. You are not alone.

Respectfully,
Todd L. Beck, DMD 

The opinions expressed in this editorial are solely the author’s own and do not reflect the views of the Oregon Dental Association or its affiliated organizations.



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Welcome New and Returning ODA Members

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST AND RETURNING MEMBERS! Please reach out to these members and welcome them into the ODA community.

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Clackamas County Dental Society

Donald Draper, DMD
Rogue Valley Dental Society

Mark Eilers, DMD
Central Oregon Dental Society

Jillian Ellis, DMD
Multnomah Dental Society

Elisa Herrman, DMD
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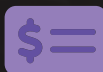
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Events & Education

Component CE Calendar

CONTINUING
EDUCATION

Calendar provided by Mehdi Salari, DMD

This calendar is current as of March 25, 2025

Please visit the host dental society website for the most up-to-date information.

Date	Dental Society	Course or Event Title	Speaker	CE	Location	More Information
04/17/25	Southern Oregon	NSK handpiece repair, maintenance and DIY (1 CE) & Medit Intraoral Scanners (1-1.5 CE)	Mike Langvin	2	West Ortho Medford	sodentalsociety@gmail.com
04/21/25	Clackamas County	Botox	Dr. Olesya Salathe	2	Oregon City (PWFCC)	RSVP to executivedirector@clackamasdental.com
05/01/25	Multnomah & Washington	Large Group Practice Social Event	-	-	TBD	Info/Register: www.multnomahdental.org
05/01/25	Coastal Cascades	The Latest & Greatest in Pediatric Dentistry	Dr. Greg Psaltis	2	Corvallis (Community Center – Willow Room)	Register: www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE
05/02/25	Coastal Cascades	The Latest & Greatest in Pediatric Dentistry (3 CEs AM) & Isn't it Just Baby Teeth? (3 CEs PM)	Dr. Greg Psaltis	6	Eugene (Lane Community College)	Register: www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE
05/15/25	Southern Oregon	Here's a Cool Thing I've Been Doing Lately	Various Speakers	2	West Ortho Medford	sodentalsociety@gmail.com
05/21/25	Multnomah	Annual Meeting/Table Clinics	TBA	2	Kennedy School	Info/Register: www.multnomahdental.org
05/22/25	Coastal Cascades	Goat Happy Hour for Dentists	-	-	Monroe – Original Goat Yoga	Register: www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE
05/27/25	Clackamas County	Annual Meeting/Election of Officers	TBD	-	Oregon City (PWFCC)	RSVP to executivedirector@clackamasdental.com
06/10/25	Coastal Cascades	Retiree Luncheon	-	-	Eugene – Roaring Rapids Pizza	Register: www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE
07/08/25	Coastal Cascades	The Top 10 Financial Planning Strategies for Dentists	Loyd Bureson III - Financial Freedom for Dentists	2	Eugene (Lane Community College)	Register: www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE
8/1/2025 & 8/2/2025	Coastal Cascades	Friday CE and Saturday Social with Family Activities	Dr. Timothy Bizga	6	Newport – TBD	Register: www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE
09/12/25	Coastal Cascades	The Esthetic & Long Term Considerations of Cementation & Material Choice	Dr. An		Eugene – Valley River Inn	Register: www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE
09/18/25	Southern Oregon	Advanced Techniques for Full Arch Cases	Nobel Biocare	2	Margaritaville – Medford	sodentalsociety@gmail.com
09/18/25	Multi-Component	Fall Kick-Off Tailgater	-	-	Wilsonville – ODA Office Parking Lot	Info/Register: www.multnomahdental.org
09/23/25	Coastal Cascades	Fall Dentist Social	-	-	Eugene - TBD	Register: www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE
10/09/25	Coastal Cascades	Contemporary Approach to Dental Implant Maintenance for Long-term Success	Lynn Peneck, RDH, MS	-	Eugene - Lane Community College	Register: www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE

Find this calendar online at www.oregondental.org. Click “Meetings & Events” > “Calendar of Events”.

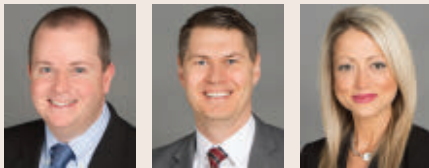
Looking for additional ways to get CE? The American Dental Association has a large collection of webinars and on-demand video learning opportunities available, many of which are free to members. Visit adaceonline.org to catch up on the latest offerings on your own schedule. 🎧

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Board of Trustees Meeting Highlights

Oregon Dental Association
Board of Trustees Meeting
January 17, 2025

- Board reviewed 2023-2025 ODA Strategic Plan and approved revised edition as well as set priorities for 2025. Priorities for Board in 2025 are membership, evaluating House of Delegates, legislative agenda and advocacy education, and wellness.
- Oregon Health Authority Dental Director and ODA member Dr. Ahmed Farag addressed the Board and participated in an open discussion with Board members.
- Board approved endorsement of an expanded line of products from iCoreConnect. 🗣️

Moda Holdings Group, Inc. Board of Directors — Call for Applicants

With a broad array of companies under its corporate umbrella, Moda is committed to attracting candidates to serve on the Organization's Boards of Directors who represent excellence in both the practice of dentistry and in its diverse business ventures. Review the full job description at <http://bit.ly/ModaBoard>

The call for applicants is open for two positions on the Moda board for a term of four years. The incumbents in these positions are running for re-election.

Interested in serving on the Moda/ODA Board? Submit a letter of interest, CV/resume, and 3-5 references (no family and one non-dental) to btaylor@oregondental.org by July 1st, 2025.

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Talkspace Go Complimentary for ADA Members

Wellness resource supports mental health

By Olivia Anderson

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THE ADA ANNOUNCED A NEW RESOURCE AVAILABLE for all ADA members and dental students: Talkspace Go, a self-guided therapy app to support mental well-being.

The app provides tools to manage work stress, relationships, and overall balance in life. In as little as five minutes a day, Talkspace Go can support well-being through personalized courses around topics like work stress, financial stress, burnout, depression, conflict, and relationships.

Users can also participate in therapist-led live workshops, courses, daily journaling, and more. The app is available at no cost to members and students.

This comes after the 2024 ADA Council on Communications Trend Report found that more than 82% of dentists report major career stress. In a January 15 message to the membership, ADA President Brett Kessler, DDS, acknowledged the pressures of dentistry often lead many people to struggle in silence with anxiety, depression, and burnout. He said that keeping the dental “professional community well is among my top priorities as your ADA president.”

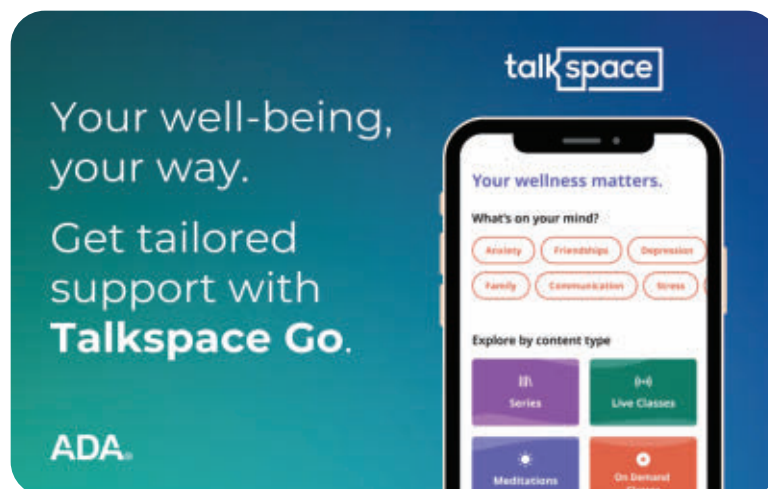
“I’ve used Talkspace Go myself, and I can tell you – it’s not just another app. It’s a powerful tool that can help you take those small, impactful steps toward living your best life,” Dr. Kessler said.

To get started:

- Visit [ADA.org/TalkspaceGo](https://ada.org/TalkspaceGo) to log in with your ADA information and receive a member-only access code.
- Download Talkspace Go on iOS or Android.
- Create an account and enter the ADA organization code.
- Answer 25 questions to help identify areas of support and growth to begin the self-guided experience.

For more information about Talkspace Go or to sign up, visit [ADA.org/TalkspaceGo](https://ada.org/TalkspaceGo).

For more information and resources on overall wellness, visit [ADA.org/Wellness](https://ada.org/Wellness). 🎧



Oregon Passes Dental Licensure Reform that Removes Stigmatizing Mental Health Questions

Vote follows advocacy by Oregon Dental Association, coalition members

By Mary Beth Versaci

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AFTER NEARLY 18 MONTHS OF ADVOCACY EFFORTS, dental licensure applications in Oregon will no longer include stigmatizing questions related to mental health.

On Dec. 13, 2024, the Oregon Board of Dentistry voted to remove “have you ever” questions related to receiving counseling, therapy, or treatment for mental health issues, including substance misuse, from initial and renewal licensure applications. These changes align with updated language already used by the Oregon Medical Board for physicians.

“Historically, the language used in licensure applications stigmatized mental health and substance use issues. Not only were these questions potentially illegal, but they also created barriers for dentists seeking

treatment,” said Julie Spaniel, DDS, Oregon Dental Association trustee, ADA wellness ambassador and member of the ADA Dental Team Wellness Advisory Committee. “Under the previous system, licensees who sought help for mental health conditions or substance use disorders were required to disclose their diagnosis to the board indefinitely. This requirement deterred many from seeking treatment, prompting some to seek help confidentially to avoid professional stigma.”

The Oregon Dental Association led the advocacy efforts for licensure reform in collaboration with the Oregon Dental Hygienists’ Association, Permanente Dental Associates, Willamette Dental Group, Gentle Dental, Delta Dental of Oregon, and Capitol Dental.

“The Oregon Dental Hygienists’ Association was proud to partner with the Oregon Dental Association and other stakeholder groups to advocate for the use of less stigmatizing language on applications for initial licensure and license renewal for dentists and dental hygienists in Oregon,” said Lisa Rowley, advocacy and membership director for the Oregon Dental Hygienists’ Association. “The ODHA believes that this is a significant step in supporting licensees and encouraging them to seek care when needed.”

The efforts began in August 2023 when the Oregon Dental Association and the Oregon Dental Hygienists’ Association sent a letter to the Oregon Board of Dentistry expressing their concerns about “have you ever” questions on the state’s dental



licensure applications. Dr. Spaniel and Oregon Dental Association Executive Director Barry Taylor, DMD, then brought the issue before the board in person to request that the questions be changed to align with language used by the Oregon Medical Board.

The Oregon Board of Dentistry initially hesitated to make the changes, Dr. Spaniel said, and the matter was referred in spring 2024 to a committee for further review. Significant progress was achieved by fall 2024 with the formation of the coalition facilitated by Brett Hamilton, director of government and regulatory affairs for the Oregon Dental Association. The coalition – which represented a majority of the state’s dentists – submitted a letter to the board strongly supporting licensure reform. Around the same time, dentists serving on the board spoke in favor of the changes, which they then passed in December.

To help educate board members, the Oregon Dental Association had provided studies, supportive articles on the Americans with Disabilities Act and a letter from ADA President Brett Kessler, DDS. The ADA House of Delegates passed a resolution in 2023 to assist states in developing and advocating for legislation or regulations that prevent licensure discrimination against dentists who have ever received mental health-related treatment.

“The Oregon Board of Dentistry’s decision to remove invasive mental health and substance use questions from licensure applications is a significant step forward in fostering a supportive and compassionate environment for dental professionals,” said Cyrus Lee, DMD, CEO and executive dental director of Permanente Dental Associates. “We believe that clinician wellness is directly linked to quality of care and patient experience. By reducing stigma and creating space for practitioners to seek help when

needed, this reform ultimately benefits both our colleagues and the patients we serve. We are proud to have advocated for this change and applaud the board for prioritizing the well-being of Oregon’s dental practitioners and the communities they care for.”

The new licensure application language states that the Oregon Board of Dentistry recognizes licensees may encounter mental health conditions and substance use disorders and lists options they can pursue, such as seeking medical care, self-limiting their practice or self-referring to the Oregon Health Professionals’ Services Program. It states that if licensees fail to adequately address a health condition that makes them unable to practice dentistry with reasonable skill and safety to patients, the board may take action against their license.

The initial and renewal applications also include a question

that asks if applicants are currently engaged in the excessive or habitual use of alcohol or drugs or are dependent on the use of alcohol or drugs that impair their ability to practice safely and competently. Dentists who are enrolled in the Oregon Health Professionals’ Services Program may answer no. The changes are expected to take effect by February.

“The new licensure questions have significantly changed the landscape. Dentists struggling with mental health or substance use challenges can now seek treatment without fear of stigma or lasting repercussions,” Dr. Spaniel said. “This reform marks a significant step forward in reducing stigma and fostering a culture where seeking help is both encouraged and supported. The ODA remains committed to ensuring its members have access to the resources they need to thrive professionally and personally.”

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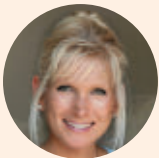
Well qualified dentists with a preferred one-year experience (can be met with a GPR or AEGD Fellowship) are encouraged to contact our recruitment team.

A Q&A with Dr. Barry Taylor and Dr. Julie Spaniel, Two of the Driving Forces Behind Oregon's Dental Licensure Reform

Why Is This Issue Important to You?



Dr. Taylor: I have been open and public with my past struggles with depression, and in doing so I have learned from many people who have struggled with substance use disorders. There is a stigma and shame around mental health issues and substance abuse issues that we need to remove so that providers are uninhibited to seek help. The most courageous – and sometimes difficult – step is for someone to ask for help.



Dr. Spaniel: Stigmatizing licensure questions creates a significant barrier for dentists seeking help. When a dentist struggles with substance use or a mental health disorder, they are often forced to carry that burden like a scarlet letter for the rest of their career. This fear discourages many from seeking the care they need. Nearly 20 years ago, I faced my own battle with alcohol use disorder. I wanted help, but I feared the consequences of jeopardizing my license, my livelihood, and my future. As a result, I had to seek treatment in secrecy, away from public scrutiny. My hope is that changing these licensure questions will remove this fear and allow dentists to seek help early before their struggles escalate into greater challenges.

Why Do You Believe This Is Important to Oregon's Dental Community?

Dr. Taylor: Part of the mission of the Oregon Board of Dentistry is to “protect public health and safety by regulating dental professionals,” and I feel that best way to do this is caring

for the dental team. Approximately 10% of the adult population has some degree of alcohol use disorder, and the number of dental licensees reporting a problem was significantly lower than this number. Providers were not being honest in their answers, so the question was ineffective in prevention and helping providers; therefore, they aren't able to reach out for help.

Dr. Spaniel: The questions we ask on licensure applications are intended to assess an applicant's qualifications and uphold public safety by addressing moral, legal, and ethical considerations. These applications are not designed to stigmatize an applicant's medical history or past health challenges. For example, we do not ask whether an applicant has diabetes or whether it is well-managed, as such personal health matters do not impact one's ability to practice dentistry with skill and competence. Likewise, dentists should not be subjected to intrusive questions about their medical history when those conditions do not impair their professional abilities. Revising these questions will create an environment where more dentists can prioritize their health without fear of public scrutiny, ultimately benefiting both practitioners and the patients they serve.

What Benefits Will This Reform Have for Patients and for Dentists?

Dr. Spaniel: When dentists are at their best – physically, mentally, and emotionally – they can provide the highest quality care for their patients. A healthy, well-supported dentist is better equipped to focus on patient needs, make sound clinical decisions, and contribute positively to their profession. Beyond their practice, dentists who are in good

health can also lead fulfilling lives with their families and friends, free from the burden of untreated conditions that could otherwise diminish their well-being. However, when they are forced to live in fear – whether of stigma, professional repercussions, or the loss of their livelihood – their struggles are only compounded. This fear creates a vicious cycle, discouraging them from seeking the care they need, which ultimately worsens their condition and affects every aspect of their lives. By fostering a culture that encourages dentists to prioritize their health without fear of judgment or career consequences, we not only support the individuals behind the profession but also enhance the overall quality of dental care and patient safety. A profession that values the well-being of its practitioners is one that ensures the best outcomes for everyone involved.

Dr. Taylor: In order for an oral health care provider to take care of their patients, they first need to take care of themselves. Removing the intrusive questions is one factor in removing barriers and stigma from a provider who has a history of a substance use disorder. We are working on changing a cultural attitude to recognize people who are healthy and not judge them on past harmful behaviors.

How Does This Licensure Reform Align with Other States?

Dr. Spaniel: A growing movement in the U.S., led by the medical community, is working to remove stigmatizing licensure questions. So far, 31 state medical boards have revised their initial and renewal applications for MDs and DOs. Dental licensing boards across the country are now being urged to follow suit, prioritizing the mental

health and well-being of dentists and dental hygienists while ensuring compliance with the law. These changes have already benefited over 1.1 million licensed healthcare professionals. The trend of auditing licensure, re-licensure, and hospital credentialing applications continues to gain momentum, aiming to eliminate intrusive mental health questions and stigmatizing language nationwide.

Dr. Taylor: This is an opportunity for Oregon to be a leader, as we are one of the first states to adopt these questions on the dental license application. Oregon has long been a progressive state, so it only seems natural that we are leaders in adopting this model of questions.

Why Was It Important for the ODA to Partner with Other Stakeholders on This Issue?

Dr. Taylor: This is about doing what is best for the community, so it is key to include all licensees and providers in all modalities. The fact that we had a large, diverse coalition that supported this reflects that there was a commonality in our dental community to remove the stigma around having a history of substance use disorders.

Dr. Spaniel: It is easy to maintain the status quo, but meaningful change requires effort and courage. The belief that these licensure questions protected the public was false – they were ineffective because most applicants did not answer them truthfully, which highlights a deeper

issue: When dentists fear seeking care due to potential repercussions on their license and livelihood, public safety is compromised. By building a coalition representing over 75% of Oregon’s licensed dentists, we successfully demonstrated to the board that this issue mattered to the majority of our profession. We are grateful to everyone who contributed to making this critical change, ensuring a healthier and more supported dental workforce.

What Do You Want Other Dentists to Know about These Changes?

Dr. Spaniel: Every dentist in our state should know that they will no longer be asked if they have ever had a history of mental health or substance use disorders. This change means that if you are struggling, you can seek help without fear. If you are concerned about your use of alcohol or other substances, or if you are facing mental health challenges but are afraid to seek care, know that as long as you are in successful treatment, you will not be required to disclose past struggles on your licensure application. Living with substance dependence is incredibly difficult, and trying to navigate recovery while fearing professional consequences only makes it harder.

We no longer have to choose between health and our careers. The updated licensure application now states that if you are currently in treatment, you do not need to answer

“yes” to this question. I encourage anyone questioning their substance use or mental health to reach out to the Oregon Wellness Program, where you can access three free, confidential mental health sessions to help assess your situation. Seeking help is a sign of strength, and support is available.

What Do You Want Patients to Know About These Changes?

Dr. Spaniel: Dental patients deserve the confidence that their provider has every opportunity to be at their best. They should feel reassured knowing that dentists are no longer punished for seeking the health care they need. These updated licensure questions ultimately enhance public safety by encouraging providers to prioritize their well-being without fear of professional repercussions. It is essential for every dentist to fully understand the impact of these changes so they feel empowered to take care of themselves. A healthier dental workforce means better care for patients and a stronger, more supportive profession for all.

Dr. Taylor: These changes put patient safety first by working to ensure healthy providers. The Oregon Board is still asking if the provider has a current problem with any substance use disorder. The Board is fulfilling its mission to protect public health and to promote quality oral health care. Providers do their best when they themselves are receiving quality care. 🎧

Dentists in our state should be aware of the valuable resources available to support their well-being at both the state and national levels.

The American Dental Association provides excellent free resources, including Talkspace Go, the Mayo Clinic Well-Being Index, and a wealth of articles, webinars, and podcasts focused on mental health and substance use disorders.

At the state level, the Wellness Ambassador Program offers confidential peer support, connecting dentists and dental students with experienced colleagues who can share their own experiences, strength, and hope. Additionally, the Oregon Wellness Program is available to all licensed dentists and hygienists, providing three free, confidential mental health sessions with a licensed therapist who has at least five years of experience treating healthcare professionals.

If you have questions about these or other resources, please contact the Oregon Dental Association for more information. Support is available; you are not alone.

– Dr. Spaniel

Dr. Alanson Randol Exemplifies Community Dentistry in Roseburg

HAVING GROWN UP ON A 650-ACRE RANCH in rural Douglas County, life in a smaller, close-knit community was all Dr. Alanson Randol knew. Today, he exemplifies what it means to be a rural, community dentist in his practice, in his community involvement, and in his commitment to supporting the next generation of rural dentists.

Today, Dr. Randol is a rare fifth-generation dentist, but originally, he wanted to be a medical doctor. After a few years of business and accounting classes at the University of Arizona and a realization that the medical field wouldn't offer him the work-life balance he wanted, he transferred to Oregon State University, where he enrolled in the general science program and got

involved in a pre-dental student organization with Dr. Ken Johnson.

"I fell in love with dentistry at that point," said Dr. Randol. "It blended the aspect of being a doctor and helping people with the business aspect of being a small business owner, which is what I had enjoyed about my business classes in the first place."

Dr. Randol credits Dr. Johnson as being his first mentor on how to be a good clinician in the community. That mindset encouraged him to move back home to Roseburg after attending University of the Pacific's Dental School in San Francisco and purchase a small private practice, which he grew to nearly 30 employees.

"One thing that was great for me as a young dentist was the Umpqua Dental Society," said Dr. Randol.

"They did a great job mentoring and welcoming me in as a member. It gave me a really great opportunity to ask questions about what I was going through from a learning perspective."

Dr. Randol makes every effort to continue that culture of mentorship in Roseburg, inviting new dentists in the community out to lunch and encouraging them to reach out with questions or to collaborate.

He knows that it can be challenging to encourage young dentists to move to rural communities after dental school, which is why he worked closely with Dr. Michael Plunkett and Dr. Sean Benson to create the first preceptors program through OHSU's School of Dentistry, which sends dental students off site to a clinic for a rotation during dental school.



DR. ALANSON RANDOL





“The experience gives them a good opportunity to see what the real world is like,” said Dr. Randol. The program, which started as a one-week rotation, now sends students to off-site clinics for up to eight weeks, primarily at Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). It also gives students an opportunity to personally experience the benefits of working in a smaller or rural community.

“There’s a lot of opportunity in the rural areas, especially if you’re family oriented,” said Dr. Randol. “My life goals were to have a family and a job, and dentistry has allowed me to do those things and have a good work-life balance.”

In addition to the work-life balance his practice offers, Dr. Randol appreciates the freedom it gives him to treat patients at no cost or half cost, if needed, without having administrative hoops to jump through like he would at a larger organization.

“Dr. Johnson said don’t ever be afraid to give something away or do something nice for the community

because it comes back to you tenfold if you’re doing it for the right reasons,” said Dr. Randol, who has taken that advice to heart, giving back to his community in a multitude of ways throughout his career.

One of the first charitable dental programs Dr. Randol was involved in was Donated Dental Day in Roseburg, where a handful of local dentists worked together to treat patients who couldn’t afford dental care. The program eventually ended because many of those patients now receive access to care through the Oregon Health Plan, but it provided a framework for Dr. Randol’s latest community dental program, Freedom Smiles Day.

“Roseburg has a large VA hospital and a large veteran population, but unless the veterans are 100% disabled, the VA doesn’t cover their dental work, and we saw that a lot of veterans were having difficulty getting their dental work done,” said Dr. Randol, who worked with veterans organizations and other

local dental providers to start Freedom Smiles Day.

The annual event is held around Veterans Day and allows dentists like Dr. Randol to treat veterans’ dental needs for free. A local lab even donates crowns or dentures when the need arises.

“We do everything from extractions to root canals,” said Dr. Randol. “It’s been a really great event over the years.”

In addition to Freedom Smiles Day, Dr. Randol is deeply involved in his community through athletics, serving as the team dentist for the Umpqua Community College Athletic Department and as a youth sports coach.

Whether he is welcoming new dentists to town, offering free dental care to veterans, or treating his seventh-grade art teacher, Dr. Randol is a prime example of what it means to be a true community dentist, meeting the dental needs of his community while also living and working alongside them. ●

HomePlate Youth Services Shared Their Testimonial With Us!

AT THE DFO, WE ARE ALWAYS THRILLED when a new partner organization shares feedback with us when the Tooth Taxi pays its first visit to the organization. Recently, we received this email from HomePlate Youth Services regarding an early January site visit:

“Thank you DFO and Tooth Taxi team for an incredible experience with the Tooth Taxi this past week at HomePlate Youth Services. I have heard incredible feedback from staff and youth with their experiences with the staff involved with Tooth Taxi. As you all may know, dental care can be intimidating, especially when it’s something that you may not have access to regularly. Our drop-in coordinator Mireya expressed that youth who were anxious beforehand came out of their appointment smiling, in awe of the care and treatment they received, and are already asking when the Tooth Taxi will be back. As someone who has helped coordinate external partners with HomePlate before, I can also say that this is the quickest I have seen a sign-up sheet fill up, which clearly expresses the need and want for services like this.

Thank you, again, for your support to your community and to HomePlate. It means so much to be able to offer services like this to folks who are on their path to stability. THANK YOU, Amber, for connecting us!”

—Jaycie Sabala, Development Coordinator, HomePlate Youth Services



TOOTH TAXI STAFF

The DFO Earns 7th Platinum Status

FOR THE 7TH YEAR IN A ROW, The Dental Foundation of Oregon has achieved Platinum status with Candid (formerly Guide Star), the premier destination for nonprofits and nonprofit research. Learn more at [Candid.org](https://www.candid.org).



The Dental Foundation of Oregon (DFO) is dedicated to advancing oral health education, providing charitable care, and coordinating resources for Oregon's children and vulnerable communities.

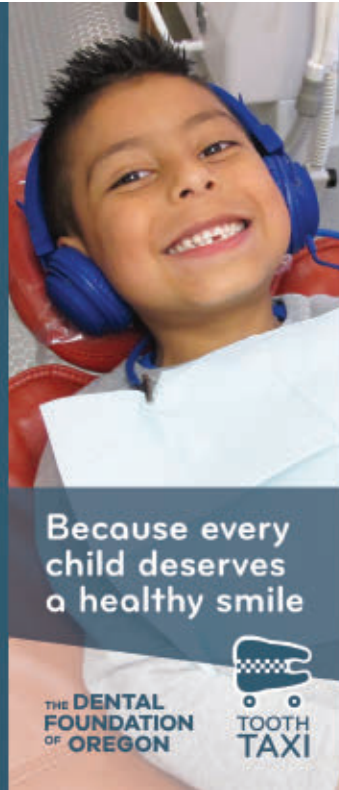
Founded in 1982 by the Oregon Dental Association, the DFO brings smiles to our state's underserved children through the Tooth Taxi, a specially equipped 18-foot vehicle. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, since 2008 our dental professionals and volunteers have provided \$7 million dollars in free dental care and oral health education to more than 20,000 school-aged children, many in our state's rural areas.

"I love to come here. When I grow up I want to be a dentist on the Tooth Taxi."

— Child



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Financial Wellness



By Alayna Schoblaske

AS THE AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION PREPARES TO open a members-only credit union this fall, the national New Dentist Committee – which I have the privilege to serve on – has been talking more and more about financial wellness. It is a cornerstone to our lives. Money is a tool that we use to care for ourselves, our families, our friends, our pets, and our teams. And learning to most effectively use that tool can be particularly overwhelming for new dentists who are managing student debt along with a slew of personal and professional milestones: buying a home, buying a practice, getting married or becoming a parent, replacing a car, or taking a dream vacation to celebrate any one of these milestones.

Here are three pieces of advice that I would give to new dentists as they find their own version of financial wellness:

- **Make a plan, and stick to it.** The plan will look different for everyone.

When I was single and managing my own finances, that looked like a lot of research (I leaned heavily on *White Coat Investor* and *Money For Couples*) and many, many Excel spreadsheets. After I got married this past summer, though, the plan got more complicated and my husband and I met with a flat fee, advice-only Certified Financial Planner. He was able to help us build a plan to meet our shared goals and coach us on actions we could take now and in the future to carry out that plan. However you make your plan, though, I have found that my wellness comes from sticking with it even when the stock market fluctuates or savings rates go down. As new dentists, we have time on our side and calm, measured consistency will be our greatest advantage – and one of our greatest insulators from worry.

- **Ask for help.** This might be a Certified Financial Planner, a practice management advisor, or

scheduling a consultation with a student loan expert (ADA members get a free 30-minute student loan consultation from Laurel Road and GradFin). Just as our patients come to us for our expertise, it's OK to seek out financial experts for theirs.

- **Talk about money.** Many of us were raised to believe that talking about money is off-limits or taboo. However, I have found that the more openly I talk about money, the more confidence and the less shame I feel. My husband and I regularly have money meetings to review our spending (we love the Monarch app), I love talking to my friends and colleagues about our financial plans, and I enjoy podcasts (like *White Coat Investor* and *Money For Couples*, mentioned above) that talk candidly about money.

As you navigate your financial wellness journey, remember that you can find all sorts of resources for ADA members at ada.org/money. 🎧

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New Study Identifies How Blood Vessel Dysfunction Can Worsen Chronic Disease

Discovery could lead to new prevention, treatment strategies for cancer, diabetes, fibrosis, many other diseases

By Angela Yeager

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<https://news.ohsu.edu/2025/01/10/new-study-identifies-how-blood-vessel-dysfunction-can-worsen-chronic-disease>

RESEARCHERS AT OREGON HEALTH & SCIENCE UNIVERSITY have uncovered how specialized cells surrounding small blood vessels, known as perivascular cells, contribute to blood vessel dysfunction in chronic diseases such as cancer, diabetes, and fibrosis. The findings, published in *Science Advances* (<https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/sciadv.adp3789>), could change how these diseases are treated.



Luiz Bertassoni, DDS, PhD (OHSU)

The study, led by **Luiz Bertassoni, DDS, PhD**, founding director of the Knight Cancer Precision Biofabrication Hub and a professor at the OHSU Knight Cancer Institute and the OHSU School of Dentistry, shows that perivascular cells sense changes in nearby tissues and send signals that disrupt blood vessel function, worsening disease progression.

Nearly a decade ago, Bertassoni and his team developed a method to 3D print blood vessels in the lab – a breakthrough recognized as one of the top scientific discoveries of the year by *Discover* magazine (<https://www.discovermagazine.com/health/blood-vessels-via-printer>). Since then, they've focused on engineering blood vessels that better mimic those in the human body to study more complex diseases.

"Historically, endothelial cells lining blood vessels have been considered the main contributors of vascular disease," Bertassoni said. "Our findings represent a paradigm shift, showing how perivascular cells, instead, act as important sentinels. They detect changes in tissues and coordinating vascular responses. This opens the door to entirely new treatment strategies."

Cristiane Miranda Franca, DDS, PhD, the study's lead author, is an assistant professor in the OHSU School of Dentistry and holds appointments with the OHSU Knight Cancer Precision Biofabrication Hub and Knight Cancer Institute's Cancer Early Detection Advanced Research Center, or CEDAR.

"The applications of this research are wide," she said. "We've shown for the first time how perivascular cells trigger inflammation and signal blood vessel changes when surrounding tissues are altered."

The study used an innovative "blood vessel on-a-chip" model developed by **Christopher Chen, MD, PhD**, and his team from Boston University and the Wyss Institute at Harvard, who are collaborators on this project. By replicating conditions like tissue stiffening and scarring – common in aging, chronic diseases, and cancer – the researchers discovered that perivascular cells drive blood vessel leakage and distortion, worsening inflammation and disease.

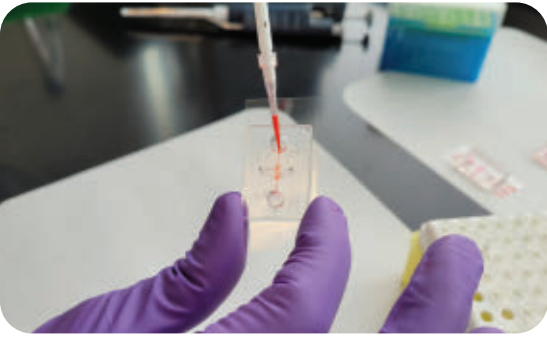
"When we removed perivascular cells, blood vessels essentially failed to respond to tissue changes," Franca said.

The findings shed light on the relationship between the extracellular matrix, blood vessel function, and disease progression. Perivascular cells could become targets for therapies aimed at restoring normal vascular function and reducing the progression of various diseases such as fibrosis, diabetes, and cancer.

Importantly, the research also holds promise for cancer prevention and early intervention. Early detection and treatment of changes in these cells could help stop tumors before they grow.



Cristiane Miranda Franca, DDS, PhD (OHSU)



OHSU/CHRISTINE TORRES HICKS

OHSU researchers have uncovered how specialized cells surrounding small blood vessels, known as perivascular cells, contribute to blood vessel dysfunction in chronic diseases such as cancer, diabetes and fibrosis. The findings could change how these diseases are treated.

“If we intervene early, we might prevent precancerous lesions from advancing to full-blown cancer,” Bertassoni said. “This could revolutionize how we approach cancer prevention and treatment.”

In addition to Bertassoni and Franca, OHSU co-authors include

Maria Elisa Lima Verde, PhD, Alice Correa Silva-Sousa, DDS, PhD, Amin Mansoorifar, PhD, Avathamsa Athirasala, MS, Ramesh Subbiah, PhD, Anthony Tahayeri, BS, Mauricio Sousa, DDS, MS, PhD, May Anny Fraga, DDS, MS, Rahul Visalakshan, PhD, Aaron Doe, MS, Keith Beadle, BS, and McKenna Finley, BA.

Co-authors also include **Emilios Dimitriadis, PhD**, with the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering; **Jennifer Bays, PhD**, and **Marina Uroz, PhD**, with Boston University; and **Kenneth Yamada, MD, PhD**, with the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research of the National Institutes of Health.

In our interest of ensuring the integrity of our research and as part of our commitment to public transparency, OHSU actively regulates, tracks and manages relationships that our researchers

may hold with entities outside of OHSU. In regard to this research, OHSU’s Bertassoni and Beadle are cofounders and shareholders of HuMarrow Inc. Bertassoni, Beadle and Tahayeri are inventors on a patent related to this work.

This research was supported by the National Institute of Dental & Craniofacial Research of the National Institutes of Health under Award Numbers R01DE026170, R01DE029553, K01DE030484, CAPES/Brazil #88887.716956/2022-00 (to A.C.S.-S.), European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO) long-term fellowship – EMBO ALTF811-2018, National Institutes of Health grant ZIADE000718, and National Institutes of Health grant ZIADE000719. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the funders.

Learn more: <https://news.ohsu.edu/news-media/ohsu-knight-cancer-institute>





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Continued on page 34



2024 oda Annual Report



Barry Taylor, DMD,
ODA Executive
Director

TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER

THE ODA ANNUAL REPORT IS AN OPPORTUNITY to share with you all the accomplishments that the Oregon Dental Association had in 2024. It is also an opportunity to encourage members to be ODA membership ambassadors by encouraging your colleagues to join. There is a great deal to celebrate about 2024, and we continue to expand programs going into 2025. We are a membership association, and without members growing membership, our work will not be able to be accomplished.

Our work includes advocacy, wellness, an annual continuing education meeting with the largest dental exhibitor hall in the state, and a great affordable Regional Event just to name a few of our endeavors. Without the ODA, none of these programs would exist, and there is no individual or group that would fill the gap. In 2024 the groundwork was done to introduce three legislative bills for the 2025 session. This required the work of one full-time staff member, two contract lobbyists as well as a media consultant. All of this requires the support of membership dues, because without those dues we are unable to support this team. Having now observed the early weeks of the 2025 legislative session, I can tell you that individuals are introducing no dental legislation. It takes an association to represent you. The same can be said for an annual meeting with 3,000 attendees and over 100 exhibitors, or a wellness program that has been advocating for programs to take care of the dental team.

The Oregon Dental Association is dedicated to advancing the dental profession and promoting the highest standard of oral health and oral healthcare in the state. Together we are stronger, and without the support of a larger membership base, we will be leaving it to others to decide our fate.

ADVOCACY

2024 Legislative Session

The 2024 Legislative Session was arguably one of the most bipartisan and congenial sessions in recent memory. The short, five-week session saw Republicans and Democrats come together to tackle remarkably complex issues, including affordable housing, homelessness, campaign finance, and addressing Oregon's drug crisis. However, in a crowded legislative session, the ODA remained focused on a handful of key bills impacting Oregon dentists.

ODA tracked and advocated for hundreds of bills, from funding

for dental rate cuts and dental lab registration requirements, to a bill that would have limited private equity ownership in health care organizations and a modification to the Oregon Family Leave Act, and much more.

Regarding dental rates, the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) recently announced cuts to dental rates between 3-6% for the Oregon Health Plan (OHP) population. To offset the rate cuts, a coalition of dental care organizations (DCOs) and the ODA asked legislators to provide a backfill of \$14M. However, with much of the short session focused on the priority

legislation on housing and drug recriminalization, the legislature did not address the rate cut through a budget note as the coalition had requested and failed to fund the \$14M.

ODA continued to focus on the health and well-being of its members during the 2024 Legislative Session. ODA, and a coalition of medical associations, advocated legislators to fund the Oregon Wellness Program (OWP), which provides confidential counseling for healthcare providers. Although the OWP did not receive the desired funding, it was well-positioned, and ODA expects that funding for

the OWP will remain a key issue for healthcare providers in 2025.

2025 Legislative Agenda Development

The ODA's Regulatory Affairs Committee (RAC) engaged in policy discussions with the ODA's government affairs team beginning early summer 2024 to determine what policies and legislative concepts the association would prioritize for the 2025 Legislative Session.

The RAC and the ODA Board of Trustees agreed upon a 2025 legislative agenda that prioritized what we heard from our members as some of their top priorities, including an insurance reform bill, Senate Bill 532 (SB 532) (<https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/LIZ/2025R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/SB0532>), that, if passed, will help address current challenges facing patients and dental offices, and House Bill 2676 (HB 2676) (<https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/LIZ/2025R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB2676>) that will include Oregon in the multi-state Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact, in order to support efforts to expand Oregon's dental workforce. ODA will also continue to support and advocate for increased dental reimbursement for serving the OHP population by supporting House Bill 2597 (HB 2597), which will set minimum rates of reimbursement providers serving OHP patients (<https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/LIZ/2025R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB2597>).

Dental Insurance Reform

The challenges of navigating dental insurance are perennial concerns that we hear from members. Some of the challenges members have shared are with assignment of benefits, retroactive denials, and prompt pay. After research and discussion, the RAC recommended



ODA will be monitoring bills related to oral health

that these three ideas be bundled into a Dental Insurance Reform bill, which became an ODA proposed bill, SB 532 (<https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/LIZ/2025R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/SB0532>). Below is a description of each component.

Assignment of Benefits

In Oregon, insurers are not required to submit insurance payments directly to the dentist when patients are seeing an out-of-network dentist. Instead, payments go directly to patients, a practice known as "assignment of benefits." This burdensome process often means that the patient is forced to pay out of pocket for services and await reimbursement from their insurer, while the dentist has to contact the patient for payment after services have been rendered, leading to confusion from patients who expect their insurers to pay providers directly.

Senate Bill 532 will allow patients to choose for payments to be sent directly to their provider, putting patients in control of their benefits while ensuring that the insurance benefit is used for its intended purpose.

Retroactive Denials

Retroactive denials allow insurance companies to require dentists to repay claims already paid to them when insurers discover they paid a claim mistakenly, even if the claim was processed years ago. This

practice often results in unexpected bills for patients and erodes trust between patients and their dentists.

Senate Bill 532 will limit the time frame within which an insurer may demand a refund on a claim they have paid. Most existing retroactive denial laws across the country limit the time frame allowed for insurer recoupment to 12-24 months, which is longer than the window of time many insurers give dentists to timely file claims.

Prompt Payment

Many dentists regularly encounter unpredictability and delay associated with getting paid by insurers. When these payments are delayed, dentists may have trouble paying staff and other administrative expenses, impacting the patient experience – and potentially access to dental care. This is particularly important today as operational costs have dramatically increased while insurer payments have not kept pace with inflation.

Senate Bill 532 would bring dental issuance laws in line with existing medical insurance laws which require an insurer to pay a clean claim or deny the claim no later than 30 days after the date on which the insurer receives the claim. At the time of this writing, 46 other states had laws that required prompt payment from dental insurers.

Dental and Dental Hygienist Compact

The ODA team and leadership know that workforce challenges remain one of the biggest issues facing dentistry today. So, ODA is being solution focused and advocating for House Bill 2676, which will bring Oregon into the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact. The compact, which has already been approved by 10 states, will allow licensed dentists and dental hygienists to practice in all states participating in the compact, rather

than get an individual license in every state in which they want to practice. The ability of dentists and hygienists to immediately treat patients after moving from another state to Oregon will increase Oregon's dental workforce. Mobility and multistate practice for licensed dentists and dental hygienists is particularly critical for dental practices or practitioners living in Portland and Vancouver, as they are not currently allowed to practice on both sides of the Oregon/Washington state border.

Modernizing Medicaid Dental Rates

Medicaid dental rates are at a tipping point. While facing an ongoing erosion of Medicaid dental investments, oral health providers are striving to resolve pandemic-related issues – workforce, utilization, and costs – and readying for new waiver responsibilities, increased caseloads, and coverage. Oregon's fee-for-service reimbursement is the lowest of the Western states, compared to average dentist charges

and private dental insurance; therefore, most dentists can't afford to treat OHP patients.

Senate Bill 2597 will require the OHA and coordinated care organizations (CCOs) to reimburse dental providers at a minimum of 59.8% the average rate paid by insurers in Oregon. Using transparent and actionable data from the independent nonprofit Fair Health will promote sound rate setting. The bill also directs OHA to review and revise rates annually.

MEMBERSHIP

This year we saw our local component landscape change as we continue with the intention of providing each ODA member a comparable membership experience. Southern Willamette Dental Society and Lane County Dental Society merged, creating Coastal Cascade Dentist Society. The new dental society has a robust calendar of CE and social events throughout 2025. Yamhill County dissolved and members were moved into Washington County Dental Society, Marion Polk Dental Society, and Multnomah Dental Society. Rogue Valley Dental Society has hired an experienced executive director who also serves as the executive director of Southern Oregon Dental Society to increase consistent member value within the region. The 2024 House of Delegates passed resolutions which will further component restructuring to better serve our members. We continue to support our 14 local components throughout the state. This effort may look different depending on whether the local component has staff or is purely volunteer driven, is large or small, in the metro area or rural. The ODA staff is here to support our diverse components and members as we understand one size does not fit all. We worked closely with local

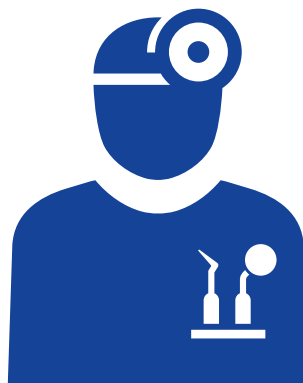
component leadership to retain and recruit members throughout the state using a variety of methods. Member engagement focused on email, direct mail, digital ad campaigns, and social media. Multiple campaigns focused on new dentists (0-10 years out of dental school) or recently lapsed members. Moving into 2025, peer-to-peer recruiting by current members continues to be critical to growing the association. We encourage you to reach out to a non-member peer you know and invite them to a local component meeting. Staff attended nine component/social meetings and held four component leadership meetings. We were there to listen to you, the members, inform members and non-members of association benefits,

and continue to expand offerings to make membership valuable and relevant.

The ODA has continued highlighting member value to new dentists and OHSU dental students. The New Dentist Council continued to support the ODA Mentor Program. The program currently has three in-person pods, with 65 mentees participating and 24 mentors who meet monthly to discuss life in dental school, interesting cases, wellness, and life after dental school. We continue to have a presence at OHSU, which led to 26 touchpoints/programs in 2024. We continue to partner with OHSU staff/faculty and ASDA to expand our programming to present relevant topics and have plans to expand faculty outreach.

In conjunction with the ADA, we converted to a new customer relationship management (CRM) system. We hope that you are becoming acquainted with your new ADA portal where you can manage your account, pay dues, and purchase ADA CE and resources. If you have any issues with your portal, please do not hesitate to contact the ODA office.

We are pleased to share that with the support and hard work of our volunteer leaders and staff across the state, we retained 93%



1,989
Total Members

VOODOODOT/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

of membership. Welcoming 119 new members into ODA membership in 2024, we ended the year with membership totaling 1,989 dentists throughout the state; this represents 51.5% of active dentists. As we move forward into 2025, we will continue to concentrate on retainment of current members

while demonstrating the value of membership to all Oregon dentists. Our strength comes in numbers, and we urge you to share your community experiences with colleagues in hopes that they will join your association! We thank you for your support of organized dentistry. We love to see our members thrive!



119
New Members

EDUCATION AND EVENTS

2024 Oregon Dental Conference

The 131st Oregon Dental Conference (ODC) was held on-site at the Oregon Convention Center, April 4-6, 2024. Fifty speakers presented 81 scientific continuing education sessions. Two of the sessions were hands-on workshops. There was a focus on health & wellness that included daily yoga, a wellness hub, and continuing education in several health & wellness categories.

The exhibit hall was held on Thursday, April 4 and Friday, April 5. There were 107 exhibiting companies with a total of 122 booths. There was a Grand Opening Reception with a fireside chat with ADA President Brett Kessler on Thursday to drive traffic to the hall. There were also professional headshots offered on Friday and the wellness hub both days that offered massage chairs, activities from Hope for the Day including a coloring wall, and resources from the Oregon Wellness Program.

The Friday night president's party, *Night of Smiles*, was rebranded to the *ODC Party*. The 2024 theme was *80s Edition!* and featured arcade games and live music from the band 5 Guys Named Moe. The event was sponsored, in part, by Delta Dental of Oregon. The ODA New Dentist Award was awarded to Dr. Adam Fox, and the Tom Tucker Humanitarian Award was awarded to Dr. Tom Holt.

A total of 3,025 individuals attended the conference (2,525 dental professionals and 500 exhibitor personnel). We thank everyone

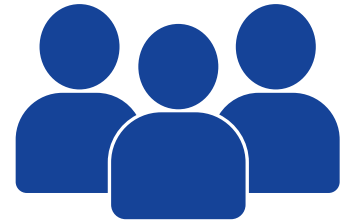
who attended and supported the 2024 ODC!

The 2025 ODC will once again return to the Oregon Convention Center. It will feature 48 speakers and 80 courses from April 3 to 5, with four hands-on workshops. The exhibit hall will feature several activities to draw traffic including a grand opening reception, food trucks, professional headshot station, a superhero-themed day on Friday, and a book signing by 2025's keynote speaker, Dr. Jeffrey Gurian. Supply companies Henry Schein, Burkhardt Dental and Patterson Dental are all making their return to the exhibit hall for the first time post-pandemic. Oregon Board of Dentistry courses are being provided for free to ODA Members (Infection Control, Cultural Competency & Medical Emergencies) with the ICE track that also allows them access to the exhibit hall and keynote speaker at no charge.

In the fall of 2024, the Annual Meeting Council voted in favor of moving the dates of the Oregon Dental Conference to March. Due to the scheduling system with the Oregon Convention Center, this will begin in 2028 with the potential dates of March 2-4, 2028.

2024 Regional Event

On November 1st & 2nd, 2024, the ODA successfully hosted the third annual Regional Event in Powell Butte, Oregon at Brasada Ranch. Karen Daw gave a very well-received presentation in the morning, with local Oregon



3,025
Attendees

oral surgeons Dr. Daniel Petrisor and Dr. Jonathan Jelmini giving an equally well received lecture in the afternoon. Attendees were able to earn five hours of CE credit. The Friday evening prior featured a fun trivia social event hosted by ODA's own Dr. Travis Baskerville. The Boots & Bling Party followed the education sessions. This event was open to all ODA members as well as non-members and dental team members. We had 96 attendees in total, 53 of those being ODA members.

ODA's next regional event is scheduled for the weekend of November 8th at Salishan in Lincoln City. We hope to have over 100 registrants for this event, which will be highlighted by a Luau-themed party on Saturday evening. Save the date and watch for registration to open soon!

Winter Webinar Series

The Oregon Dental Conference is in transition to change its dates to early March, but this will not take place until 2028. In 2024, the Winter Webinar Series was created in response to this. This series was

created to provide ODA members the opportunity to receive Oregon Board of Dentistry-required courses before the licensure deadline of April 1st.

These webinars are 100% free and exclusively for ODA members.

The Winter Webinar Series is a three-part series featuring a webinar a

month. January 2025 was on cultural competency; February 2025 will be on infection control; and March 2025 will be a medical emergency update.

WELLNESS

2024 was a year of significant progress for the Oregon Dental Association (ODA) Wellness Initiative, marked by key leadership under Chair Dr. Julie Spaniel. With a continued commitment to supporting dental professionals' well-being, the ODA maintained its position as one of the leading states addressing wellness in the dental community. Dr. Spaniel's active involvement as an ADA Wellness Ambassador and a member of the ADA's Dental Wellness Advisory Committee has strengthened the alignment between the ODA and ADA in their shared wellness goals.

Key Highlights of 2024

- **Leadership and Advocacy:** The ODA has played a critical role in advancing wellness initiatives within the dental profession. Dr. Spaniel's work with the ADA has ensured that both the ODA and ADA are united in their wellness objectives, reinforcing the ODA's commitment to creating a supportive environment for dental professionals across Oregon.
- **Wellness Committee Engagement:** The Wellness Committee met four times virtually in 2024, with an in-person option provided. These meetings served as a platform for collaboration, allowing speakers from the health and wellness sector to share valuable insights and feedback on wellness within the dental community. The exchange of ideas during these meetings has contributed to the growth and

expansion of wellness initiatives within Oregon.

- **District 11 Collaboration:** A notable development in 2024 was the participation of wellness advocates from District 11, which includes Oregon, Washington, Alaska, Idaho, and Montana. Representatives from these states attended all four meetings, actively contributing to the development and streamlining of Wellness Ambassador programs and resources. Looking ahead to 2025, it was decided that two meetings will focus specifically on District 11 wellness topics, while the other two will address Oregon-specific Wellness Ambassadors and initiatives.
- **Oregon Board of Dentistry Policy Update:** A significant milestone was achieved with the Oregon Board of Dentistry's approval of a language change that aligns licensure applications with the Oregon Medical Board's licensure language. The ODA will follow up on this update to ensure the information is reflected on the website and in all relevant literature.

Looking Forward to 2025

- **Formal Training for Peer Support:** A consensus emerged among District 11 wellness advocates on the need for formal training for those dentists who take phone calls from colleagues in need of support. After evaluating proposals and quotes from three different organizations, the ODA has decided to move forward with *Hope For The Day* for a two-part

training session titled *Things We Don't Say*.

- **Part 1** will be an asynchronous online learning platform.

- **Part 2** will be a live webinar scheduled for August 2025.

This training is designed to equip dentists with the tools and resources needed to provide meaningful support to their peers, addressing the mental and emotional challenges faced within the dental profession.

- **Continual Advocacy for Wellness Funding:** In addition to promoting the Wellness Ambassador peer-to-peer support network, the ODA will continue advocating for increased funding for the Oregon Wellness Program. This ongoing effort aims to ensure that resources are available to all dental professionals seeking assistance, further reinforcing the ODA's commitment to mental health and wellness in the dental community.

Conclusion

2024 was a successful year for the ODA Wellness Initiative, with notable achievements in leadership, collaboration, and policy development. As we move into 2025, the ODA remains focused on expanding wellness resources and providing essential support to dental professionals throughout Oregon and District 11. The ongoing efforts to strengthen training, peer support, and funding will continue to make Oregon a leader in dental wellness, ensuring that dental professionals have the resources they need to maintain their well-being and thrive in their careers. ●



EXCLUSIVE WELLNESS RESOURCES FOR ADA MEMBERS AND DENTAL STUDENTS



Find programs and resources to support your mental, emotional and physical well-being at [ADA.org/Wellness](https://ada.org/Wellness).



Talkspace Go [ADA.org/TalkspaceGo](https://ada.org/TalkspaceGo)

Your well-being, your way. Talkspace Go, a self-directed therapy app, can help you address the challenges like work stress, relationships and burnout. Get your exclusive ADA access code for complimentary access at [ADA.org/TalkspaceGo](https://ada.org/TalkspaceGo).



Well-Being Index (WBI) [ADA.org/Well-BeingIndex](https://ada.org/Well-BeingIndex)

Your health matters. The ADA provides members access to the Dental Well-Being Index (WBI), a validated, anonymous risk assessment tool invented by the Mayo Clinic. Log into your ADA account then set up your WBI account. In just one minute, you'll have access to a personalized dashboard and resources, allowing you to track your well-being over time.



State Well-Being Program Directory *(updated in 2024)* [ADA.org/WellnessDirectory](https://ada.org/WellnessDirectory)

Looking for help and guidance? Support may be closer than you think. This directory links you to local resources, state contacts, and ADA Wellness Ambassadors, ensuring you have the assistance you need right in your community.



ADA Ergonomic Stretches [ADA.org/Stretch](https://ada.org/Stretch)

Better ergonomics, stretching, and exercise help dental teams build long, healthy careers. Download the ADA Ergonomic Stretches infographic with 25 quick stretches or access the ADA Member app for more resources to keep you and your dental team healthy.



After a Suicide Postvention Toolkit [ADA.org/Postvention](https://ada.org/Postvention)

Developed in 2023 by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) and the ADA, the *After a Suicide Postvention Toolkit* provides guidance for those responding to a suicide death for professional dental settings.



National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

If you or someone you know is experiencing suicidal thoughts or a crisis, please text or dial 988 to be connected to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. This service is free and confidential. For a medical emergency dial 911.

BOOST EFFICIENCY, SECURITY...

Continued from page 27

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