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# This One's For the Students



By Alayna Schoblaske

## DENTAL STUDENTS HAVE BEEN ON MY MIND

recently. I am volunteering with other ODA members to take part in the new mentor pod program, and get to meet once each month with a group of dental students to answer their questions and learn from their experiences. I also act as a preceptor for fourth-year students who rotate at my clinic and have had the privilege of spending the last couple of months working with one of these students as she completes her externship before graduating in June. And so, this month, my editorial is directed toward the dental students who read *Membership Matters*. A little bit of encouragement. A little bit of advice. And a lot of gratitude that you are a part of our association, too.

**Pat yourself on the back for your flexibility and resiliency.** We have all been on a roller coaster the past two years, and you have been no exception to that. Some of you went through your first year of school without meeting your whole class. Some of you have navigated clinical protocols and limited scheduling. Some of you pioneered the first major implementation of the DLOSCE and mannequin-based WREB licensing exams. All of you have adjusted to virtual classes, a change in school leadership, and additional PPE. You have found innovative ways to support and connect to each other, and you have shown consistent dedication to learning dentistry. As some COVID restrictions start to lift, and you start to gather again—having the opportunity to small talk with your pre-clinical neighbor while you both set denture teeth, or organizing

a study group at lunch—take some time to recognize and celebrate the courage and adaptability you have shown. I'm proud of you!

**Consider a residency.** For third- and fourth-year students, COVID protocols have also meant reduced clinical hours. Now, more than ever, is a great time to consider completing a residency. Of course, they are required if you want to specialize. And even if you plan to pursue general dentistry, a general practice residency (GPR) or advanced education in general dentistry (AEGD) program gives you the opportunity to refine your skills, learn from new mentors, understand medically complex patients, and practice complex procedures like implant placement, molar root canals, crown lengthening, and prosthodontic rehabilitation. I did a GPR at the Washington, D.C., VA Hospital after I graduated in 2017, and absolutely recommend the GPR experience to new graduates!

**Have a financial plan in place.** This may be one of the most important things you can do to set yourself up for security when you graduate. There are lots of free and unbiased resources to help you learn more. OHSU has an Educational Debt Counseling and Financial Management office that you can reach out to. I love the blog and podcast from White Coat Investor. And a quick search of “financial plan” on ASDA’s website returns plenty of helpful information.

**Life doesn't change after graduation...kind of.** My graduation day is still one of the most memorable and joyous days of my life. And yet, dentistry (and life) was not magically easier. I loved working with dental

assistants. I loved my increased efficiency without having to worry about swipes or CSAs. But the distolingual margin of #31 was still hard to see. I still got composite flash in that mesial concavity of #12. And I still missed some of my IAs. You will graduate dental school as a competent beginner, and you will continue to grow for many years. This growth comes with discomfort and frustration, which is normal. It is also normal to take time to find your niche in dentistry. You may try a few different practice settings (and cities) or decide that you want to pursue a specialty. This is all okay. If you keep the curiosity and learner’s mentality you have as a student, you will be better equipped to manage the transition from school to practice.

**It's worth it.** That's the really, really good news. What we do as dentists is amazing. We get to relieve pain, increase confidence, and—sometimes—give kids cheesy tooth stickers. In a world that is focused on digital connection, efficiency, and “likes,” we get to physically touch our patients, hear their stories, and share their humanity. We get to work with the teams in our offices and with the broader community of dentists to improve oral health. We get to learn each and every day as dentistry evolves and as new technology emerges—our job is never boring. And we get to support each other through study clubs, friendships, and organized dentistry. Throughout your time in dental school, and throughout your entire career, the ODA will be here cheering you on and supporting you every step of the way. ●



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# Events & Education Component CE Calendar

Calendar provided by Mehdi Salari, DMD

This calendar is current as of March 10, 2022.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, events may be altered or postponed.

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

Date	Dental Society	Course Title	Speaker	CE	Location	More Information
04/22/22	Lane	Endodontics Revisited	Dr. Anne L. Koch	6	Lane Community College	Register/Info: <a href="https://bit.ly/LCDSEVENTS">https://bit.ly/LCDSEVENTS</a>
04/26/22	Clackamas	The Current State of Practice Valuations and Transitions	John Van Leeuwen	2	TBD	executivedirector@clackamasdental.com
04/29/22	Southern Oregon	Cementation & Ceramics	David Hornbrook, DDS, FAACD	7	Ashland (Ashland Hills Hotel & Convention Center)	<a href="https://sodshornbrook.eventbrite.com">https://sodshornbrook.eventbrite.com</a> or sodentalsociety@gmail.com
05/17/22	Lane	Reality Check: Cultivating Care for Trans/Gender Diverse Individuals and Communities	Oblio Stroyman, M.Ed.	2	Webinar	office@lanedentalsociety.org
05/18/22	Multnomah	Table Clinics	-	1	The Kennedy School	Register: <a href="http://www.multnomahdental.org">www.multnomahdental.org</a>
05/19/22	Central Oregon	Top 7 Reasons for Early Orthodontic Intervention	Shannon Woods, DMD	2	Bend (Riverhouse Convention Center)	drjessicahenderson@gmail.com
05/24/22	Clackamas	TBD	WEO Media	2	TBD	executivedirector@clackamasdental.com
10/16/22	Multnomah	3D Printing Techniques - Bio Engineering	Luiz Bertassoni, DDS, PhD	2	(Portland) OHSU School of Dentistry	Register: <a href="http://www.multnomahdental.org">www.multnomahdental.org</a>
12/02/22	Multnomah	Risk Management and Medical Emergencies	TBD	7	TBD	Register: <a href="http://www.multnomahdental.org">www.multnomahdental.org</a>

Find this calendar online at [www.oregondental.org](http://www.oregondental.org). Click “Meetings & Events” > “Calendar of Events”.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many component meetings were canceled or postponed. 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](http://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  
**Friday January 28, 2022**

- With the reallocation of House of Delegates funds that will be saved with the new virtual format, the Regional Events Task Force was created to determine the timing and format of these events moving forward.
- The Board approved a \$15,000 donation from the Board Designated Fund towards Dr. Linda Edgar's ADA President-Elect campaign.
- The endorsed vendor contract with Pension Plan Specialists was approved. 🗳️



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# Straumann® TLX

## What You Need to Know



Alex Rugh, CDT  
Implant Specialist, O'Brien Dental Lab

Straumann recently released an update to their 35-year-old tissue level (TL) implant. This new implant, called the TLX, borrows features from both the original TL and the bone level (BLX) implant released in 2019.

If you've worked with the original TL implant, you'll recognize the transmucosal neck design of the TLX, which is almost identical to the original. But whereas it borrows the neck design from the TL implants, it borrows both the implant body and the internal interface from BLX.

The original TL has the synOcta® connection, while the new TLX has the TorcFit™ connection Straumann introduced with BLX. The TorcFit connection features a 7° internal cone with a star-shaped anti-rotation element. The advantage of sharing a connection with the BLX line is that you can now use the same surgical kit and drilling protocol for both tissue and bone level implants.



synOcta®— original tissue-level implant TLX



Star-shaped Anti-rotation Element

TorcFit™ Connection

7° Internal Cone



There are three different platform diameters available in the TLX line. Those sizes are 3.5mm (NT), 4.8mm (RT), and 6.5mm (WT). For each size, there are also two neck height options of 1.8mm and 2.8mm.

Open and closed tray impression copings are available for

each platform size. However, the plastic impression kit that is available for the TL system is not available for the TLX implants.

For intraoral scans, there's just one scanbody that works for all TLX platforms. That is because the internal connection is identical across the entire line, even though there are three different platform sizes.

The restorative options for TLX include the standard selections including UCLA, Variobase®, Angled Screw Variobase, CAD abutments and bars, and stock cementable abutments.



036.3220 Scan Body All TLX Platforms

All the abutments for the TLX implants fit over the top bevel of the implant. With the original TL implants, it was possible to get abutments that nestled inside the implant, so that top bevel of the implant became the margin for the crown. That is no longer the case with TLX.

Each of the TLX platforms also shares the same clinical screws. The regular basal screw fits the standard abutments and bars, while the AS basal screw is used for the angled Variobase abutments.

Even though all the platform sizes share the same internal connection, scan body, and clinical screws, the prosthetic components were not designed to be cross-compatible. Each TLX prosthetic component is laser etched with the correct platform size to avoid mixups.

We hope you found this article to be helpful. If you have any questions or comments, please email us at [customerservice@obriendental.com](mailto:customerservice@obriendental.com). to subscribe to our educational videos and articles, please visit [obriendental.com/subscribe](https://obriendental.com/subscribe)



# The Oregon Wellness Program

**LIKE ALL HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS, DENTISTS** sometimes suffer from burnout and other stressors. As an Oregon Dental Association member, you have access to specialized resources to support your physical and mental well-being—including the newest addition, access to anonymous and confidential counseling services through the Oregon Wellness Program.

The Oregon Wellness Program has long promoted the health and well-being of Oregon's medical community. Thanks to a generous three-year grant from Permanente Dental Associates, the state-wide program was extended in September 2021 to include Oregon dentists, meaning ODA members can now receive up to eight free counseling sessions with one of the Oregon Wellness Program's mental health providers, who are all experienced and vetted clinicians. A standardized process ensures consent and confidentiality, and many providers offer telemedicine services.

Please visit the Oregon Wellness Program website at [www.oregonwellnessprogram.org](http://www.oregonwellnessprogram.org) or call (541) 242-2805 to schedule an appointment. 📞

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# Healthcare Providers Prioritizing Mental Health



By Bailey Andersen,  
LMSW

## Let's Talk Mental Health

Over the past few years, mental health has become a more common and less stigmatized subject. For healthcare providers, the COVID-19 pandemic has created or exacerbated existing feelings of burnout and exhaustion. According to a 2020 CDC survey, 42.4% of essential workers self-reported having anxiety or depressive disorder as compared to 29.9% of nonessential workers and 12.1% of retirees (<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6932a1.htm>). Dental professionals have carried the heavy burden of continuing to provide essential care in the face of the unknown, the sometimes scary, and the often arduous. This has resulted in many providers seeking help for the first time this past year.

## Defining Mental Health

Mental health refers to our social, emotional, and psychological well-being. It affects how we think, act, and feel. It influences how we handle stress, interactions with others, and our decision-making process. In place of “health,” sometimes you’ll hear the terms disorder, problem, condition, illness. But many clinicians prefer using the umbrella term of mental health or mental wellness, as it is more reflective of the broader complexities of living in a confusing, chaotic, and challenging world.

## Finding the Right Kind of Help

Mental health provider credentials vary by state, but all require either a master’s or doctoral degree. Most therapists come



*“The benefits of therapy extend far beyond mental health and wellness. Just as dental professionals educate patients on how to best care for their unique oral health needs, mental health professionals help patients understand how to improve their mental wellness, or simply help to make the good, great.”*

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from one of three disciplines: counseling, social work, or psychology. Therapists who are counselors and social workers are masters-level clinicians and have the following letters behind their names: LMSW/LCSW (social work) or LPC, LPCC, LMHC (counseling).

Clinical psychologists also do therapy, and while some have a master’s degree, most have a PhD.

Psychiatrists are medical doctors who specialize in mental health. They are the only mental health professionals who can prescribe medicine, and their credentials are either MD or DO. Psychiatrists often work in tandem with other mental health providers by helping to balance medication with therapy.

Recently there has been an increase in the prevalence of life coaches. Though some find coaches to be beneficial, it is important to note there is no oversight or mandated state or federal qualifications. That means life coaches do not have to adhere to the same quality of care and ethical or legal standards as licensed healthcare providers (e.g., HIPAA).

### **Common Reasons People Seek Therapy**

Therapy should be considered a routine part of maintaining health and wellness. Many people worry that seeking out therapy is admitting something is “wrong” with them; but that couldn’t be further from the truth. Here are common reasons to seek therapy:

- You have fallen into a pattern or habit you are hoping to change or learn more about.
- You are experiencing a crisis or just feeling “off.”
- You notice changes in mood, irritability levels, difficulty with relationships or sleep (too much, too little).
- You have experienced or are about to experience a significant change or transition.
- You want to improve your self-relationship.

Many people struggle with mental health at various times in life; rarely does this mean their feelings are abnormal or disordered. Long-term effects of stress can have serious and life-threatening implications on our physical health. The benefits of therapy extend far beyond mental health and wellness. Just as dental professionals educate patients on how to best care for their unique oral health needs, mental health professionals help patients understand how to improve their mental wellness, or simply help to make the good, great.

### **How to Find a Therapist**

Common ways people find a therapist are through their primary care doctor, insurance provider, or even word of mouth. *Psychology Today* has a database where clinicians advertise their practice. You can search providers based on location, insurance and specialties. To start your search, visit: [www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists](http://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists). This website is a great resource to bookmark and can be a beneficial tool. 📌

*Bailey Andersen, LMSW, serves as the personal counselor and wellness coordinator at the University of Detroit Mercy School of Dentistry. In her role, Ms. Andersen provides daily individual psychotherapy for the School of Dentistry students, offers consultation services to faculty and staff, and delivers programming on a broad range of mental and behavioral health issues. Ms. Andersen is a recognized speaker on a variety of topics including student wellness, interdisciplinary approaches to mental health, suicide prevention, and stress management. Ms. Andersen has provided two sessions in the ODA’s Wellness Webinar series “Emotional Wellness: Awareness, Understanding and Tips for Success.” ODA members can find the recorded sessions available on the Wellness Initiative page at [www.oregondental.org](http://www.oregondental.org).*

# Dentists Are People Too!



By Julie A. Spaniel,  
DDS, ODA Wellness  
Committee Chair

## THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT HAS

changed drastically in the last couple of years. The pandemic, politics, and practicing dentistry amid the upheaval can be challenging. The reality of being a healthcare provider means people look to us for answers, assurance, and support.

We are trusted to be strong individuals and to provide our care confidently. But care providers are humans too. We are affected by events and circumstances the same as any other community member. In a tumultuous world, we have our personal issues, our family complexities, and sometimes it can all be a little too much. Because we are looked to for support, we may diminish the

importance of our own mental or emotional status. We may choose to let go of issues, big or small, so that we are available for others. Sometimes we are just plain burned out. How do we answer when WE are asked “How are you?” Are we “fine”? Let’s not forget, dentists are people too.

A dentist’s job is to fix problems for other people. We must do it with the utmost caring and compassion, exhibiting empathy and understanding for our patients. Our job is physically demanding, emotionally taxing, and requires complete precision and focus. As doctors, we are so good at hiding or stuffing our own issues. Our profession demands we are 110% present for others.



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*“For dentists to be the absolute best at their jobs, they must recognize and care for their mental, emotional, and physical health. Sometimes this means we need the courage to ask for help.”*

We are givers. But the world in which we live has changed. Our patients have different views of the pandemic and how it has affected them. Our families are affected by change. Some doctors may have school-age children, or our team is affected, and we work short staffed for a week. There are labor shortages. The list goes on. Amid all this, we may have personal challenges. It can all just be too much. When it all piles up, are we fine?

Are you fine? The first step in mental or emotional health is asking the question. This requires absolute and total honesty with yourself or maybe a trusted loved one. This is a process that often starts with genuine self-assessment. We are so good at stoicism. It is easy to create or live in a self-imposed denial of our true reality. Since we are the trusted care providers, how can we have issues or problems? Some may feel there is a stigma to admit they need help. There is no shame. There should be no guilt, but why do we feel we are held to a higher standard than other humans? For dentists to be the absolute best at their jobs, they must recognize and care for their mental, emotional, and physical health. Sometimes this means we need the courage to ask for help.

Sometimes we identify an issue that we feel is greater than we can handle alone. It could be a family or marital problem, substance use or abuse that is concerning, or an issue affecting our business. It is often best to seek professional care. This may go against our judgment, as we should have tenacity and be self-reliant. But when we can no longer depend on our own self will, there are people to help. Mental health and wellness have been a hot topic over the last couple years. With that, access to care has been a challenge. But, last year, the Oregon Dental Association facilitated the expansion of the Oregon Wellness Program (OWP) to include all Oregon dentists. This program has promoted the health and wellness of the medical community for many years.

Dentists are people too! During tumultuous times, we must stop and self-assess. Just as we strive to eat a healthy diet and stay physically fit, we need to acknowledge the mental and emotional stressors in our lives. Know that we are all in this together. The network of professional, experienced, mental healthcare providers is a vital resource and easily accessed. The

Oregon Wellness Program offers eight annual wellness sessions with a licensed, trained clinician for no fee, supplementing the ODA's Wellness Initiative. The ODA's Wellness Ambassador Network includes over 20 volunteer dentists who are trained to provide confidential support. Oregon dentists can request peer-to-peer support at <https://www.oregondental.org/member-center/benefits-of-membership/wellness-initiative>. As trusted care providers, our overall well-being is more important than ever!

To learn more about the ODA's Wellness Initiative, including resources, volunteer opportunities, and request for support, go to <https://www.oregondental.org/member-center/benefits-of-membership/wellness-initiative> or visit the Wellness Initiative page at [www.oregondental.org](http://www.oregondental.org).



2022 ALASKA DENTAL SOCIETY  
**Annual Meeting**

MAY 13-14, 2022  
*Anchorage Sheraton Hotel*

Visit the ADS website at [www.akdental.org](http://www.akdental.org)  
for more information and registration.



# 2021 oda Annual Report



Barry Taylor, DMD,  
ODA Executive  
Director

## *A Message from the Executive Director*

**IN 2021 WE LEARNED THAT WE CANNOT** wait for a return to “normal” and that we need to learn not just to operate an association, but also thrive, in an ever-evolving environment. The ODA membership continued to provide leadership and were engaged throughout the year. In 2021 we had much to celebrate, including a partnership with the Oregon Wellness Program funded by the generous support from Permanente Dental Associates, a partnership with OHSU to provide COVID-19 vaccines to dental healthcare workers, and a very successful virtual Oregon Dental Conference.

Advocacy continued to be one of our greatest strengths as we addressed legislation regarding dental therapists and continual regulatory burdens on the profession. Our advocacy successes depended upon the involvement and leadership of our volunteer members. There is truly strength in numbers.

We look forward to 2022 bringing many new 2021 initiatives into action. In 2022 we will see the ODA mentor program move from a tested beta model to an expanded program, new opportunities with endorsed entities, and the development of regional events to increase engagement outside of the tri-county metropolitan area. And of course, the return of an in-person ODC. None of this can happen without membership engagement. Thank you for all that you do for our association.

# COMMUNITY

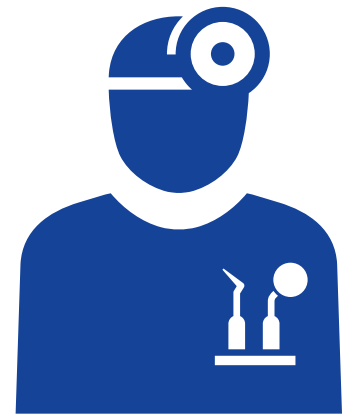
## Membership

As another unpredictable year closes, we are proud of ODA's ongoing COVID-19 pandemic support offered to our members. Our efforts were evident in our partnership with Oregon Health and Science University to offer multiple vaccine clinics (providing 1,200 vaccination opportunities to dental professionals), our ongoing member communications navigating a continually changing regulatory environment, the expansion of wellness resources available to dentists, and our tireless advocacy in an ever-shifting back-to-work environment with new vaccine mandates. Through these pandemic-focused initiatives and other support and services offered in 2021, we believe we have continued to demonstrate the true value of tripartite membership.

This past year a concentrated effort was placed on strengthening communication and support efforts with the 16 local dental societies throughout Oregon. With limitations on in-person meetings, we worked closely with local component leadership to retain and recruit members throughout the state using a variety of methods. Member engagement was focused on virtual programming, email, direct mail, digital ad campaigns, and social media. We plan to continue this support initiative into 2022 and encourage all local leaders to attend the monthly Live Leadership Exchange offered virtually using Zoom. This platform brings leaders from around the state together to foster participation and engagement at the local level, as we know this is critical to member satisfaction and the recruitment of new members.

The ODA also continued its focus on highlighting member value to new dentists in 2021. In May, a member value survey was sent to new dentist members 0-5 years out of school. The survey helped to identify opportunities to better support new dentists and better understand value perception. Mentorship was identified as critically important, especially with the current pandemic. The New Dentist Council continued work in redesigning the ODA Mentor Program into a mentor pod concept, conducting beta testing in 2021. Each mentor pod consisted of 10-12 people including established, new, and retired dentists, plus OHSU D2-D4 students. Pods met every other month, attended ODA-sponsored events, and utilized a text group for casual communication. Meetings took place virtually and in person, allowing participation from throughout the state. The beta program was a remarkable success, receiving positive feedback from all participants and attention from the ADA and other state dental associations across the nation. This program will be expanded in 2022.

We are pleased to share that with the support and hard work of our volunteer leaders and staff across the state, we met our strategic plan retention goal, retaining 92% of membership. Welcoming 123 new members into ODA membership in 2021, we ended the year with membership totaling 2,152 dentists and dental students throughout the state. As we move forward into 2022, we will continue to concentrate on retention of current members while demonstrating the value of membership. Our strength comes in numbers, and we thank you for your support of organized dentistry!



**2,152**  
Total Members



**123**  
New Members

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**Dentist Ambassadors from throughout Oregon**

### **Wellness Initiative**

As pandemic impacts on individual wellness persist, the ODA’s Wellness Committee sought to better understand the needs of members by conducting a member-wide survey. The top three areas of worry among participants included: work-life balance (1), future plans/retirement (2) and HR issues (3). The top three ways to manage stress included: exercise (1), talking to friends/colleagues/family (2), and mindfulness (3). When it comes to the ODA’s Wellness Initiative, which was launched in 2019 and continues to grow, survey participants identified confidential peer-to-peer support as the most valued benefit. The ODA’s peer-to-peer support program continues to thrive, offering a robust network of 20 dentist Ambassadors from throughout Oregon, who are ready to provide support on a multitude of wellness issues.

Thanks to the ongoing efforts of the Wellness Committee to identify a confidential, immediate access solution for dentists who need support beyond what the peer-to-peer program can offer, the Oregon Wellness Program was expanded to include dentists as of September 2, 2021. Through the

program, all Oregon licensed dentists can now receive up to eight free counseling sessions with one of the Oregon Wellness Program’s mental health providers. We thank Permanente Dental Associates (PDA) for providing a generous three-year grant, which made this expansion possible.

### **Dental Foundation of Oregon**

The ODA’s charitable arm, The Dental Foundation of Oregon (DFO), finishes another year, making huge strides in advancing oral health education and providing charitable care for Oregon’s children and vulnerable communities. The DFO’s flagship program, the Tooth Taxi, started serving children at schools throughout Oregon in 2008 and hasn’t stopped changing lives since.

Since the Taxi started rolling, the team has provided oral hygiene education in the classroom to 25,655 students, screened 25,186 patients, and provided \$8,548,552 in care during 14,932 appointments. These impressive stats are possible due to the generous support of ODA members, DFO partners, and the community. Looking ahead to 2022, the DFO is excited to unveil Tooth Taxi 2.0, which is currently under production.

## EDUCATION & PRACTICE SUPPORT

### Virtual 2021 Oregon Dental Conference

For the first time in the 128-year history of the Oregon Dental Conference (ODC), the 2021 event was offered 100% virtually. This included all continuing education courses and the Solutions Marketplace (exhibit hall). The virtual conference started on April 8, 2021, and was open on the ODC virtual platform through May 15, 2021. Offering over 30 days of virtual access allowed attendees additional time to connect with ODC partners and learn from content experts while earning up to 90+ CE credits.

The virtual 2021 ODC hosted 44 scientific sessions featuring 41 speakers. The virtual Solutions Marketplace featured 56 exhibitors. Attendees were able to interact directly with exhibitors via text or video chat, view show specials, and link to exhibitor websites. ODC participation exceeded our expectations and would not have been possible without the support of our loyal ODC community. A big thank you to the 2,631 individuals who attended the 2021 virtual conference (2,293 dental professionals and 338 exhibitor personnel).

Based on the feedback of members and ODC attendees, the 2022 Oregon Dental Conference will be offered as a hybrid format. The Solutions Marketplace and the majority of CE sessions will be offered in person as the ODC returns to the Oregon Convention Center in Portland after a two-year hiatus. In addition to the in-person offerings, 10 CE courses, including most courses required for licensure renewal, will be offered virtually on-demand on the ODC's virtual platform. Virtual courses will be available starting on Thursday, April 7th and will run through Sunday, May 15th. All virtual on-demand courses will be included for no additional charge as part of full conference in-person registration. Attendees who only wish to

attend virtually will be able to register in a "virtual only" category.

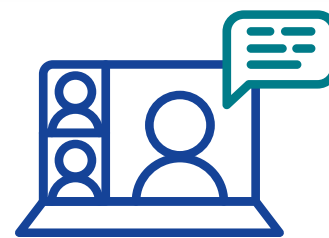
We look forward to bringing the Oregon Dental Conference back in person and providing the ODC community with the opportunity to Reconnect, Learn, and Grow!

### Webinars

In addition to the virtual ODC, the ODA continued to offer members other educational opportunities throughout the year providing wellness support and guidance on key issues facing dentistry. One highlight was a fall webinar, "Employment Law Regarding Oregon's Healthcare Provider Vaccine Mandate," presented by attorney David Briggs. This offering helped hundreds of ODA dentists and their staff better understand the employment law implications of the vaccine mandate for healthcare workers in Oregon.

### Member Perks

Through ODA-endorsed and co-endorsed offerings, we negotiate deals and discounts providing members savings on the products and services on which they rely. In the last year, two new co-endorsements were added: Laurel Road Mortgage Solutions and Stynt. Laurel Road offers savings to members who are looking to purchase a new home or refinance an existing mortgage with special discounted rates and savings on closing costs. The ODA also co-endorsed Stynt in 2021 to provide members with another tool to assist with current workforce issues. Stynt offers on-demand temporary and permanent staffing assistance, connecting members with dental professionals in the area who are ready to help. These new offerings join a wide collection of tools and services available exclusively to ODA members.



**2,631**  
Virtual conference  
attendees



# 138

Letters written by  
ODA members to key  
legislators regarding  
HB 2528

## ADVOCACY

### 2021 Legislative Session

Oregon's 81st Legislative Session adjourned on Saturday, June 26th, finishing what will be characterized as one of the most challenging sessions in Oregon's history. The state capitol, closed to the public because of the coronavirus pandemic, was limited to just legislators and staff. All committee hearings were conducted virtually, house and senate floor sessions were limited to smaller groups of people at one time, and lobbying occurred by text, email, and phone calls.

Certainly, the most controversial and largest body of work for ODA during the session was on HB 2528, the dental therapy bill. ODA had significant concerns with HB 2528 as introduced and spent the entire session working with legislators and negotiating the bill to add critical constraints that will increase patient safety, increase education, and limit scope. The final bill was a reflection of hours of tough, but successful, negotiations and member-driven work. ODA members engaged on this bill throughout the process, from our Legislative Task Force directing staff work, to members testifying during committee hearings, and the 138 members who wrote letters to the legislators on this bill.

Another key ODA success during the legislative session relates to dental reimbursement rates. At the beginning of the year, OHA cut reimbursement rates for dental care to 2014 levels, significantly impacting the Medicaid population. ODA successfully joined our Dental Care Organization partners in lobbying legislators to restore these cuts. In the last bill of session—commonly called the “Christmas tree bill,” which allows groups to add/hang their last requests—Section 265 included a \$19 million appropriation to the emergency board to be allocated to the Oregon Health Authority to fund dental rates for medical assistance programs. ODA members were key to this success, writing 90 letters to key legislators urging action on this important issue.

On February 4, 2021, ODA members and students gathered for a virtual lobby day to learn about ODA's advocacy work and engage directly with key legislators. Senator Fred Girod

and Representative Hayden, both dentists, were joined by Representative Prusak, chair of the House Health Care committee, to share their insights from session and connect with ODA members. The evening's virtual format was quite successful in allowing ODA members from around the state to easily participate in an event that would normally require travel and time away from patients.

### Regulatory

When the legislative session is complete, passed bills then move to the regulatory process for agencies to implement. ODA spends considerable time ensuring that dentists are represented in rulemaking processes and bill implementation.

HB 2362, passed in the 2021 session, directed the Oregon Health Authority to examine and monitor the competitiveness of the health care market, and approve or deny mergers, acquisitions, and affiliations among hospitals, insurers, and provider organizations. Early drafts of the rules would have required all transactions, including providers contracting with insurance panels, to file and engage in an expensive administrative process to even be considered exempt. ODA joined other provider stakeholders and successfully advocated for reasonable requirements. We expect the final rules to have limited direct impact on ODA members after our advocacy work.

### Vaccine CDT Code Development

Building on our successful work from 2019 with the legislative authorization of dentists administering vaccines, ODA is tackling barriers providers may face in implementing this new scope of practice. Ensuring providers have CDT codes to submit for billing purposes is an important piece. To that end, ODA submitted a CDT code request for the HPV vaccine to the ADA Code Maintenance Committee and co-sponsored a request for additional COVID-19 vaccine codes. If approved, dental providers would be able to use these new CDT codes in coming years.

## LEADERSHIP

ODA leaders are the livelihood of the organization, giving their time and expertise to advance the association, profession, and patient care. We continue to see record participation in leadership positions and opportunities for membership engagement. This is in part due to the highly successful Leadership Academy, which offers members the opportunity to experience a backstage pass to ODA experiences and offerings while developing and enhancing their leadership and interpersonal skills. Since the program launched in 2018, the Academy has assisted 38 individuals on their leadership journey, matching 70% of graduates with an ongoing leadership role in the association.

It is the collective efforts of our diverse leadership that allow us to advance the ODA's vision and achieve the goals outlined in the 2020-2022 Strategic Plan in the areas of engagement, advocacy, development, and organizational health. With continued emphasis on a united membership that embraces all backgrounds, beliefs, experiences, perspectives, and expertise, the ODA analyzed the leadership composition of the board, councils, and committees to determine if leadership is reflective of overall membership. We focused on three areas: women, new dentists, and dentists of racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds. We are happy to share that the ODA exceeded all best practice standards, but our work does not stop here. As we move into 2022, we will continue to build upon our current successes and further prioritize

inclusiveness in all our endeavors. We are truly stronger together.

### House of Delegates

The 2021 House of Delegates was offered virtually on September 25, 2021. Seventy-one delegates from throughout the state came together to discuss important issues and vote on resolutions that will guide the association moving forward. The final report and recommendations from the House of Delegates Task Force were considered by the group, adopting a resolution to hold the meeting virtually on a permanent basis. This recommendation came after a successful virtual meeting in 2020 that reduced barriers to member participation and the cost to host the meeting. The cost savings on the ODA's end will be reallocated in the budget to develop and offer regional event offerings throughout the state, with the goal of further engaging members with the ODA while also fostering local community connections. Plans for these new offerings are still being developed, with additional details coming in 2022.

### Closing Message

As an ODA member, you are part of something bigger. The successes outlined in this report are due to the collective efforts of the ODA community including members, leadership, partners, and staff. ODA's successes are your successes. Thank you for your individual contributions and your ongoing support of the ODA and the profession. ODA is your organization, and we look forward to all that we can accomplish together in 2022. ●



**Delegates in attendance**

# Oregon Kids Are Counting on Us!

As dentists living and working in every corner of the state, you know better than anyone that childhood dental disease is persistent and deeply rooted in Oregon. In fact, the ODA's Fall 2020 Report, *21st Century Solutions for Dental Care Access*, details the barriers – from geographic isolation and lack of reliable transportation to affordability and access to quality to care – that stand in the way of Oregon's most vulnerable residents receiving the dental care they need and deserve.

Unfortunately, there is no single solution to improving the oral health of Oregon's children, especially the most vulnerable. It demands a multi-pronged approach that includes education, prevention, direct service, advocacy, systemic changes, and legislation.

Thanks to you – the ODA and its membership – along with the Oregon Pediatric Oral Health Coalition, the Oregon Children's Dental Health Initiative and others, the hard work to improve Oregon's oral health landscape is well underway.

The Dental Foundation of Oregon supports and applauds collaborative efforts to create substantive, lasting change. Our Campaign for Children's Oral Health is a critical part of the solution towards stopping childhood dental disease in its tracks.

Learn more and donate: [SmileOnOregon.org](http://SmileOnOregon.org).

## TOOTH TAXI OVERALL STATS

(September 2008 to February 8, 2022)

- Students screened - 25,186
- Appointments on the TT - 14,998
- Dental education in the classroom - 25,655
- Value of services provided - \$8,556,595



PHOTO CREDIT: THE TOOTH TAXI TEAM & ERIN E. KANE

**THE DENTAL  
FOUNDATION  
OF OREGON**



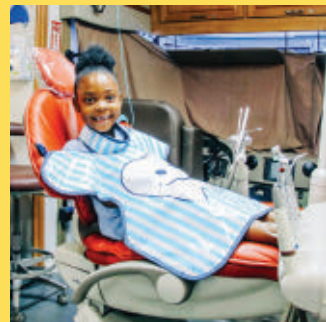
# OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP US ACHIEVE OUR MISSION

- General donation gifts of any amount help support the Dental Foundation of Oregon and the Tooth Taxi, while raising awareness of our mission to advance oral education, provide charitable care, and coordinate resources for Oregon's children and vulnerable communities.
- Get involved with DFO-led events including our annual Chip! for Teeth Golf Tournament, purchase raffle tickets or donate champagne for our new Wall of Bubbles!
- Host a third-party event where you and/or others collaborate to hold a birthday fundraiser through Facebook, host a dinner, garden party, movie night or trivia night to help raise funds for the DFO.
- Honor a friend, loved one, employee or referring dentist. Make a gift in the name of someone you care about. An acknowledgement card is sent on your behalf to honor the memory of a departed loved one, celebrate a special occasion or recognized a valued employee or business partner.
- Get your company involved and include the DFO in your employee giving campaign. Companies like Moda Health and Nike often match employee contributions, and this is a great way to involve employees and demonstrate your commitment to our community.
- Volunteer dental professionals can join us on the Tooth Taxi or host the Tooth Taxi at your dental office. Donate a day, or even half a day to help deliver oral health education to children in classroom settings in schools.
- Join the DFO's Cornerstone Society along with other like-minded individuals who have remembered The Dental Foundation of Oregon in their estate plans, ensuring the future of the foundation and leaving a true legacy for Oregon's children and vulnerable communities.
- Shop and give to the DFO every time you shop. At no cost to you, you can contribute by quickly registering the DFO as your beneficiary through the AmazonSmile program, which donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the foundation, and then registering your free Fred Meyer Community Rewards card to the DFO #81176 with a percentage of your purchases donated quarterly to the DFO.
- Gifts to the DFO include charitable annuity, securities, or monthly gifts through a planned account withdrawal system support the DFO throughout the year.
- Corporate partnerships in support of DFO events are always welcome, and we can tailor a sponsorship package to help meet your organizational aspirations.

## Connect with Us!

SmileOnOregon.org | [facebook.com/DentalFoundationofOregon](https://facebook.com/DentalFoundationofOregon)  
[instagram.com/toothtaxi](https://instagram.com/toothtaxi) | [twitter.com/ToothTaxi](https://twitter.com/ToothTaxi)

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# The Top 2 Reasons Why Electronic Prescribing All Medications Improves Patient Safety and Clinical Workflow

By Robert McDermott, President and CEO, iCoreConnect

**IN THE PAST TWO YEARS, YOU'VE MOST** likely experienced various ways modern technology assists during the highs and lows of business, especially seen with the prolonged impacts of COVID, supply chain, and staffing issues.

At this stage in 2022, it's important to evaluate how you can build on current business infrastructure to run your practice even better. Pause for a minute to think about your current system. Are you still prescribing all medications by phone, fax, or pad? Are you e-Prescribing controlled substances, then still writing, calling, and faxing all other prescriptions? Every minute you and your team spend switching between processes interrupts workflow and creates confusing next steps for your patients.

Electronically prescribing all medications has value in both cost and time savings. From the patient's perspective, filling prescriptions is inconsistent from doctor to doctor. Sometimes patients take a prescription to the pharmacy. Sometimes they lose the prescription before getting to the pharmacy. Sometimes their prescription is called in. Sometimes the pharmacy actually *had the chance* to listen to voicemail before the patient arrived to pick it up. In many scenarios, the pharmacy ends up calling your office anyway. It's frustrating and a waste of time, energy *and* resources for everyone.

Here are the two key areas where safety and clinical workflow merge together when you e-Prescribe.

## Patient Safety

To reduce errors and adverse drug events while improving formulary adherence, e-Prescribing software may provide substantial information at your fingertips. One thing to evaluate when considering moving all prescriptions to electronic is your specific process. For example, do you:

- Access a comprehensive drug information database for dosing, adverse effects and contraindications, brand and generic information?
- Check prescription history for all meds?
- Manually look up patient information in order to complete the prescription?

If you answered yes to any of these three, you're a strong candidate for e-Prescribing all medications. Each of the above questions represents various areas where patient safety may be susceptible to errors. The pad, pen, phone, and fax methods of prescribing keep key steps in the process separate, manual, and less secure. But perhaps the biggest concern is the inability for traditional methods to integrate with practice management systems. When your practice management system integrates with your e-Prescribing software, your patient data auto populates. This speeds up your prescribing process, reducing multiple manual entries and potential critical errors.

## Practice Flexibility

In addition to patient and practice protection, e-Prescribing offers an opportunity to advance the way you and your staff work. Cloud-based electronic prescribing allows you to prescribe from anywhere, on any internet-connected device. No matter where you are, or whether you are using your desktop computer, laptop, tablet, or phone, your workflow improves with a single and streamlined prescribing process. Your patients receive the prescription care they need, when they need it, and you aren't inconvenienced by writing the prescription.

e-Prescribing all medications improves workflow and access to robust information which help better inform decisions around prescription care.

iCoreConnect, an ODA Rewards Partner, develops cloud-based technologies to improve and protect your practice, including iCoreRx e-Prescribing software. ODA members receive a 43% special discount on iCoreRx. e-Prescribe all meds faster from any device with iCoreRx. Book a demo at [land.icoreconnect.com/OR5](https://land.icoreconnect.com/OR5) or call 888.810.7706. ●



ISTOCK.COM/TETIANA MYKHALENKO

# ODA Wellness Committee Ambassadors

**THE ODA'S PEER TO PEER AMBASSADOR PROGRAM** offers a robust network of compassionate colleagues armed with resources to help support dentists and dental students who are dealing with wellness issues, including, but not limited to: stress management, practice issues, debt, fraud, family obligations, illness, isolation, injury, depression, loss, grief, and addiction.

Wellness Ambassadors are available to assist dentists at all levels of their career, including dental students. The ODA has more than 20 trained volunteer Wellness Ambassadors, serving eight component dental societies. Learn more about a few of our Ambassadors and why they joined the Wellness Committee below:

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As Joni Mitchell wrote it so well so many years ago in her hit “Big Yellow Taxi,” losing a loved one really puts it all into perspective.

March 7th was the fourth anniversary of the darkest day of my life. My best friend, my high school sweetheart, my girlfriend of 50 years, died of a heart attack while I was at work. My life had abruptly changed, and I was devastated. I was numb for months.

It took the persistence of some of my dear friends to bring me out of the depths of despair that I was experiencing. I never would have been able to heal enough to move on with life without them.

We all need help sometimes during our lives, and it's OK to ask for help. I renewed old friendships and developed new ones. I started seeing a long-time friend and therapist on a weekly basis, and asked myself, why didn't I seek out his professional help before this tragedy? In our society, it is fine to ask for help with physical issues, but mental health issues are shameful and embarrassing.

I would be totally lost without my circle of friends and my weekly therapy sessions. I started painting with two of my dental school classmates, and we continue to paint almost every Sunday morning; it's our “church.” Sometimes we talk more than we paint, but it's always such a powerful creative experience.

If I can help just one person realize that it is all right to ask for help, that we aren't rocks, we aren't islands. We need each other, and we need to leave room for redemption.

The Wellness Committee is here to help. We have all experienced episodes of despair, of hopelessness, and helplessness. We need each other, so that we all can pedal on together...



**Mark Miller, DMD**  
Wellness Committee Ambassador  
Yamhill County Dental Society

I decided to get involved with the Wellness Committee because when I made the decision to sell my practice and shift my position within my profession, I developed some insight, experienced some personal growth, and gained some tools that helped me find balance in my life. Having a sounding board of peers was instrumental. It's important to me that I make myself available to others who could benefit from me just being present and listening and connecting them to the resources available through the Wellness Committee.



**Leah Hickson, DDS**  
Wellness Committee Ambassador  
Lane County Dental Society

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I have been practicing dentistry for over 30 years. A lot of life can happen in three decades! I graduated from the University of North Carolina in 1991 and did my residency at the VA Medical Center in Portland. Shortly after, I moved to Vermont and practiced dentistry for 27 years. I now have four adult kids.

After moving back to Oregon, I heard about the Oregon Dental Association's Wellness Ambassador Network. In my years of practice in Vermont, I had my own personal challenges. I had worked on my own to try to resolve my issues to no avail. The very last thing I could imagine was asking for help. I was so grateful to the people who were there for me and could relate. People who understood my situation and helped me without judgment. As dentists, we shouldn't be afraid or ashamed to ask for help. In those years, for me, it was life-altering.

I joined the ODA Wellness Ambassador Network to be of service. I have a unique understanding of mental and emotional health and am happy to provide assistance if someone reaches out for assistance. It is a privilege to serve along with more than a dozen other dentists.



**Julie A. Spaniel, DDS**  
Wellness Committee Chair  
Washington County  
Dental Society

To learn more about the ODA Wellness Initiative, request support, find resources, or volunteer as an ambassador, visit our website at <http://bit.ly/ODAWellnessInitiative>. 

Thank You  
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# New Dentist Spotlight: Pete Lahti

**HELLO EVERYBODY! I'M PETE LAHTI**, a DS2 at OHSU. I am the Wellness Co-Chair for our chapter of the American Student Dental Association (ASDA). I wanted to be a part of the Wellness Committee of ASDA because I believe that wellness is at the very core of success. My personal wellness is something that is extremely important to me. I am at my best when I prioritize my own health and well-being. Making my health a priority is also in the best interest of those around me, including my loved ones, my colleagues, and my patients.

Recently, I had the opportunity to attend District 10's Annual ASDA Meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah. The lineup of speakers was incredible. I would like to share with you all my thoughts and reflections on how two speakers' presentations relate to wellness.

Dr. Brett Kessler, trustee for the 14th District of the ADA, shared his inspiring experiences with substance abuse and recovery. Briefly, earlier in his life and career, he struggled significantly with substance abuse. He was in a very dark place and had many low points before finally finding his way to sobriety. He has

since come a very long way both personally and professionally, showing his resilience and passion for the field of dentistry. He has shared his experiences all over the country and has provided care to many in need in his many years of sobriety.

Dr. David Chan, the current president of the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry, also gave an amazing presentation on comprehensive care in dentistry. He used his own professional pictures of giving people beautiful smiles to illustrate what can be possible with a comprehensive plan, a careful eye, and skillful hands.

Both of these presentations challenged me to reflect on my journey in dentistry. I came to appreciate that in our profession, we are given skills that can change lives. We can give people the smile that they always wanted. We can give people the ability to eat their favorite food again. We can take pain away from people. But, let's face the facts.

Dentistry is difficult.

I'm only a second year in dental school, yet I am already getting a grip on how challenging our profession can be. It is physically, mentally, and emotionally challenging. This is why it is crucial that we are taking care of ourselves. I know that I want to be the best version of myself for my loved ones, my patients, and anybody else in my life. The conference presenters challenged me to examine the things in my life that have allowed me to deal with my own struggles and refuel me day after day to put my best foot forward for those around me.

Some of the most important factors for driving my successes and coping with my struggles have been:

1. A strong support system—I have been extremely fortunate to have been surrounded by people who are truly in my corner. I've been helped through many hard times, whether it be with school, in sports, or in life.
2. Physical health—I played three sports throughout high school and football all four years of college. Since I stopped playing football, I have tried to stay in similar shape compared to when I was playing. It may not be attainable forever, but having something to chase physically keeps me engaged. My mind is at my best when I prioritize exercise.
3. Little victories—There are inevitable days that are long and hard. Finding joy in the small things such as watching funny YouTube videos, cracking jokes with my friends, or my nighttime ritual of a big bowl of popcorn and a movie with my girlfriend and cat has made all the difference for me in recharging my batteries to prepare for the next step.

With all of this being said, I am incredibly grateful to be in this profession. This difficult, frustrating, taxing, beautiful, rewarding profession. Wellness means a lot to me, and I believe that in order to help others in the ways that Dr. Kessler and Dr. Chan have, we must take the responsibility of helping ourselves as well. By taking care of myself, I am better able to strive to be a man that people can count on, that they can trust, and that they believe in.

Stay well, y'all.

Pete 🌟



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

# Improve Patient Safety with a Timeout Policy

By TDIC Risk Management

**PATIENT SAFETY IS ALWAYS A TOP PRIORITY;** however, in a fast-paced working environment, countless distractions can impede best practices. Shortcuts often come at a high cost. Making the time to check procedure details protects your patients and your practice.

A timeout is an immediate pause by the entire surgical team to confirm the correct patient, procedure and site. It's the last in a series of steps established by the Joint Commission's Universal Protocol for Preventing Wrong Site, Wrong

Procedure, Wrong Person Surgery ([https://www.jointcommission.org/standards\\_information/up.aspx](https://www.jointcommission.org/standards_information/up.aspx)).

The Joint Commission requires accredited dental practices to implement a timeout before all surgical procedures. Even when not required, *all practices* should strongly consider implementing a timeout policy to mitigate mishaps.

Calls to The Dentists Insurance Company's Risk Management Advice Line illustrate the need for consistent timeouts. In one case, the dentist had referred a patient to an endodontist

for an evaluation on teeth Nos. 14 and 15. After diagnostic radiographs and further testing, the endodontist identified tooth No. 14 as the source of the complaint and recommended root canal therapy. The patient returned the following day for treatment.

Halfway through the procedure, the endodontist realized he had accessed the wrong tooth and was working on tooth No. 15 instead of No. 14. He immediately completed a root canal on No. 15 to repair his mistake and then began the root canal on the correct tooth.





After completing the procedure, the endodontist informed the patient of the incident and offered to waive the fee for both teeth. He also promised to take care of tooth No. 15 should it require treatment in the future.

A few days later, the office received a demand letter from the patient regarding the “mistake of drilling” the wrong tooth, seeking restitution.

The endodontist contacted TDIC for assistance, and a claims representative and the insured were able to reach a settlement with the patient in exchange for a release of liability.

### Conducting a Timeout with the Dental Team

Prior to invasive or irreversible treatment, a timeout is a vital step. Dentists, dental assistants, and front desk staff all play significant roles.

The timeout is initiated by a designated member of the treatment team, usually the dentist, and begins with a preprocedure verification of the patient, the procedure, and the site. It involves interactive verbal communication with the patient, if possible, and all team members. Any team member is able to express concerns about the procedure verification.

The timeout is conducted in a fail-safe mode, meaning that the procedure is not initiated until all questions or concerns have been resolved. It includes a process for reconciling differences in responses among team members. The completed components of the timeout should be clearly documented in the patient’s records.

The Joint Commission does not require providers to individually document each step. One

checkbox or a brief note regarding the successful completion of the timeout, located in a consistent area of the patient record, is adequate documentation as long as the full content of the timeout is specified elsewhere, such as a policy handbook.

The Joint Commission recommends dentists and oral specialists follow these steps:

- Review the dental record including the medical history, laboratory findings, appropriate charts, and radiographs. Indicate the tooth numbers or mark the tooth site or surgical site on the odontogram or radiograph to be included as part of the patient record.
- Ensure that radiographs are properly oriented and visually confirm that the correct teeth or tissues have been charted.
- Verify completion of the informed consent process, ensuring any questions or concerns from the patient are addressed.
- Conduct a timeout to verify patient, tooth, and procedure with an assistant present at the time of the extraction.
- For patients referred to a specialist, review the referral slip to verify the tooth for which the patient was referred.

### Employer Liability for Employee Negligence

Verification processes should be conducted any time the responsibility of care is transferred to another dentist within the practice or when the patient is being referred to another provider.

In many cases, the practice owner could be held vicariously liable for the negligence of their employees.

In another case reported to TDIC, a patient arrived at the dental office for an extraction that had previously been diagnosed by the practice owner. The extraction was performed by an associate dentist who was not involved in the initial consultation.

The patient returned to the office a few days later for fillings on a different quadrant with a different associate dentist. After reviewing the patient’s treatment plan, the dentist noticed that the other associate had extracted the wrong tooth.

The dentist informed the patient and recommended a consultation with the owner, who then reassured the patient he would do whatever it took to fix the problem. A short time later, the dental office received an intent to commence litigation notice from the patient’s attorney.

This case underscores how easily a wrong site procedure can occur and how quickly these incidents can escalate. Had the associate dentist verified the details of the procedure prior to beginning treatment, it could have been easily avoided.

Even when the owner is not the one who performs the procedure, they could still be held liable. Employers may be responsible for their employees’ actions while they are on the job and are considered to be able to prevent and/or limit any negligence by the employees. It is in an owner’s best interest to exercise reasonable care to prevent negligent behavior.

A timeout policy promotes a safe environment with team members who are all empowered to work on behalf of the patient. Open the lines of communication among all team members and create the space to speak up before, during, or after a procedure. ●

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