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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

## FEATURES

- 14 THE DENTAL FOUNDATION OF OREGON
- 20 ODA TURNS MEMBER CONCERNS INTO LEGISLATIVE WINS
- 24 A CONTEMPORARY REVIEW OF APPLIED ERGONOMICS
- 28 NEW DENTIST SOCIAL – GOOD TIMES!
- 29 BRINGING OHSU STUDENTS TOGETHER TO LEARN ABOUT ODA ADVOCACY EFFORTS
- 30 PUT MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY IN YOUR PRACTICE MANAGEMENT TOOLBOX

## DEPARTMENTS

- 5 GUEST EDITORIAL
- 7 NEW MEMBERS
- 9 EVENTS AND EDUCATION
- 13 MEMBER BENEFIT OF THE MONTH
- 32 THANK YOU, SPONSORS!
- 34 CLASSIFIED ADS
- 34 INDEX TO ADVERTISERS




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# The Dental Foundation of Oregon



By Amber Fowler

## DEAR FRIENDS,

By the time you read this issue of *Membership Matters*, the brand new Tooth Taxi will have been in service for nearly a month! We launched the Taxi with a special event on Friday, February 2nd at the Oregon Dental Association. Guests received a tour of the new Taxi, heard brief remarks from special guests, and enjoyed small bites and light refreshments as we celebrated with an official “mouthwash” christening and a champagne toast! It was an honor to have everyone celebrate the 40+ year legacy of The Dental Foundation of Oregon and the 15th anniversary of the Tooth Taxi and our mission and dedication to advancing oral health education, providing charitable care, and coordinating resources for Oregon’s children and vulnerable communities!

In this issue, you will learn more about Ed Spradlin, a 77-year-old Vietnam Veteran who was honored at the Taxi special event as our 2023 DFO Volunteer of the Year. We have photos highlighting the special event, which included a special nod of recognition to Dr. Teri Barichello, who recently passed the Board President baton on to Dr. Philip Marucha.

We are thrilled to share the positive impact of the Tooth Taxi since 2008, which has resulted in more than \$8.8 million dollars in FREE services to Oregonians in need.

We have dozens and dozens of individuals, community partners, businesses, and foundations to thank for their support over the years. Our ODA members have been an important part of our success, and recently the Oregon Dental Association Board of Trustees approved a \$50K gift that was split equally between the DFO and the Tooth Taxi. It really has taken a village to make the magic happen over the years, and we appreciate our friends at Moda Health for their annual sponsorship of the Taxi, along with board member leadership to the DFO.

As we start 2024 on a profoundly positive note, we are very proud to continue serving a diverse population of patients. Closing the chapter on our Tooth Taxi “Classic,” it’s bittersweet and hard to believe the Taxi traveled every corner of Oregon, having accumulated over 90,000 miles on its odometer, and helped nearly 30,000 Oregonians on the Taxi with everything from screenings to cleanings to fillings, to helping locate a local dental care provider.

With good cheer and joy and a heart filled with gratitude, thank you for your love, support, best wishes, and gifts of volunteerism and financial support to The Dental Foundation of Oregon.

Warm regards,  
Amber Fowler, Executive Director  
The Dental Foundation of Oregon 📍

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# Welcome New ODA Members

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

**Mariah Baldwin, DMD**  
Southern Oregon Dental Society

**Mark Bell, DMD**  
Multnomah Dental Society

**Peter Carlesimo, DDS**  
Marion and Polk Dental Society

**Amanda Gallegos, DMD**  
Multnomah Dental Society

**Bradley Hagedorn, DMD**  
Eastern Oregon Dental Society

**Bruce Havens, PhD, DDS**  
Multnomah Dental Society

**Margaret Klein, DDS**  
Multnomah Dental Society

**Ronald Le, DMD**  
Eastern Oregon Dental Society

**Heather Manka, DMD**  
Marion and Polk Dental Society

**Tu Nguyen, DDS**  
Multnomah Dental Society

**Melvin Pederson Jr., DDS**  
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**Benjamin Russell, DMD**  
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**Dane Schapper, DMD**  
Southern Willamette Dental Society

**John Waite, DMD**  
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**Shannon Walker, DDS**  
Multnomah Dental Society

**Geoffrey Wang, DDS**  
Marion and Polk Dental Society

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# Events & Education

## Component CE Calendar

CONTINUING  
EDUCATION

Calendar provided by Mehdi Salari, DMD

This calendar is current as of February 16, 2024.

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
03/14/24	Lane	Retirement Planning Strategies for Dentists	Nathan Ricks, CFP, MS	2	Eugene (Lane Community College)	Register: <a href="http://www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE">www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE</a>
03/14/24	Southern Oregon	Anterior Composite Veneers: Introducing 3M Filtek Matrix	Brock Offerdahl with 3M	2	Medford (West Orthodontics)	Info/Register: <a href="http://www.sodsonline.org">www.sodsonline.org</a>
03/19/24	Clackamas County Dental Society	Radiology	Kate Dubois, DMD	2	Oregon City (PWFCC)	RSVP to <a href="mailto:executivedirector@clackamasdental.com">executivedirector@clackamasdental.com</a>
04/19/24	Lane	Soft Tissue & Radiographic Pathology	Dr. Bryan Trump	4	Eugene (Lane Community College)	Register: <a href="http://www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE">www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE</a>
04/23/24	Clackamas County Dental Society	Financial Planning	Retirement Advocates	2	Oregon City (PWFCC)	RSVP to <a href="mailto:executivedirector@clackamasdental.com">executivedirector@clackamasdental.com</a>
05/10/24	Lane	LCDS Golf Scramble	-	-	Junction City (Shadow Hills Country Club)	Register: <a href="http://www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE">www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE</a>
05/15/24	Multnomah	Table Clinics	-	2	Portland (Kennedy School)	Info/Register: <a href="http://www.multnomahdental.org">www.multnomahdental.org</a>
05/16/24	Central Oregon	TBA	TBA	2	Bend (Riverhouse Convention Center)	More info email: <a href="mailto:drjessicahenderson@gmail.com">drjessicahenderson@gmail.com</a>
05/16/24	Southern Oregon	Financial	Dr. Tyler Scott	2	Medford (West Orthodontics)	Info/Register: <a href="http://www.sodsonline.org">www.sodsonline.org</a>
05/28/24	Clackamas County Dental Society	Conservative TMD Treatment	Kim Wright, DMD	2	Oregon City (PWFCC)	RSVP to <a href="mailto:executivedirector@clackamasdental.com">executivedirector@clackamasdental.com</a>
06/11/24	Lane	Retiree Luncheon	-	-	TBD	Register: <a href="http://www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE">www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE</a>
06/20/24	Multnomah	Women in Dentistry - Wine/Paint Night	-	-	TBD	Info/Register: <a href="http://www.multnomahdental.org">www.multnomahdental.org</a>
08/15/24	Southern Oregon	Ergonomics and More	Dr. Jordan Spence (Physical Therapist)	2	Medford (West Orthodontics)	Info/Register: <a href="http://www.sodsonline.org">www.sodsonline.org</a>
09/19/24	Central Oregon	TBA	TBA	2	Bend (Riverhouse Convention Center)	More info email: <a href="mailto:drjessicahenderson@gmail.com">drjessicahenderson@gmail.com</a>
09/19/24	Multnomah	Fall Kick Off/Tailgate Event	-	-	ODA Parking Lot	Info/Register: <a href="http://www.multnomahdental.org">www.multnomahdental.org</a>
10/18/24	Lane	Suturing for Success: (Hands-on, Limited to 30 people)	Dr. Nabeel Cajee	2	Eugene (Lane Community College)	Register: <a href="http://www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE">www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE</a>
10/23/24	Multnomah	TBA	Saulo Sousa Melo, DDS, MSD, PhD, MS	2	Portland (OHSU SOD)	Info/Register: <a href="http://www.multnomahdental.org">www.multnomahdental.org</a>
11/07/24	Multnomah	New Dentist Event	-	-	TBD	Info/Register: <a href="http://www.multnomahdental.org">www.multnomahdental.org</a>
12/06/24	Lane	Advances in Dental Pharmacotherapy	Karen Baker, RPh, MS	3	Eugene (Lane Community College)	Register: <a href="http://www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE">www.bit.ly/LCDSEVENTBRITE</a>

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

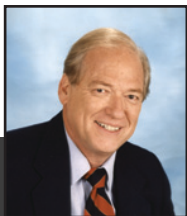
Looking for additional ways to get CE? The American Dental Association has a large collection of webinars and on-demand video learning opportunities available, many of which are free to members. Visit [adaceonline.org](http://adaceonline.org) to catch up on the latest offerings on your own schedule.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

# TRANSITION POINTER

## WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF MY PRACTICE TRANSITION SERVICES?

- My **accurate & comprehensive practice appraisal** is the foundation for a successful transition.
- **Recruiting the perfect associate and/or buyer** is the key to the continuity of your patients' dental care.
- **If you already have a potential buyer or associate** for a buy-in, then my transition services coordination can complete your sale or buy-in.
- Negotiating a **Letter of Intent** completes the major details of your sale, such as:
  - Sale price
  - Financial terms
  - Timing
  - Covenant-not-to-Compete
  - Future employment contract, partnership, or expense sharing details (if any).
- My **liaison with your attorney and CPA** enhances the legal and financial planning.
- My qualified **Financial Resources** insures that the buyer can obtain 100% financing.
- My **49 Point Transition Checklist**, reviewed with yourself, your staff, and the buyer details the administrative and clinical tasks necessary for a successful transition.
- Sample **Patient & Referral Source Letters of Introduction** assist you in writing your own letter.
- If you are to be employed by the buyer in the future, my **Employment Agreement Questionnaire** will outline specific details.
- If this is to be a partnership or solo/group practice entity, my **Management Operating Agreement Questionnaire** outlines management roles and how income will be shared.

**If a practice transition is in your future, give the expert a call.**



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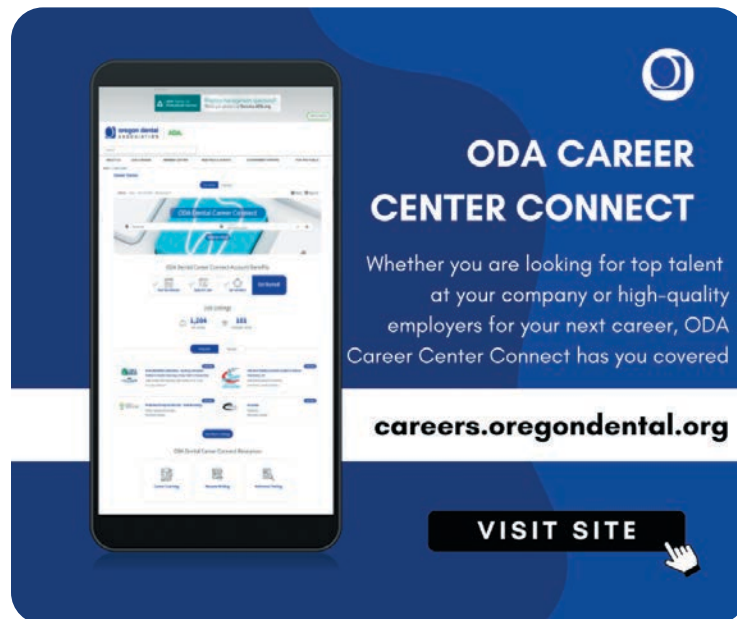
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# Dr. Barichello Thank You & 2024 Board Leadership

**THE DENTAL FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS EXTENDS** its sincerest thanks to Dr. Teri L. Barichello for serving as DFO board president from 2019 through 2023, and is pleased she will continue to provide leadership as a board member. In November 2023, the DFO board voted in its new officers, and we are grateful to have Dr. Phillip T. Marucha (president), Dr. Anthony Ramos (first vice president), and Robert Gootee (secretary/treasurer) as the new 2024 officers. At-large board members include Grant Austin, Dr. Hai T. Pham, Kristina Grimes, Dr. Elizabeth Tomczyk, Julie Marie, Dr. Landis Kwong, Sarah Boylan, Dr. Thomas D. Pollard, and Dr. Barry Taylor.

## ➔ Ed Spradlin, 2023 DFO Volunteer of the Year

The DFO is delighted to share with our readers that Ed Spradlin was honored as our 2023 Volunteer of the Year award recipient at the February 2, 2024, Tooth Taxi Launch Event for his inspiring leadership in starting the DFO's very own Oregon Bottle Drop Charitable Donation program. As of this mid-January writing, Ed's efforts have raised nearly \$4,000 in support for The Dental Foundation of Oregon's Tooth Taxi program! In a future issue

of *Membership Matters*, we look forward to sharing more information with you about Ed, his team of supporters, and telling you more about the man himself.

### ***In his own words:***

A few years ago, I looked for an organization to contribute a little extra money to, and then I stumbled onto The Dental Foundation of Oregon's Tooth Taxi program. Being a child of the 1940s, for me, going to the dentist was

emotionally and physically a challenge at times. It made sense to me that the mission of the Tooth Taxi is to also educate children and families about the importance of dental care and help give treatment to those in need.

What began in 2023 as an individual effort on my part to gather recyclable cans and plastic bottles as part of the Oregon Bottle Drop charitable donation program has grown to include others who are just as eager to be a part of my mission to help the DFO and the Tooth Taxi! As luck would have it, I was talking to some of my friends at the Wood Village Fred Meyer store, who also happen to be employees, about how I fundraise for the Tooth Taxi and how I save loose pocket change along with help to generate money from the Bottle Drop Charitable donation program that I donate to Tooth Taxi. Several of the employees loved the idea and have joined me in the cause. So now every day when I show up at Fred Meyer, they give me the bottles and cans they have collected so I can redeem them through Bottle Drop!

Now, with my wonderful team of helpers, I estimate our donation will



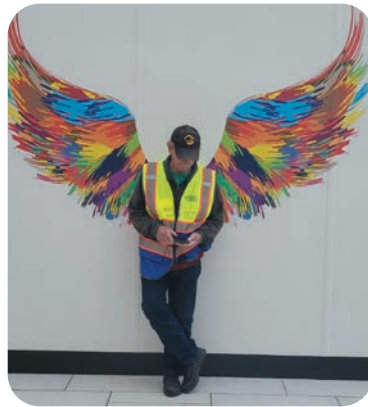
LAURIE CECIL

generate about 10 bags of cans per week, with the average bag bringing in about \$7.10 each.

Together, it is an honor and a pleasure for all of us to be part of such a wonderful program that helps Oregon's children receive dental care!

Thank you to The Dental Foundation for the opportunity to help and for all that you do to help make the world a better place!

Sincerely, Ed Spradlin



LAURIE CECIL

## ➔ Special Thanks

The Dental Foundation of Oregon is grateful to the following organizations, community partners, production teams, business sponsors, grant and foundations partners, in-kind supporters, and volunteers for their support. The arrival of our new Tooth Taxi would not have happened without each of you!

The team members of GISI Marketing Group, ADI Mobile Health, A-dec, Henry Schein, Moda Health and their leadership and marketing teams, ODS, Delta Dental, the Oregon Dental Association and its Board of Trustees, staff members, component societies, and association members, The Dental Foundation of Oregon and its Board of Directors and Amber Fowler,

Executive Director, Mr. Ed Spradlin and Laurie Cecil, Wilsonville Lifestyle Magazine, The Oregonian Season of Sharing, the Willamette Week Give Guide, OHSU School of Dentistry, The Crook County Foundation, Marcia H. Randall Foundation, Poison Waters, Heritage Bank, WEO Media, Columbia Bank, BnK Construction, OEA Choice Trust, Dr. William Ten Pas, Dr. Rick Asai, The Ferre Family, Jones & Roth Dental CPA's, Green Sail Transitions, Emmett Phair Construction, Mary Lou Burton, The Zera Foundation, Steven Doane, Rebecca Lanxon Astra Practice Partners, Burkhart Dental, Clackamas County Dental Society, Dentegra Insurance Company, Dixon Golf, Ferguson Wellman Capital Management, Mountain Top Practice Transitions, Multnomah Dental Society, Oregon Academy General Dentistry, Sirius Computer Solutions, The Dentists Insurance Company (TDIC), West Bearing Investments, Western Construction Services, Inc., Willamette Dental Group, The Oregon Community Foundation, McDonald Jacobs, Philanthropy Northwest, Lori Ackerman Photography, Nonprofit Association of Oregon, Mr. Robin Richardson, Wayne Barichello,



DMD, Erin Kane | EEK Photography, Steven Doane, Leslie McCabe, the Tooth Taxi staff and volunteers past and present whose professional services are contracted through Moda Health, Langdon Farms Golf Club with a special nod to Stephanie Reynolds, Fluence, Portland Embroidery, The Spirit Mountain Community Fund, Ronald W. Naito Foundation, The Kelley Family Trust, The Irwin Foundation, Juliet Ashby Hillman Foundation, The Franklin & Dorothy Piacentini Trust, The Rose E. Tucker Charitable Trust, Juan Young Trust, The Collins Foundation, Oregon Jewish Foundation, and Jackson Foundation.

*We apologize for any errors or omissions that may have occurred after printing.*



# ➔ New Tooth Taxi Special Event

It was a festive atmosphere as The Dental Foundation of Oregon welcomed guests to the Oregon Dental Association office on Friday, February 2, 2024, as everyone welcomed our new Tooth Taxi into official service!

Guests enjoyed a tour of the new Taxi, heard brief remarks from a variety of special guests,

congratulated Dr. Tei Barichello, outgoing DFO board president, on her five years of leadership, and honored Ed Spradlin as the DFO's 2023 Volunteer of the Year. Guests delighted in small bites and light refreshments, and celebrated with an official "mouthwash" christening and a champagne toast!

The Dental Foundation of Oregon is the charitable arm to the Oregon Dental Association, whose 40+ year mission and dedication is to advance oral health education, provide charitable care, and coordinate resources for Oregon's children and vulnerable communities. The Tooth Taxi is staffed by dental professionals who are Moda Health employees.



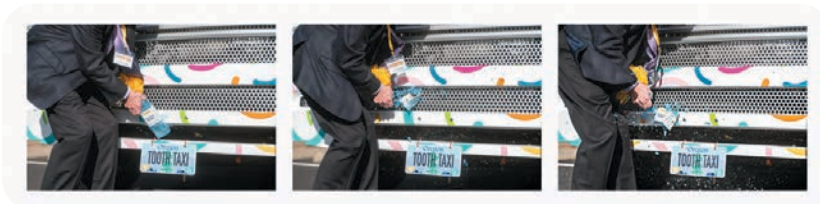
ADI Leadership



Ed Spradlin and Laurie Cecil

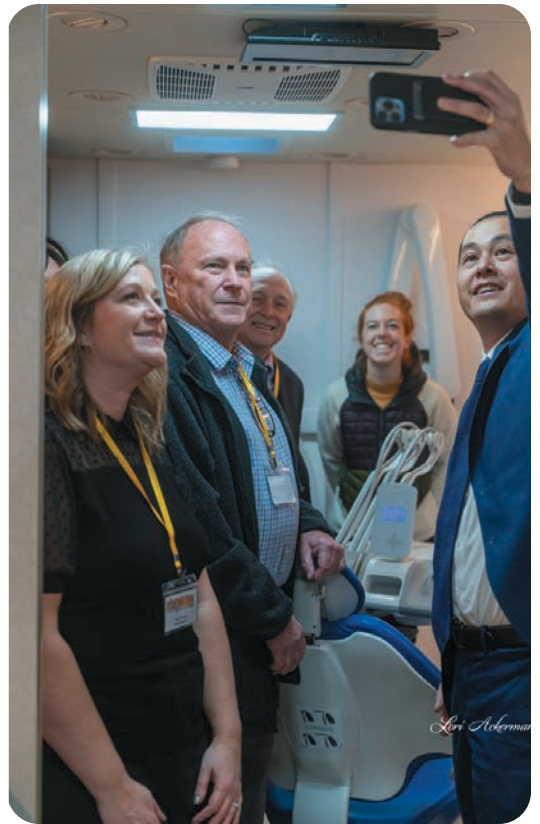


DFO Board Members



LORI ACKERMAN PHOTOGRAPHY





# ➔ With the Launch of the New Tooth Taxi Mobile Dental Clinic, Providing Charitable Care to Kids in Every Corner of the State, The Dental Foundation of Oregon Celebrates Success

Headquartered at SW Sun Place across from the Ferrari dealership, The Dental Foundation of Oregon (DFO), whose mission is to advance oral health education, provide charitable care, and coordinate resources for vulnerable children and communities, is the charitable arm of the Oregon Dental Association.

Since its launch in 2008, the DFO's marquee dental program, the Tooth Taxi, has provided critical dental care for children onsite at schools across Oregon using a then state-of-the-art 38-foot mobile dental clinic on wheels. The Tooth Taxi is Oregon's ONLY mobile dental unit singularly devoted to delivering FREE pediatric dental care and oral health education.

The success of the Tooth Taxi, which is on the road year-round, is rooted in a variety of partnerships with schools and nonprofit organization, experts in outreach, engagement, and service to vulnerable children and families.

Success is also possible because of the passionate and licensed provider team aboard the mobile unit, including a dentist and two dental assistants who spend up to five days at each school or nonprofit site, delivering a range of comprehensive dental care from screenings and cleanings to fillings and extractions.

The Tooth Taxi serves schools for one week at a time, and the dental services provided allow children to become better students by eliminating pain and enhancing their self-image. Teachers work even harder to manage classrooms when they have students who are suffering with dental pain. With the absence of oral health issues, students can focus during instructional time, absenteeism improves, and teachers encounter less teaching disruption. The overall stress level in the classroom improves significantly! But perhaps a more important measure of the positive impact of the Tooth Taxi is the display

of bravery and grateful smiles of the children who are also resilient, funny, and determined to smile on!

For the past 16 years, The Dental Foundation of Oregon and our Tooth Taxi program have steadfastly adhered to its mission, and as a result, the positive impact of the Tooth Taxi program can be demonstrated by the numbers:

- 25,613 patients screened
- 15,455 unique appointments on the van
- 25,785 students received classroom and hygiene education
- \$8,816,047 value of FREE services

The Tooth Taxi is also very proud to serve a diverse population of patients, and the table below demonstrates the patients seen in the last four years and is reflective of the patient demographics of our entire tenure of service to Oregon youth.

In December 2023, The Dental Foundation of Oregon retired our first mobile clinic, which traveled

	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>White</b>	40.10%	48.50%	33.10%	37.40%
<b>Hispanic</b>	41.50%	36.90%	45.80%	39.40%
<b>Black</b>	8.20%	7.60%	9.30%	9.70%
<b>Asian</b>	3.30%	3%	3%	2.60%
<b>American Indian</b>	2.90%	1.90%	2%	0.70%
<b>Other</b>	4%	2.10%	6.80%	10.20%

over 90,000 miles within the borders of Oregon, providing care onsite at schools. The DFO team is excited to welcome a brand-new replacement mobile clinic as this marks an exciting new chapter in the history of the program, and with that comes new opportunities yet to be realized.

Working with a number of local companies and long-term community partners and supports to The Dental Foundation of Oregon – GIS Marketing (exterior vehicle wrap), American Dental Industries, Inc. (interior build-out and coordination with Winnebago), Moda Health Marketing (creative conceptualization), and A-dec (dental equipment), this team of industry experts were routinely challenged as they navigated global supply chain issues during the pandemic to help bring the new Tooth Taxi to fruition. Manufacturing and outfitting the new state-of-the-art Tooth Taxi has been a nearly three-year-long process.

The village of Tooth Taxi supporters includes public/private partnership with the Oregon dental membership to the Oregon Dental Association, MODA Health, Delta Dental, OEA Choice Trust, and dozens of family and charitable foundations, along with thousands of individual donors. This generosity ensures that all children are free of dental pain, ready and able to learn in the classroom, and enjoying increased confidence in the appearance of their smile!

The Dental Foundation is a proud member of Philanthropy Northwest and Nonprofit Association of Oregon. Since 2019, they have achieved Platinum status on Candid (formerly GuideStar), the premier destination for nonprofits and nonprofit research. Most recently, for the first time ever, they were independently evaluated and rated by Charity Navigator as having earned a 92/100 score!

Together, they strive to build a stronger and brighter future for Oregon’s children – one tooth and one child at a time.

## ➔ Learn More and Get Involved!

Wilsonville is a wonderful community in which to live, learn, work, and serve. The Dental Foundation of Oregon is a proud nonprofit member of the community, and it loves getting to know its neighbors! There are many ways to get involved with the DFO. Here are just a few:

- Follow The DFO and Tooth Taxi on Social Media – Facebook ([www.facebook.com/DentalFoundationofOregon](https://www.facebook.com/DentalFoundationofOregon)) and Instagram ([www.instagram.com/toothtaxi/](https://www.instagram.com/toothtaxi/))
- Talk to your local dentist about sharing DFO materials with their patients
- Encourage retired dentists you know to volunteer their time and expertise



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# ODA Turns Member Concerns into Legislative Wins

*First of its kind insurance transparency law benefits dentists, patients*

By Jennifer Sitton, ODA Lobby Team

**AS AN ADVOCACY ASSOCIATION,** ONE OF THE Oregon Dental Association's highest priorities is ensuring its members' voices are heard when decisions are being made in Salem that impact dentists, so ODA members can focus on what matters most: patient care and running their practices.

While the last few legislative sessions have seen more turmoil than most, the ODA has secured some very significant wins for Oregon dentists in recent years, particularly in the 2023 Legislative Session, with the passage of a first of its kind insurance transparency law.

**Oregon becomes the first state to require active consent for network leases, credit card reimbursements**

ODA's advocacy team works closely with its members to ensure

they are prioritizing legislation that will have the greatest benefit for members' practices. In 2023, the ODA heard loud and clear that a lack of insurance transparency often led to unexpectedly low reimbursements, causing challenges for both dental offices and patients, who were regularly saddled with higher-than-expected bills for routine procedures.

In order to ensure better transparency when it comes to insurance reimbursements, ODA helped pass House Bill 3008. When the law went into effect on January 1, 2024, Oregon became the first state in the nation to require dentists' active consent before a network lease can occur, in addition to requiring dentists' consent to being reimbursed by insurance providers via credit cards.

Prior to the passage of this ODA-sponsored bill, dentists were subject to surprise network leases by insurers. This relatively common practice often meant that dentists were unaware their services had been leased out to a different network, and patients often found that their copays or reimbursement rates were completely different than for other provider networks. By requiring active consent from providers before leasing their services to different provider networks, this new law ensures transparency for both dentists and patients.

The implementation of House Bill 3008 also improves transparency in the claims reimbursement process by requiring providers to opt in to receiving payment reimbursements via credit card, instead of having to opt out. It also requires insurers to notify providers of any potential fees associated with payment processing and offer an alternative. The ODA heard from many members that fees associated with reimbursements provided via credit cards have often led to thousands of dollars in lost reimbursements.

"My practice suffered hardship when PPO companies that we contracted with started paying much less than the contracted rates. It turned out that they had leased my contract to the lowest-paying PPO without informing me. I suggested to the Legislative Affairs Committee that this was unfair and hoped they would propose legislation to address



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this problem. Ultimately, the dental transparency ‘opt in’ requirement for credit card reimbursements and network leasing passed as a first-in-the-nation bill,” said Dr. Mark Mutschler, DDS. “ODA’s lobby team listened to members like me when we said this is a problem, ODA worked with dental legislative champions to introduce the bill, and in January it was signed into law. That is advocacy in action on behalf of Oregon dentists.”

These new protections apply “when a contract is entered into, renewed, or extended,” and the ODA has heard from many members throughout the state who have already seen significant benefits from this new active consent requirement. With Oregon becoming the first state in the nation to require active consent for network leases, ODA’s advocacy team helped pave the way for other states to similarly protect and empower dental providers.

### **Prioritizing legislation addressing dental workforce challenges, oral health**

In addition to the flagship insurance transparency bill, the ODA spent much of the 2023 Legislative Session focused on addressing the dental workforce crisis. House Bill 2979 was developed by ODA members and sponsored by dentists Rep. Hai Pham and Rep. Cyrus Javadi and sought to address Oregon’s shortage of dental support staff by funding the primary pathways Oregonians take to become dental assistants and hygienists and better supporting those working in rural and underserved areas. ODA staff and leadership helped build a coalition of over two dozen supportive stakeholders, testified in front of legislators, and sent a record 1,500+ letters supporting the bill to lawmakers. While the bill stalled due to the Senate walkout in 2023, the ODA is confident it will see support in future legislative sessions.

## **Meet ODA’s New Director of Government and Regulatory Affairs!**



I am thrilled to introduce all of our members to Brett Hamilton, who joined the ODA as our new Director of Government and Regulatory Affairs in late January. Brett, who is re-joining our team with a wealth of knowledge about dentistry and health care, previously served the ODA as the organization’s Managing Director of Professional and Public Education, which at the time included government and regulatory affairs.

Since he last worked with the ODA, Brett has gained significant experience in the healthcare sector, working with non-profits, a coordinated care organization, and a large healthcare system, including providing funding for Medical Teams International Dental Vans. With a Masters of Public Administration from the University of Washington Evans School of Public Policy and a healthcare MBA from Oregon Health and Science University, he has dedicated his career to advocating for policies and scaling and improving programs that affect populations in positive ways.

Brett will lead our already strong government and regulatory affairs team, managing our advocacy work in Salem, liaising with the ADA’s lobby team in Washington, D.C., and serving as a voice for the dental industry on regulatory issues. He will lead the ODA’s Legislative Affairs Task Force and will serve as the primary point of contact for members who are interested in advocating on behalf of dentistry.

I hope you will all join me in welcoming Brett to the team. If you have questions about our advocacy work, please don’t hesitate to reach out to him at [bhamilton@oregondental.org](mailto:bhamilton@oregondental.org).

– Barry Taylor, DMD  
ODA Executive Director

Another legislative concept seeking to address workforce shortages, included in House Bills 2996 and 3223, would have allowed dental assistants to perform radiography procedures through a combination of education and hands-on training, rather than requiring completion of a written exam. Many dentists feel that written exams do not accurately reflect competency, do not impact the health and safety of patients, and often serve as an economic barrier to career advancement. This bill would have allowed dental assistants to obtain certification with proficiency

verified by a licensed dentist or dental hygienist. HB 3223 was amended to establish a workgroup at the Oregon Board of Dentistry on dental assisting credentials. The amended bill passed out of the legislature and also expanded the types of accepted dental assisting tests and entities that may provide those tests, required that tests are offered in multiple languages, and specified that the board may not require more than one examination per dental assistant certification type.

The ODA team also advocated in 2023 for House Bill 3007, which

would have established an Office of Oral Health and an Oral Health Advisory Committee to support the Oregon Health Authority's dental director and promote evidence-based oral health disease prevention across the state. While the bill failed to progress due to the Senate walkout, the ODA team worked closely with the Healthy Teeth, Bright Future's Coalition to build support for similar legislation in the future.

In addition to the priority bills above, the ODA's lobby team also focused on bills that would have prohibited the distribution or sale of flavored tobacco products, required the registration of dental labs, provided funding for sealant programs and CDHCs, and created a health scholarship program to be administered by Oregon Health and Science University for members of federal recognized tribes.

### A voice for Oregon dentists in Salem

With so many new pieces of legislation being introduced every year that impact oral health and dental practices, every legislative session brings new challenges and new opportunities for the ODA advocacy team. The passage of the insurance transparency law in 2023 highlighted how ODA members voicing challenges in their practices led to the introduction of legislation and, eventually, the implementation of a new law benefitting ODA members and patients.

"Our government affairs team is committed to advocating for legislation that will benefit our members in all aspects of their practices," said Brett Hamilton, ODA's new Director of Government and Regulatory Affairs. "Our success in Salem is in large part due to the engagement of our members,

whether they're voicing the need for new legislation, attending Dental Day at the Capitol, sending letters or testimony to legislators, or telling their fellow dentists about ODA's advocacy work on their behalf."

With the 35-day 2024 Legislative Session already underway, the ODA lobby team is already engaged in advocating for and against new policy proposals that will impact ODA members. The more members who are engaged with the ODA and the organization's advocacy work, the more successful that work will be.

If you're interested in learning more about ODA's advocacy work or getting involved, please reach out to Brett Hamilton at [bhamilton@oregondental.org](mailto:bhamilton@oregondental.org). If you know a fellow dentist who is not an ODA member, encourage them to become an ODA member today and ensure their voice is heard in Salem. 🗣️

The advertisement is set against a dark, textured background. At the top left is the iCoreRx logo, which consists of a green and grey sphere followed by the text 'iCoreRx'. Below the logo is a green horizontal bar with the text 'ePrescribe all meds faster from any device.' in white. In the center is a white pill bottle with an orange cap and a white label that reads 'iCoreConnect ELECTRONIC PRESCRIPTION'. To the right of the pill bottle is a large QR code. Below the QR code is the Oregon Dental Association logo, which is a blue circle with a white crescent shape inside, followed by the text 'oregon dental ASSOCIATION' and 'ENDORSED PROGRAM' in blue. At the bottom right, there is a blue-bordered box containing the text: 'Members receive a 43% discount. iCoreConnect.com/OR13 888.810.7706'.

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# A Contemporary Review of Applied Ergonomics

## *Keeping You in the Loupe*

By Brian Wilkinson

ODC SPEAKER  
HIGHLIGHT

### IT HAS BEEN WELL ESTABLISHED

**THAT ORAL** health professionals are at a remarkably high risk of experiencing a physical injury while performing their normal work duties.<sup>1</sup> In fact, dental practitioners frequently seek out remedial care to address persistent musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs), with estimates indicating that 60% to 96% of the hygiene workforce are impacted.<sup>2</sup> MSDs most commonly affect the neck, shoulders, wrist, and hand among dental professionals.<sup>3,4</sup> Despite ardent attempts to educate providers and implement ergonomic-based programs, MSDs are increasingly prevalent among this population.

The day-to-day procedures provided by dentists are associated with MSDs due to the normal array of physical demands that are inherent to the occupation. These include prolonged sitting, leaning forward to provide patient care, repetitive pinching and grasping, operating equipment, and routine computer work.<sup>5</sup> In addition to these factors, many dentists face uninterrupted work cycles, leaving clinicians with few opportunities to implement structured rest breaks. These occupational constraints illustrate why the proper establishment and maintenance of a routine movement program can help to reverse the effects of this rigorous type of work.

One of the most common barriers to implementing an ergonomic-based exercise plan is a persistent lack of time. In fact, health care workers frequently neglect their own self-care as a result of the heavy burden of

caring for others.<sup>6</sup> Other common factors that limit performance include a lack of supervisory support, inadequate physical space, improper education, reduced self-efficacy, financial barriers, or working in a clinic culture where ergonomics is not highly valued.<sup>7-10</sup> Whether one or more of these obstacles exist in any given workplace, a great deal of individual diligence and self-advocacy are required to adequately address this persistent dilemma.

In light of these identified barriers, it seemed necessary to develop an enhanced, more realistic model for ergonomic implementation among dental practitioners. As part of developing a program for practical use, two very important factors influenced the final selection of activities; a consideration of the number of recommended tasks as well as the complexity of the desired movements. Since these elements have been suggested to directly correlate with program adherence, guidelines by reputable literature indicate a maximum of four total activities, as this specific quantity helps to promote efficiency and achieve effectiveness through individual performance.<sup>11-13</sup>

In 2016, a novel paradigm entitled the Core Four – a set of four activities that were explicitly designed after extensive movement analysis of dental hygienists in their work environment – was developed. The program was designed to integrate the management of time, the focus of a routine, and the vital parameters to promote necessary tissue healing.

The Core Four consists of two stretches and two movements, and each one is to be completed in a separate 1-minute interval. With the 4 individual minutes involved in the activities paired with the brief transition periods needed to obtain each of the desired body positions, the entire set should not require any longer than a total of 5 minutes to complete. Ideally, this set would be performed between every patient visit as part of a routine rest break regimen, and it should subsequently be adopted as a structured daily habit. However, some authors have suggested that “microbreaks” as short as 30 seconds throughout the day may be beneficial in reducing the onset of MSDs for workers who perform repetitive tasks.<sup>14</sup>

Taking breaks throughout the work day can also reduce the need for physical recovery at the end of the day and may directly reduce the chance of MSD occurrence.<sup>15,16</sup> Throughout performance, normal breathing patterns should be maintained during each activity. Dentists must be mindful of the tendency to hold their breath and strictly avoid this response since this type of exertion can create increased intrathoracic pressure.

### Element One

The first element of the Core Four is an extension-based stretch of the wrist and fingers that is commonly referred to as the “prayer stretch.” In order to perform it properly, place all five fingertips together and touch the palms firm in contact with one

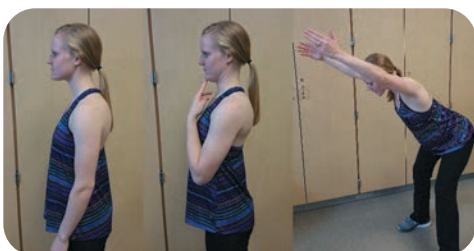




another starting at chest height very near to the trunk. Then, while maintaining close contact of the palms and fingertips, slowly lower the hands toward the waist until a mild but comfortable stretch is noted; most people will feel tension develop just above their wrist on the anterior (palm) side of their forearm. When this position does not yield a feeling of tension, the position of the hands can be maintained and the forearms can be rotated outward so that the fingers point directly away from the chest; this should enhance the feeling of stretch during performance.

### Element Two

The second portion of the Core Four is a stretch that targets the extensor muscles located on the dorsal (backside) of the wrist and forearm. This is normally completed for the dominant arm; the contralateral extremity can receive a similar stretch if time allows.<sup>17</sup> As part of proper performance, the elbow should be fully extended without being locked out or hyperextended, and the wrist should be flexed downward toward the palm side of the hand. The shoulder position can vary, with the stretch being performed at shoulder height or below this position. Obtaining a point of personal comfort



is the highest determination for this aspect of the stretch. Additionally, the contralateral hand (non-stretched side) should facilitate the stretch over the metacarpophalangeal joints (largest knuckles on the back of the hand) and not over the fingers, as including finger flexion will target undesired muscles during performance.

If performed correctly, a stretch should be felt just proximal to the wrist in the posterior forearm. When this initial position no longer yields a feeling of tension, the shoulder can be rotated inward (causing the fingers to move relatively outward) while maintaining the same position of the elbow, wrist, and hand, so that further elongation can be achieved.

### Element Three



The third activity associated with the Core Four is a movement frequently called “tracing a doorframe.” Instead of facilitating a stretch of muscular tissue, this movement seeks to restore the normal alignment of the thoracic spine, facilitate scapular retraction, and activate some of our focal postural muscles. Normally, the thoracic spine (better known as the mid-back) is aligned in a kyphotic shape, where it curves away from

the trunk to create a rounded shape. Slouching can exaggerate this curve and may cause added stress to the individual joints in this region of the spine. As dentists tend to lean forward to provide care to their patients – causing an excess of kyphosis in the thoracic spine – the initial reaching upward with both arms seeks to reverse this biomechanical shortcoming. Then, as the hands are drawn outward and then downward in the shape of a doorframe, the scapulae are drawn inward and downward into a more optimal position. This collective movement activates the lower trapezius, latissimus dorsi, and rhomboid major and minor, which helps to maintain the scapulae and shoulders in their desired, natural position.<sup>18</sup> When this activity becomes effortless and fluid, an appropriate progression includes a gentle pinching of the scapulae together at the very end of the movement to further engage the postural muscles. This should not be overexerted, or a strain of the muscles between the scapulae may occur.

### Element Four

The final activity from the Core Four is well-known as a “chin tuck” movement. Instead of seeking to correct the thoracic spine, this movement attempts to realign the cervical spine (neck region). The cervical spine has a normal curve that is in the reverse position of the thoracic spine beneath it, rounding to create a forward sway in its natural shape. Again, with the tendency to look downward frequently for prolonged periods in order to carry out oral assessments and provide care, this lordotic curve can be exaggerated to the point where added stress is created in the neck through the added effect of gravity. This can

be reduced significantly with the routine use of dental loupes.

In order to perform the chin-tuck movement properly, the head should be drawn backward to reduce the curve of the neck in either an upright seated or standing position. For some, it is helpful to cue proper performance by sharing the prompt to “create a double chin” by using their head and neck to draw the chin straight backward (posteriorly). This activity should create a feeling of tension in the anterior aspect of the neck where the deep neck flexors lie, but may also generate a sensation of stretch in the posterior neck from supporting muscles that have become short and tight. When this activity no longer creates adequate demand on the muscles that support the alignment of the neck, the chin tuck can be performed after leaning forward slightly through the hips while keeping the knees and back relatively straight. This position introduces supplemental resistance, as the muscles must engage against the added weight caused by moving against gravity, rather than in a relative plane where movement in upright posture occurs primarily in a manner that is perpendicular to gravity’s effect.

If typical work duties or the performance of the Core Four causes any symptoms that last greater than 72 hours, individuals should consult with a qualified medical provider to have their condition more formally evaluated. ●

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## WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Brian Wilkinson will be presenting on Saturday, April 6 from 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. at the Oregon Dental Conference, Course Code S223.

**Mark your calendar and plan to attend!**



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# New Dentist Social – Good Times!

COMPONENT HIGHLIGHT

By Lora Mattsen, Multnomah Dental Society Executive Director

**MULTNOMAH DENTAL SOCIETY AND WASHINGTON COUNTY DENTAL SOCIETY** joined forces to bring new dentists together for an evening of fun, games, and camaraderie.

The annual New Dentist Social was held on Thursday, November 9th at Langers Entertainment Center, with a full house in attendance. New dentists, dental students, and guests gathered to eat and drink as well as play arcade games but mostly just to connect and enjoy each other's company.

Our goal for this popular event is to provide a stronger dental community. We want to ensure that new dentists are getting value from their membership and organized dentistry in general. There was discussion from the group

about what they would like from membership. We asked for ideas on what we can do to cultivate their member experience. Many ideas were provided, and it was clear that they enjoy social events like this one. Everyone was also very supportive of having more joint-component gatherings. We most definitely will!

The event was fun and successful. The MDS board of directors would like to express the utmost appreciation to the WCDS board and their members as well as our sponsors, who helped to make the event so successful.

We are looking forward to having more joint and multi-component meetings and events. Sharing interests and ideas with members from all of our components is a wonderful way to bring everyone together. 🗨️



LORA MATTSSEN

# Bringing OHSU Students Together to Learn About ODA Advocacy Efforts

OHSU

By Dr. Barry Taylor, ODA Executive Director

## THE DENTISTS OF OREGON POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

(DOPAC) sponsored a lunch recently at the OHSU School of Dentistry for all dental students. The ODA's long-time lobbyist, George Okulitch, and ODA's Executive Director, Dr. Barry Taylor, gave the students an introduction to the advocacy process in the ODA as well as an update of current advocacy success that the ODA has achieved. ODA President Dr. Mark Mutschler, was also in attendance. Dr. Mutschler shared

his story of challenges he faced with leased dental provider networks and how the ODA listened to his concerns and turned it into successful legislation (HB 3008, story on page 20 in this month's *Membership Matters*). Dr. Mutschler's story is a great example to demonstrate to the students the steps that a member's concern is vetted, addressed, and eventually passed as successful legislation.

In April, 12 students will be joining the six ODA members (Drs.

Mark Mutschler, Fariba Mutschler, Amberena Fairlee, Rachel Meek, Alayna Schoblaske, and Caroline Zeller) for ADA Lobby Day in Washington, D.C. The collaboration between ASDA and the ADA/ODA is an opportunity to share with students the importance of organized dentistry in advocacy for oral health care. Later this year DOPAC will be sponsoring another lunch at the school with ODA member representatives Dr. Cyrus Javadi and Dr. Hai Pham as guests. 🍽️



ODA STAFF

# Put Mental Health Literacy in Your Practice Management Toolbox

By Adam Member

## DENTAL PRACTICES IN OREGON

and across the country are challenged today by the same post-pandemic headwinds as all of corporate America: hiring, retaining, and engaging the workforce of tomorrow.

This is all the more challenging given the prevalence of mental illness in the workplace and its impact on all aspects of employee and team performance. The situation is so dire in our country today that the U.S. Surgeon General recently noted “workplace wellbeing” as one of the top five population health priorities for his office.<sup>1</sup>

## Simple Mental Health Leadership Consulting

Not opiate addiction, homelessness, or diabetes, but “toxic workplaces”; just how we experience and treat each other at work every day is one of the U.S. Surgeon General’s top population health priorities for the country.

It’s no surprise given the facts:

- More than 20% of the workforce every year experiences a clinically diagnoseable mental illness that hurts just like a physical illness does, but less than half seek help.<sup>2</sup>

- The average time from the onset of symptoms to first seeking care is more than 10 years.<sup>3</sup>
- Mental well-being is a leading driver for employee productivity and engagement. Depression alone has been shown to drop productivity by 27%.<sup>4</sup>
- 81% of employees report that they’ll be looking for workplaces that support mental health in the future.<sup>5</sup>



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How did we get to a place where every team in America larger than five people is impacted by an illness akin to 20% of their employees being diagnosed with cancer, diabetes, congestive heart failure, or any other significant disease every year? The answer is simple: It's stigma.

Eighty percent of patients report that stigma alone prevents them from seeking care. But the stigma doesn't act independently. It's not the root cause. It just plays a part in the larger isolation cycle of myths, stigma, shame, and silence.

The societal myths of mental illness ("depression isn't a real illness") create the stigmas around mental illness ("people with depression are weak"), which drives an overcoming sense of shame ("I feel depressed, I must be a weak person"). So, people stay silent, and the flywheel keeps spinning faster as the myths become more hardwired in our thinking.

Thankfully, embedded in the problem is also the simple solution: Address the root cause of the Isolation Cycle, the myths. Because, as we educate ourselves, the myths get debunked, the stigmas and

shame evaporate, the silence ends, and we start sharing our stories and getting help.

That's why the first element of mental health literacy training is understanding the basic facts. It starts with debunking the myths and learning to share our stories. And the next three elements are just as straightforward:

- Learning the signs to look for in colleagues that they may be experiencing challenges with their mental well-being and how to encourage them to get help.
- Adjusting your practice leadership and management approaches given the fact that so many of your teammates are struggling in silence.
- Mastering self-care for yourself as "1 in 5" means leaders too, and you can't be there for your team if you're not there for yourself first.

I know I'm preaching to the choir here, but dentists aren't just health care physicians; you're leaders and business owners. Leaders accountable for creating an environment where staff can show up as their full selves every day, be the best teammate they can be, and

perform at the top of their game. And, try as you might, you can't separate people from their emotions and feelings.

Currently, 20% of your teammates are struggling with fear, panic, and sadness, regularly finding themselves in a fight-or-flight mode, performing just barely well enough to get by. And, often, what we do as leaders makes their condition worse.

So, choose to become mental health literate. You'll not just improve your staff recruiting, retention, productivity, and engagement, but you'll never be prouder of yourself as a leader as you see the happiness and overall mental well-being of your colleagues thrive. 🎯

## References

1. <https://www.hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/priorities/workplace-well-being/index.html>
2. <https://www.nami.org/mhstats>
3. <https://www.nami.org/Advocacy/Policy-Priorities/Improving-Health/Mental-Health-Screening#:~:text=Mental%20health%20screenings%20are%20a,intervention%20is%20approximately%2011%20years>
4. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3133577/>
5. <https://www.apa.org/pubs/reports/work-well-being/2022-mental-health-support>



## WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Adam Nemer will be presenting on Thursday April 4 from 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at the Oregon Dental Conference, Course Codes T201 & T202.

**Mark your calendar and plan to attend!**

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## INDEX TO ADVERTISERS

#### COMPUTER SOFTWARE

iCoreConnect..... 22  
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#### DENTAL BROKERS

Consani Associates, Ltd ..... Inside Front Cover  
[www.mydentalbroker.com](http://www.mydentalbroker.com)  
Professional Practice Specialists..... 33  
[www.practicesales.com](http://www.practicesales.com)

#### DENTAL INSURANCE

The Dentists Insurance Company.....4  
[www.tdicinsurance.com](http://www.tdicinsurance.com)

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Artisan Dental Lab ..... Inside Back Cover  
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Assured Dental Laboratory, Inc. ....6  
[www.assuredentallab.com](http://www.assuredentallab.com)  
Custom Dental Prosthetics .....8  
<https://www.cdppdx.com/>  
O'Brien Dental Lab, Inc.....23  
[www.obriendentallab.com](http://www.obriendentallab.com)

#### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Kaiser Permanente Dental Care Program.....11  
[www.pda-dental.com](http://www.pda-dental.com)

#### FULL-SERVICE DENTAL

Willamette Dental Group.....7  
[www.willamettedental.com](http://www.willamettedental.com)

#### HANDPIECE REPAIR & SALES

Hayes Handpiece Repair Company.....19  
<https://hayeshandpiece.com/location/handpiece-repair-gresham-or/>

#### IT SPECIALISTS

Dentech .....11  
[www.Den-Tech.com](http://www.Den-Tech.com)

#### PRACTICE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

Astra Practice Partners.....12  
[www.astrapracticepartners.com](http://www.astrapracticepartners.com)

#### PRACTICE SALES

Omni Practice Group..... 34, Outside Back Cover  
[www.omni-pg.com](http://www.omni-pg.com)

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