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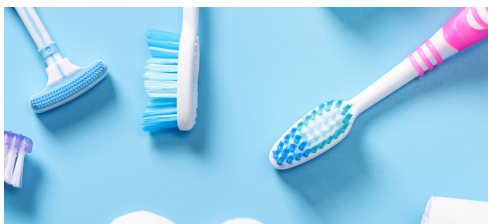
MDA NEWS

MAINE DENTAL ASSOCIATION

Summer 2024 | Volume 10 | Number 3

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SPREADING SMILES & GIVING BACK

The MDA ends summer on a high note by donating 180 goodie bags and over 600 dental products to support education and dental health in our community.

Organizations Supported:

Greater Augusta Back to School Program

Event Details: August 18, 2024

Location: Augusta Civic Center

The 29th Annual Scramble for Scholars

Event Details: September 6, 2024

Location: Samoset Resort

MDA MISSION STATEMENT:

To support members in achieving excellence in dentistry

MDA VISION STATEMENT:

To be leaders in oral health in Maine



FULL CIRCLE OF FAMILY & ORGANIZED DENTISTRY

Adan Saltz, DMD

President, Maine Dental Association

Nothing beats summer in Maine... especially this one! We kicked things off with another record-breaking year at the MDA Annual Convention. As you will see in Angie Bellefleur's article on page 9, this was the most well attended convention in the past several years. And we've enjoyed plenty of sun since!



I'd like to take the opportunity to share my story.

I'm a periodontist in South Portland, but the road there started at the Samoset. Actually, at the resort's kid's camp. My father, Dr. Barry Saltz, was involved in organized dentistry throughout my childhood. I remember taking weeks off from school to travel to different ADA meetings around the country, so he could fulfill his commitments to the MDA as he moved through the chairs. Those meetings were special for several reasons. I made friends, who are now fellow dentists, and made wonderful memories with my family. I'll never forget our trip to Hawaii. Dad was at meetings, while mom took my brother and me to the beach. (I still had two-week's worth of homework to do, but I definitely had more fun than my dad at that meeting.) I can't tell you the times I've been to the House of Delegates now and heard, "I remember when you were 'this tall'". The idea of giving back to my community was all I knew. It was a part of me. I am privileged to have had a father who set such an example for me.

The importance of mentorship is not lost on me either. The success of our organization depends on it. I'm thankful to Drs. Norma Desjardins and Shanna Gagnon, who have championed our Board the last two years and positioned us to be real leaders for oral healthcare in Maine. We joke that they are the "older sisters" I never had. That camaraderie and organizational stability are so important today. The MDA should be that platform of inclusion and belonging. I hope to continue building a supportive network, where we can meet members wherever they are personally or professionally.

Continued on page 3

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FULL CIRCLE OF FAMILY & ORGANIZED DENTISTRY

Continued from page 1

Our executive director, Therese Cahill, has made great strides to connect with different components across Maine in her short tenure. I'm excited to join her in those travels this year, listening to your ideas and concerns firsthand. First stop, Presque Isle!

Relationship building is what drew me to periodontics. Throughout my training, I treated several medically compromised patients with severe periodontitis and a rapidly declining quality of life. I will never forget a young girl who faced complete edentulism due to extremely poor hygiene, morbid obesity, and uncontrolled diabetes. She could not hold a toothbrush nor afford her insulin. But, I was determined to change things. After two years- full mouth periodontal surgery, prosthetic rehabilitation, weight loss, and an HbA1c reduction from 13% to 6%- she presented with a stable periodontium and the most infectious smile. She gained her life back. The relationship I made with her and her family through this process enriched my understanding of what is possible in dentistry, and specifically, periodontics. Our impact can be so far-reaching.

I'm proud to chair a Board that truly reflects our membership. We represent different regions of Maine, practice settings, and experience levels. And we continue to grow as an association as we strive to develop a leadership pipeline from dental schools to the tripartite. Our commitment to the next generation of dentists ensures the infusion of new perspectives, essential for the evolving needs of our community. Retaining and engaging members with varied backgrounds and experiences also enriches the association's collective knowledge and enhances its ability to advocate for your needs and patients at every level. This fosters collaboration and idea-sharing to elevate the mission and vision of the MDA.

As I look to the year ahead, I take one final look back. Some of you may remember, for better or worse, one president's gala when I sang with the band. I always felt at home with the MDA. That sense of family translated to a desire to give back and commitment to our association when I returned to Maine to practice.

I look forward to seeing you at your next component meeting!



Adam Saltz, DMD
President, Maine Dental Association



Figure 1: Family dinner with Frances Miliano, former executive director of the MDA, at an ADA Annual Meeting.



Figure 2: Snorkeling at the beach in Hawaii, while dad was at the ADA House of Delegates.



Figure 3: Dancing the night away at the president's gala.

2025 ANNUAL CONVENTION AND UPCOMING CONTINUING EDUCATION UPDATES

Therese Cahill

Executive Director, Maine Dental Association

Happy summer! Here's hoping you have been able to enjoy some of the fabulous weather we have been having this season. With all the rain last summer, I have been very grateful for the continued sun and warm temperatures!

As you can see by this edition of the MDA News, we are thrilled to share the highlights of our kickoff to summer... the 2024 MDA Annual Convention held in June. This year's event was a resounding success thanks to enthusiastic participation and support of our amazing members and their families, sponsors, exhibitors, volunteers, and, of course, the MDA Board. A special shoutout to our small but mighty staff of Angie Bellefleur and Sara Baird who put a tremendous amount of time and effort into the planning of this event all year long.

As we look ahead to next year, we are excited to announce that our convention will expand to a three full-day event June 12-14, 2025! This change is designed to provide even more opportunities for gaining CEs, connecting with other colleagues and partners, and enjoying all the beauty and activity Bar Harbor has to offer. Our esteemed keynote speaker schedule is as follows: Dr. Robert Marus is leading

off the convention on Thursday, speaking on cosmetic dentistry for the restorative practice; Friday will have Dr. Sook-Bin Woo presenting on oral pathology; and closing out the event on Saturday is Dr. Wael Garine discussing full arch restoration.

Additionally, we have heard from many of you that you missed not having MDA-offered CE events during the rest of the year. In addition to a third day of offerings at the convention, we are scheduling two other CE events, with the first being a virtual all-day session with Dr. Nathaniel Lawson presenting Materials and Techniques to Improve Your Conservative, Adhesive Dentistry on March 14, 2025. A fall session is in the works...more to come on that!

Mark your calendars for next year's events! We can't wait to build on this year's success and create an even more enriching experience for all attendees.

As always, if you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please feel free to contact me at tcahill@medental.org.

2024 HONOR WALL RECIPIENTS

The Honor Wall honors those who have given sustained service to the Maine Dental Association in a variety of capacities. It gives recognition to those who have sacrificed their free and professional time in significant ways. This year's recipients are Drs. Norma Desjardins & David Wicks.

Dr. Norma Desjardins has a broad level of dental practice experience, ranging from starting as a private practice owner in 1992, and later becoming a partner in a group practice (Academy Dental in Presque Isle). She and her husband then founded a non-profit dental clinic, she currently serves as the Executive Director to St. Apollonia Dental Clinic in Presque Isle, which she founded in 2011. She and her husband have worked incredibly hard to serve the underserved in the northern most area of the state – a notoriously difficult area to recruit dentists. In fact, Norma is not only the Executive Director – she is often the practicing dentist in St. Apollonia. During her time as President of the MDA, Norma served on all of the MDA Committees and worked tirelessly in her efforts. In

particular, she devoted a huge amount of time and effort to MaineCare – serving on the MaineCare Task Force and giving incredible insight into MaineCare reform.

Dr. David Wicks was recognized for his outstanding contributions to organized dentistry throughout his career. Dr. Wicks has demonstrated exceptional leadership, mentorship, and advocacy. Most recently as our long-term delegate— a position he filled without reservation to best support the needs of the MDA. His willingness to support and guide new dentists exemplifies his passion for advancing the profession and nurturing future talent. David's selfless nature and eagerness to assist wherever needed have left an indelible mark on colleagues and the broader dental community at the local, state, and national levels. His integrity, expertise, and genuine care make him a truly deserving candidate for this prestigious honor, celebrating a lifetime of service and dedication to the field of dentistry.

Materials and Techniques to Improve Your Conservative, Adhesive Dentistry

Speaker: Dr. Nathaniel Lawson, DMD, PhD
Friday, March 14, 2025
Virtual Session - 9am - 4pm



Be on the lookout for our ENews updates! Registration details will be announced at a later date.




Dr. Norma Desjardins receiving the Honor Wall award.



Dr. David Wicks receiving the Honor Wall award.


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WHY ORGANIZED DENTISTRY?

Serving as Officers for the 2024-2025 MDA Board of Directors are Dr. Adam Saltz as President, Dr. Matthew Lawler as President-Elect, Dr. Hena Patel as Vice-President, Dr. Dean Tourigny as Secretary, and Dr. David Kerr as Treasurer.



PRESIDENT

“It’s fun meeting dentists across the state and building relationships that last a lifetime! I appreciate the challenge of translating their concerns into action to better serve patients and protect their ability to practice unencumbered.”

- Dr. Adam Saltz



PRESIDENT-ELECT

“I got into organized dentistry in residency as a way to learn about national issues surrounding dental and specialty care. I have continued to be involved over the years in hopes to provide the dental community with knowledge of how national decisions and policies influence our individual offices, as well as attempt to make our days more patient centric.”

- Dr. Matthew Lawler



VICE-PRESIDENT

“I became involved in organized dentistry because I am a firm believer in advocating for our profession and our patients. We get what we give in this profession, and organized dentistry plays a large role in making dentistry better for dentists.”

- Dr. Hena Patel



SECRETARY

When I joined the tripartite in 1988, it was assumed that as a professional I would become a member. I felt a responsibility to my profession and my colleagues to participate. What I've found is that whatever I've given to organized dentistry over these many years, the returns to me have been 10 fold. I've been blessed with the people I have met and the experiences I've had.

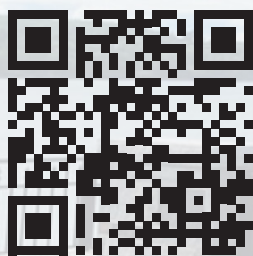
- Dr. Dean Tourigny



TREASURER

“There are numerous reasons why I am deeply involved in organized dentistry. However, if I were to highlight the two most significant ones, they would be the professional support it gives me and the sense of community it fosters. Organized dentistry provides a platform for us to interact as colleagues, preventing us from becoming isolated practitioners. The Maine Dental Association (MDA) plays a crucial role in enhancing my skills as a practitioner, fostering a supportive network among peers. Furthermore, I firmly believe that as professionals, we have a responsibility to give back to our community and contribute to improving the oral health of Maine's residents. The MDA serves as an essential conduit in facilitating this contribution.”

- Dr. David Kerr



2024 ANNUAL CONVENTION ONLINE GALLERY

Scan the QR Code to the left to check out our online gallery! Looking to submit your photos? Email Sara Baird at sbaird@medental.org

SCAN HERE

www.medentalce.org/acgallery

ORAL DISEASES' IMPACT ON GENERAL HEALTH, ECONOMY

In an audio interview with Radio Davos, the podcast from the World Economic Forum, Marko Vujicic, Ph.D., Chief Economist and Vice President of the ADA's Health Policy Institute, discussed the impact of oral health across the globe and how much its neglect is costing the economy.

“When you look at the economic burden globally, it’s about a \$710 billion tac every year,” stressed Dr. Vujicic.

The interview also detailed findings from a new report co-authored by Dr. Vujicic , *The Economic Rationale for a Global Commitment to Invest in Oral Health*, which examined the potential returns on investing more in oral health beyond healthier mouths.

“When oral health improves, for example among diabetes,

pregnant people, people with cardiovascular disease [and] people with dementia, their health care costs go down,” Dr. Vujicic underscored. “So, if we invest in oral health, we see health care costs savings in other parts of the health care system,” he concluded.

Scan QR Code to the right to access full podcast & *The Economic Rationale for a Global Commitment to Invest in Oral Health*



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WHEN DATA DOESN'T TELL THE FULL STORY

Angie Bellefleur
Deputy Director, Maine Dental Association

It is hard to describe the atmosphere at the 2024 Maine Dental Association Annual Convention. As the Deputy Director, my role largely focuses on ensuring productivity and performance and supporting the implementation of the strategic business plan. It goes without saying all of my work must be membership and data-driven. I invest many hours analyzing our program details to assist the MDA Board in having objective data and concrete evidence to effectively make decisions to advance the mission and vision of the MDA. However, when asked to describe how the event went this year, I found the data only told part of the story.

The weekend of June 13-15, we had over 250 members, partners, exhibitors, staff, and special guests attend the event. This was 14% higher than last year. In addition to offering 17 professional development sessions, 292 unique continuing education certificates issued representing 944 hours of professional development for the Maine workforce. The annual business meeting consisted of guest speakers, the president's report, financial status, membership report, and election of 2024 officers. Data and facts support the claim that this year's event was bigger and better than anticipated! Nonetheless, the data does not show the warmth of the red sunset overlooking Frenchman's Bay on Friday night after the sold-out lobster bake.

When digging into the course evaluations, we see feedback from attendees that demonstrates the great success of the local, state, and national level speakers. Quotes like "Fantastic lecturer", "He was phenomenal and very real." and "Very entertaining and informative" are examples of the comments in the close to 100 evaluations given by attendees. (The statisticians reading this know how high those survey response results are!). While we are proud the members feel their feedback is heard and responded to, it

does not show the hugs, handshakes, and cheers throughout the convention, especially during the award ceremony honoring the lifetime of dedication Dr. Norma Desjardins and Dr. David Wicks have given to earn their place on the MDA Honor Wall for their contributions to organized dentistry in Maine.

Whether you are a student, mid-career, non-practicing dentist, or a business partner, you likely thought, "is it truly worth my time to go this year?" The cost, time, and competing demands require everyone to use evidence and data to inform their decision to attend. Arguably the most obvious benefit of a convention is the ability to network. Relationships, connections, and time with friends, and family (many make it a full family affair) are hard to show on a spreadsheet. The wisdom gained from asking that colleague a clinical question you would not usually see because they work 5 hours away has an advantage that cannot be assessed through data. The business resource that will save your practice 5% off your annual insurance rate has financial benefits. The smiles and laughter you shared with your work family will make those hard Monday mornings a little easier. Objective data is critical but does not tell the full story. We need connections to be fully successful and those moments develop in ways we can't add to spreadsheets.

The Annual Convention is greater than the sum of its parts. It is our members and our partners that enhance our ability to host this event each year. It is our members' success and joy that make this an unforgettable event. Whether you prefer the term vibe, atmosphere, or buzz, mark your calendar for June 12-14, 2025 for the MDA Annual Convention to come to see for yourself those intangible qualities that data doesn't tell you.



ANNUAL CONVENTION



Photo Credit(s): Megan Gonzalez, MDA Staff & Attendees







Photo Credits: Megan Gonzalez

WHY KIDS CONVENTION?

*Sara Baird
Membership & Communications Director, Maine Dental Association*

Thanks to months of preparation and feedback, the 2024 Kids Convention proved to be a great success. We received an overwhelming response, with 27 individuals RSVPing for the event, ranging in age from 1 to 17... this is more than quadruple the amount who attended last year! This presented challenges during the planning stages, but we took pleasure in meeting the expectations of attendees across all age groups.

It wasn't solely about the glitz and glamour of Taylor Swift bracelets, vibrant tie-dye, captivating magic show, or Mario Kart racing. The Kids Convention centers on fostering stronger relationships, making work more personal, and enhancing the overall work-life balance... and who knows, maybe a future Maine dentist?

In her article on page 9, Angie Bellefleur talks about the feel and what data can't always show. The Kids Convention is an event where the data may not be as impressive to some, but pictures are worth 1,000 words. The laughter, excitement, and creativity the children brought to the event were contagious!

Thank you all for coming. We hope to see you and your family at the 2025 Annual Convention!



AN IMPORTANT UPDATE FOR MAINE DENTISTS

Dr. Jonathan Knapp
ADA First District Trustee

Greetings, fellow ADA members!

This note brings exciting news and resources to support your dental practice and well-being.

- The fight for insurance reform continues! We've seen a surge of legislation (over 151 bills filed in five years) aimed at improving insurance practices. Massachusetts's lead on strong MLR requirements is being reinforced by an unrelenting push in Connecticut and successful passage of a comprehensive analysis MLR bill in Rhode Island. Other states across the US are making progress on MLR, network leasing, virtual credit card payments, and more.
- Recognizing the dental workforce crisis, the ADA is actively developing and offering solutions. Resources on the website can help you recruit and retain staff. We're also aggressively advocating for key workforce bills in Congress, and the ADA SPA program continues to provide funding to states pursuing workforce initiatives.

Innovation at Your Doorstep:

- The ADA Forsyth Institute, located right in our own backyard in Somerville, MA, is a national and international powerhouse for oral health research. Don't miss Dentech, their annual innovation event, on October 24th and 25th! This "Shark Tank" style competition brings together entrepreneurs and investors, fostering cutting-edge solutions.
- The proximity of Forsyth offers unique benefits for New England dentists. We'll see expanded opportunities for CE course providers, expansion of the ADA Seal program for public facing products, and the launch of a new "Forsyth Certified" program for the profession, ensuring the quality and safety of dental materials, products, equipment and technology, through rigorous testing, and the application of ADA developed standards.

Enhanced ADA Membership:

- The ADA Member App is getting a major upgrade! As we transition to our new customer relationship management (CRM) system, the ADA app will become a powerful tool tailored to your individual needs. Whether you're interested in the latest clinical

procedures, advocacy, or other specific areas, the app will provide personally tailored information, products, resources and CE opportunities – all in the palm of your hand!

- We're exploring new membership models to increase value and affordability. Similar to the efforts in many states, we're looking at monthly payment and auto-renewal options, as well as lowering the overall dues rates.
- Excitingly, the ADA has launched a credit union exclusively for members, offering competitive rates for loan products and financial services.
- Lastly, we've closed on the sale of our headquarters building at 211 E. Chicago Ave, to the Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago. Early in 2025, we will move into our customized, newly built out space at 401 N. Michigan Ave, right on the Chicago River near the Wrigley Building and the Tribune Tower, two of Chicago's architectural icons.

Prioritizing Your Well-being:

- Dentistry can be demanding, so taking care of yourself is crucial. The ADA provides a wide range of wellness resources, accessible at <https://www.ada.org/en/resources/practice/wellness>.
- We encourage you to utilize the free, validated Well-Being Index self-assessment tool. This resource, licensed from the Mayo Clinic, helps you assess your well-being and track progress over time. It is completely free for all members, including dental students.
- Remember, we're in this together. Let's check in on each other and prioritize our collective well-being.

As always, I am honored to represent you, to support you, and to continue to advocate for a strong dental profession in New England and beyond!





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Source: 2024 Delta Dental Data

FROM THE LENS OF A NEW DENTIST

Interview with Drs. Hena Patel & Kailee Williams

Membership & Communications Director Sara Baird recently spoke with Dr. Hena Patel, Vice-President of the MDA, and Dr. Kailee Williams, Central Region Representative. The purpose of this discussion was to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences and perspectives of new dentists, as well as explore the significant influence organized dentistry has had on Dr. Patel's & Dr. Williams' professional journey.

Sara: Who do you turn to when needing support within the profession?

Dr. Patel: I am so fortunate to have a great group of dental colleagues I can talk to and learn from. Being from Florida, I was concerned about developing connections when I chose to practice in Maine. The dental community in Maine exhibits a comradery that is unique, which has given me the opportunity to find my community and have the support I need to successfully practice.

Dr. Williams: I am very lucky to have been able to keep in touch with some great faculty from UNE CDM that have provided me with some great mentorship. Additionally, maintaining my close friendships from dental school and sharing experiences has been really important, especially when transitioning from school and having to deal with the pandemic so early into practice.

Sara: What drew you to Maine and your current office location?

Dr. Patel: The first question really ties into this question. Maine is such a beautiful state, with something for every interest. Maine is a great place to practice dentistry. The dental community is small enough where you can learn from so many colleagues, find opportunities, and make genuine friendships. Knowing that I can call or text a colleague for input or interdisciplinary care without judgment is why I think Maine is the BEST place to work.

Dr. Williams: I fell in love with Maine as a dental student and felt like there were a lot of opportunities to be involved in and work in public health!

Sara: When did you know that organized dentistry was right or you?

Dr. Patel: I never thought I would be involved in organized dentistry until I realized how much it impacts our day-to-day work. I learned about the legislative impact organized dentistry has and knew it was something I wanted to do. Organized dentistry allows dentists to collectively advocate for important issues affecting the profession, such as healthcare policies, insurance regulations, and patient rights.

Dr. Williams: I was very involved in ASDA as a dental student and appreciated the knowledge and networking that I was able to access there. The longer I have been in practice, the more I have felt like I want to have my voice heard when it comes to shaping the profession moving forward.

Sara: Where do you hope to see your profession in 5 years?

Dr. Patel: I hope to see more collaboration and resources for the betterment of this profession. Dentistry is a very difficult career in many ways (physically, mentally, financially), and I hope that other dentists want to continue making this a great profession.

Dr. Williams: I plan to be continuing my career in public health in Maine and working to expand access to care for Maine people.

Continued on page 16

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SAY HELLO TO SEESAW

FROM THE LENS OF A NEW DENTIST

Continued from page 15

Sara: How do you plan on supporting this vision in your current position as a dentist?

Dr. Patel: I want to increase involvement of dentists in the state, so they too can participate in the betterment of this career. We need to know what the members want to make changes for them. Increasing involvement is one way to ask members what their needs are in this profession.


Dr. Williams: As a dentist I want to continue to be a mentor and resource for new dentists interested in public health in Maine and continue to bring the perspective of a provider in this type of practice to the board, as well as the perspective of a new dentist.

Sara: What has surprised you the most in organized dentistry?

Dr. Patel: The influence that organized dentistry can have

on shaping healthcare policies and regulations has been surprising. I never understood the advocacy aspect until I was put in a position to advocate for dentists and patients. Organized dentistry plays a crucial role in advocating for dentists' interests, influencing legislation related to insurance coverage, licensure requirements, and public health initiatives. This advocacy work not only benefits dental professionals but also impacts the accessibility and quality of dental care for patients.

Dr. Williams: I think the biggest thing I didn't realize I was missing was the connection to other providers. COVID was incredibly isolating and it feels like it has only been in the last couple of years that I have been able to re-establish connections and make new ones, often through the MDA, that have helped me really feel supported and excited about the next phase of my career.



Dental Care for People Living with Serious Mental Illness and/or Substance Use Disorder

A Toolkit for Dentists and Other Oral Health Professionals

©Nuttapong Punna via Canva.com

DOWNLOAD YOUR FREE TOOLKIT TODAY

Jourdan Hennick

This toolkit is not designed to make you a mental health professional or therapist, and you don't have to know someone's diagnosis to be supportive. The goal of this guide is to:

- Give oral health professionals a baseline of knowledge to understand how mental illness and substance use disorders may show up in the dental clinic.
- Help staff know what might get in the way of routine hygiene for people with various diagnoses.
- Most importantly, to create ease for everyone involved in dental care, providers and patients alike.

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Scan the QR Code to access this toolkit today.



www.medental.org/membership/resources

EDUCATING LONG-TERM CARE STAFF ON OLDER ADULT ORAL HEALTH: MAINE'S ORAL TEAM-BASED INITIATIVE VITAL ACCESS TO EDUCATION (MOTIVATE) PROGRAM

Jennifer A. Crittenden PhD, MSW, Labrini I. Nelligan MS, Denise O'Connell MSW, LCSW, CCM, CCP, Leonard Brennan DMD

Abstract

Introduction:

The oral health status of older adults in the United States is a public health crisis and a silent epidemic. Maine's Oral Team-Based Initiative Vital Access to Education (MOTIVATE) Program is an innovative interprofessional oral health program aimed at enhancing oral health education and practice of interprofessional health care teams in nursing homes. Using a blended learning model, a combination of in-person and online learning, this program provides a foundation from which to implement evidenced based oral care in nursing homes.

Methods:

Learning outcomes were assessed via a three-part timed series survey. A set of self-report assessment items measured skills implemented at baseline and post-training.

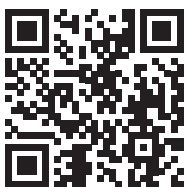
Results:

Learning domain scores increased over time from baseline to post-training. Confidence in providing oral healthcare and role clarity in providing oral health care improved over time. Staff identified using new skills in daily oral care and communication across the interprofessional team.

Discussion:

The MOTIVATE program is an effective collaborative-based model for developing oral health competencies and promoting evidence-based oral health care in nursing homes.

Scan below to access the full article.



<https://doi.org/10.1111/jphd.12630>



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2024-2025 MDA BOARD MEETINGS

September 6, 2024
November 22, 2024
January 10, 2025
March 7, 2025
May 2, 2025

MDA Headquarters
29 Association Drive
Manchester, ME 04351

Annual Business Meeting
June 12, 2025 in Bar Harbor



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WORD OF MOUTH HAS GONE DARK AND DIGITAL

Eric Kaufman
ProSites

Your online reputation matters like it always has. Patients trade experiences, collect what info they can, and then make their dental decisions. The big thing that's changed is that it's now almost entirely done digitally, at an enormous scale, and with incredible reach. If a patient leaves a review on a reviews site, it's exposed to more than just that person's friends and family. The audience extends exponentially to strangers everywhere.

With the vastness and importance of online reviews and digital word-of-mouth comes the need for tools to manage them quickly and efficiently — to use them for your practice, and to keep them from doing harm to your practice. The automation possibilities that exist now are no longer optional — they're indispensable. They can initiate review requests, consolidate reviews from different sites into a single platform, and notify you when your attention is needed, so you can attend to concerns quickly and all in one place.

Online reviews serve as a key component of a complete online presence, and the backbone of your digital word-of-mouth efforts. A reviews solution is, therefore, a must-have when crafting a comprehensive digital marketing strategy. Let's explore further how reviews and word-of-mouth work and how dentists can leverage the value of online reviews within a complete digital marketing solution to attract and retain patients.

Digital Word-of-Mouth Empowered by Human Conversation

It's important to note that the impact of positive review word of mouth goes beyond what's publicly visible on reviews sites. Dark Social refers to private communications that take place in emails and private messages within digital platforms. Much of the value of a practice's reputation manifests from this form of person-to-person referral working behind the scenes. Although not measurable by analytics, it is estimated to be responsible for 95% of your web traffic. So, when you make the extra effort to cultivate a healthy reviews presence, keep in mind that the value of those efforts branches off and continues to work for you.

Reviews Influence Patients

Online reviews are powerfully persuasive to prospective patients, offering a glimpse into the patient experience and the quality of care provided. According to maxill.

com, 70% of dental patients say online ratings and reviews influence their choice of dentist. Just like with verbal recommendations, positive online reviews attract new patients and foster trust, while negative reviews can sow doubt and erode confidence. To solidify this trust, you must actively manage your online reputation by encouraging positive reviews and promptly address any concerns raised by patients by taking the conversation offline as quickly as possible while remaining attentive to their concerns in the public eye.

ReviewTrackers reports that 51% of customers expect businesses to respond to reviews within 7 days. Imagine dealing with a steady stream of reviews across multiple platforms. Manually keeping up with this task can be challenging amidst the usual tasks of operating a practice. But failing to keep on top of things can result in undesired consequences — where one negative review drives prospective patients to your nearest competitor. One option for practices looking to simplify and consolidate tasks is a professional reviews management solution that can provide incredible time savings. These solutions ensure that action items are addressed without delay and in accordance with information provided by real-time analytics, and can save time.

Cultivate a Culture That Encourages Positive Reviews

You can begin to create a culture of open communication among patients that encourages positive reviews by sending follow-up emails, post-appointment surveys, and direct requests during visits to prompt patients to leave reviews. Highlighting positive feedback on a practice's website and social media platforms improves their visibility and underscores the practice's dedication to patient satisfaction.

Address Negative Feedback Right Away

Negative reviews are inevitable, but how you respond to them can shape the narrative. Unlike traditional spoken word-of-mouth, negative online reviews don't go away. You can't hope that people move on and forget about the issue. The post persists and can influence every potential new patient that comes along.

But the benefit of online reviews is that now you can control and reshape your brand image with a carefully crafted response that speaks volumes to help change a prospective new patient's feelings about your practice.

Continued on page 21



ANNUAL CONVENTION

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Robert Marus
DDS, AAACD, FICD



Sook-Bin Woo
DMD



Wael Garine
DDS

2025 AGENDA

Thursday, June 12, 2025

- Keynote speaker to address Cosmetic Dentistry for the Restorative Practice
- Annual Business Meeting

Friday, June 13, 2025

- Keynote speaker to address oral ulcers, fungal infections and Leukoplakia updated
- Exhibitor Hall
- Lobster Bake

Saturday, June 14, 2025

- Keynote speaker to address the full arch restoration

3

FULL DAY KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Harborside Hotel, Spa & Marina
Bar Harbor, ME



www.medentalce.org



207-622-7900

WORD OF MOUTH HAS GONE DARK AND DIGITAL

Continued from page 19

Imagine if they'd only read the initial bad review without your clarifying or sympathetic response.

Timely and tactful responses to negative feedback demonstrate a commitment to addressing patient concerns and improving the overall experience. By addressing issues publicly and offering solutions, you can reduce the impact of negative reviews and showcase your dedication to patient care.

As long as you're receiving a steady stream of positive reviews, don't be afraid of a few bad ones. If the issues raised are minor and followed up by a sincere response, they can help your practice's reputation. People scanning through reviews tend to distrust a situation where they see nothing but perfect reviews. A few minor issues that have been addressed paint a more realistic picture and go further to establish trust.

Set Up a Complete Online Presence

A robust digital presence is essential for dentists seeking to stand out amidst fierce competition. To compete, a practice needs a holistic online presence that goes beyond simply having a professional website.

Here's what you need to fill out your online presence:

- Website - Start with an expertly crafted, brand-specific customized website.
- SEO - Make sure your site is optimized for peak visibility and reaches your target audience.
- Social Media - Leverage social media channels to engage with patients, share valuable content, and showcase your expertise.
- Review Management - Take control of your online reputation by managing feedback on review platforms.

Here's how to manage your reviews:

- Monitor and Adapt - Reputation management requires regular attention for assessment, adjustment, and action. Regularly monitor your online reputation across review platforms, social media channels, and online forums. Customized solutions and services can streamline this process, providing real-time alerts for new reviews and mentions and can consolidate content across platforms into a single interface.
- Respond Quickly - Stay proactive and respond quickly to online feedback to prevent issues from escalating to safeguard your online reputation. Engage with patients in real-time to demonstrate your commitment, which helps sustain a positive online reputation.

- Bring in the Pros - Use a professional dental marketing firm to ensure that your complete portfolio of solutions operate in harmony with one another, enhancing each component.

In the Context of Digital Word-of-Mouth

Online reviews are pivotal to shaping patient perceptions and driving practice success. Word-of-mouth is being digitally driven faster and further than ever before, and now requires the support of a dedicated marketing solution. By adding an online reviews solution to a comprehensive digital marketing strategy, you can attract and retain patients, differentiate your practice, and thrive amidst an evolving industry.

Beyond managing online reviews, you've got to keep up with the latest digital marketing strategies to maintain a competitive edge. This includes staying up to date with trends in search engine optimization (SEO), content marketing, and social media advertising. By embracing a holistic digital marketing approach that's proactive and practice-specific, you can stay ahead of the curve and effectively reach and engage with patients, driving practice growth and success.

MDA's Preferred Business Partner ProSites delivers just the kind of reviews solution that's woven seamlessly into a complete online presence, essential for keeping up with current digital marketing best practices. MDA members can learn more at prosites.com/MaineDental.

Your competition is up to date — are you?



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Eric Kaufman is a writer and editor with creative, marketing, instructional design, and technical writing experience. As a content writer for ProSites, Eric applies his experience with adult learning principles to help readers absorb information and ensure that it sticks. His empathetic writing philosophy focuses on reaching his audience by identifying backgrounds, interests, and goals.

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www.medentalce.org/events



Sudoku #1113 (Medium)

7	6					5		2
		8	5					
2							7	4
			3				4	
3	7		6	4				
	9						1	
	5	1		7				
			8					6

Answers can be found on page 24



YORK COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

EXPANDED FUNCTION DENTAL AUXILIARY

August 30 - December 6, 2024
Fridays 8am-4pm

Free Workforce Training

The Expanded Function Dental Auxiliary training program prepares Certified Dental Assistants or Registered Dental Hygienists to become more valuable team members in their office by being competent and confident in a full range of reversible procedures as prescribed by the Statutes of the State of Maine under Direct Supervision.

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MDA members can take advantage of exclusive deals and discounts offered through the Preferred Business Partner Program. The program is designed for greater visibility and recognition of top-performing partners who deliver exceptional services for our members. Designed with membership in mind, we pair members with companies that can help them provide quality products and services to their businesses, employees, and patients. Preferred Business Partner Program benefits members and the association as the program produces revenue for the MDA, greater participation means more revenue for the association to add value to the MDA membership.

To inquire about becoming an approved Preferred Business Partner, contact: Angie Bellefleur, Deputy Director
abellefleur@medental.org or 207-622-7900

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Jordyn Levitas
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jordyn@torchdental.com
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JPoulin@AndroscogginBank.com
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Bangor Payroll, a division of Bangor Savings Bank, is one of New England's largest payroll and HR service providers. For more than 20 years, it has been providing simplification and streamlining.

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Nick Dyer
207-332-8466
nicholas.dyer@bangor.com
www.bangor.com/payroll



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Endorsed by the MDA and ADA. Dental practices save an average of \$2,768/24% annually in fees over prior processors. Fax or email a credit-card processing to Compare Rates@BestCardTeam.com or 866-717-7247 for a no-obligation savings analysis.

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Aaron Rich
Business and Professional Lending
Relationship Manager
arich@mtb.com
207-828-3035



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207-671-2216
james.kachmar@ddsteam.net

Tyler DeStefano
978-907-6002
Tyler.Destefano@ddsteam.net
www.ddsteam.net

Sudoku #1113 (Medium)

7	6	9	4	1	3	5	8	2
1	4	8	5	2	7	3	6	9
2	3	5	8	6	9	1	7	4
5	1	6	3	9	8	2	4	7
3	7	2	6	4	1	8	9	5
8	9	4	7	5	2	6	1	3
4	5	1	2	7	6	9	3	8
6	8	7	9	3	5	4	2	1
9	2	3	1	8	4	7	5	6

Answers to Puzzle from page 22



EQUITABLE

Equitable
We know the path to fulfillment begins with getting to know who you are, what matters to you and how you've made decisions so far. From there, we guide you toward a personalized strategy to help you make smart choices and a financial portfolio designed to give you confidence. As experienced financial professionals alongside you, we'll be ready with answers about options that can help you make the most of what you've earned and saved.

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- Business Continuation Programs
- Employee Benefits/Retirement Plans
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Contact:
Equitable Advisors
Caleb Allen, Financial Advisor
207-450-1900
Caleb.allen@equitable.com
www.equitable.com



USI Insurance Services/PPP
USI Insurance Services is the agent who brings the Professional Protector Plan for Dentists to the MDA, and provides insurance in the form of professional liability (malpractice), general liability, property, employment liability, cyber liability, plus many other coverages. MDA members receive a 5% discount on their professional liability insurance. Dentists purchasing practices for the first time, new graduates, and dentists who work part time receive special discounts.

Contact:
Kathleen Sukley, kathleen.sukley@usi.com
Jill Ketchen, jill.ketchen@usi.com
Bailey Imbus, bailey.imbus@usi.com

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The Malloy Firm has helped dentists statewide with mergers and acquisitions, and other matters like associate contracts, non-compete agreements, loan and real estate transactions, and employee relations and compliance. We also provide estate planning and wealth preservation services.

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Contact:
Nicole Rongo
P: 585-427-0020
E: nicoler@cgcicompany.com
www.cgidigital.com

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ProSites

ProSites, Inc. is the technology leader in website design and digital marketing for dental professionals. In addition to content for patients, their sites include features that help streamline patient communications and increase appointment requests. For more, and to request a free demo.

Contact:

888-932-3644
www.prosites.com/MaineDental/



RCPM Resources

RCPM Resources provides a single solution to meet your dental office's environmental, health, and safety compliance requirements. Kevin McManus, RCPM's principal, has over 25 years of experience working with the ADA, state dental societies, and individual dental practices on waste management and health and safety/infection control training to meet state and federal regulations.

Contact:

Kevin McManus
781-254-5727
kmcmanus@rcpm.llc



Warp + Weft

Warp + Weft is a full-service branding and marketing agency dedicated to helping ambitious businesses craft authentic, beloved brands and impactful brand experiences. From full-blown brand identity to social media management, website development to marketing and advertising campaigns, we help businesses make their mark on the world while connecting them with the right customers, in the right way, and at the right time.

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Ashley Eaton
207-485-4505
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Open Positions

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Beautiful Midcoast Maine, the way life should be! Lincoln County Dental, Inc. is a mission driven nonprofit oral health organization. We are seeking a General Dentist to join our team and help us support the health of our communities in Lincoln County. At Lincoln County Dental, we believe that all people deserve access to high quality, compassionate, comprehensive oral health care. For further information about our organization please visit www.lcdental.org

We are seeking a dentist with excellent clinical skills, exceptional interpersonal communication ability and a passion for ensuring access to high quality care to join our patient

centered organization. We look forward to working together to make a difference in our communities. An active State of Maine license to practice Dentistry is required. Our preferred candidates will be experienced or have completed an accredited dental residency program. Lincoln County Dental offers a competitive wage, commensurate with experience, and prorated benefits.

Please submit CVs and letters of inquiry to jimolson@tidewater.net

Open Positions

Seeking Full-time Associate Dentist – Augusta

Gentle Family Dentistry – Augusta is a thriving practice with 1 ½ Dentists and 4 Hygienists, renowned for providing premier dental care. We are seeking a full-time Associate Dentist to join our dynamic team. Our practice accepts only 3 insurances, and our Dentists are booked months in advance, reflecting our strong patient demand.

Benefits of Joining Our Team:

- Excellent mentorship opportunities from experienced practitioners
- Supportive network of providers in the area
- Competitive pay rate commensurate with experience

If you are passionate about delivering exceptional dental care and are eager to grow in a supportive environment, we want to hear from you.

Please contact Mike at mike@beautifulsmile.com to apply or learn more about this exciting opportunity.

General Dentist Wanted - Bangor

Creative Dental Solutions in Bangor, ME, a well-established practice committed to excellence, is seeking a full-time General Dentist to join our team. Our office is equipped with state-of-the-art technology including Cerec Primescan & Primemill, Laser, and CBCT, and operates on a Fee-For-Service basis.

Position Details:

- Full-time General Dentist position
- 4-day work week
- Competitive pay rate based on experience
- Great benefits package offered

Why Join Us:

- Mentorship opportunities with experienced practitioners
- Supportive network of providers in

the local area

- Opportunity to work in a progressive, digital practice environment

If you are a motivated dentist dedicated to providing high-quality care and interested in joining a practice known for its commitment to innovation and patient satisfaction, we encourage you to apply. To apply or learn more, contact Hyunjin at hyunjin@gmail.com.

Full-time Staff Dentist Opening

Waterville Community Dental Center, a nonprofit dental center in its 25th year of service to the community, is seeking a full-time staff dentist. Our mission is to provide quality dental care to underserved and underinsured residents of Central Maine. We are looking for a candidate who shares our mission and is passionate about rural community healthcare. Our office provides a full range of services, including restorative, basic oral surgery, endodontics, and removable and fixed prosthodontics. Full-time and part-time providers at this practice are eligible for the National Health Service Corps loan repayment program as well as state and federal repayment options such as FAME and PSLF. We will consider a part-time applicant as well.

Contact:

Jessica Pelotte
jessica.pelotte@communitydental.org

Join Our Team: Associate Dentist Opportunity in Lewiston

Joy Dentistry - Lewiston is a newly updated and thriving practice seeking a full-time Associate Dentist to join our dedicated team. With one Doctor, three Hygienists, one Assistant, and one EFDA, we are committed to delivering premier dental care.

About the Position

We are looking for an experienced

Associate Dentist who is passionate about providing exceptional patient care. As a full-time member of our team, you will have the opportunity to work in a:

- Fully state-of-the-art digital practice with Lasers and CBCT
- Collaborative environment with excellent mentorship
- Competitive pay rate based on your experience

If You're Interested

If you're an experienced Associate Dentist looking for a rewarding career in a progressive dental practice, we encourage you to apply. Contact sopodentist@gmail.com to take the next step in your career journey.

Exciting Opportunity for Associate Dentist - South Portland

A thriving practice known for providing premier dental care. We are seeking a full-time Associate Dentist to join our team.

About Us:

- Well-established practice with one Doctor and four Hygienists
- We accept only 3 insurances, ensuring focused patient care
- Doctors are booked months in advance, highlighting strong patient demand

Position Details:

- Full-time Associate Dentist position
- Competitive pay rate based on experience
- Excellent mentorship and support from experienced practitioners
- Network of providers in the area for additional professional support

If you are a dedicated Associate Dentist eager to contribute to a busy practice and deliver exceptional patient care, we invite you to apply. Contact cormiermike48@gmail.com to learn more.

Open Positions

Dentist / Associate Opening

Maine Center For Dental Medicine
Skowhegan, ME

State-of-the-art, fee-for-service biological general dental practice seeking motivated dentist/associate. Competitive compensation & benefits. Full-time, 4-day. Will train & mentor the right person

Contact: Dr. Khan
DDSIMAM@AOL.COM
646-641-4880

PT/FT Hygienist

We are seeking an upbeat, energetic RDH with great people and clinical skills for our periodontal practice. We offer competitive pay and benefits. We are also looking to add more hours to Fridays. If you are looking to add more hours to your current schedule, we can be flexible.

Contact: Jessica 207-941-2300
info@NePerio.us

Part-Time Associate General Dentist

We are a 3-doctor dental group practice with 25 employees looking for part-time associate to work anywhere from 2-3 days/week 7am-5pm. We have been in business since 1915 with 4 generations of dentists all while providing our patients with the newest in technology and great customer service!

We are looking for someone who is excited about dentistry, cares for people, is hungry to grow professionally and will fit in with our long-term staff and team culture! The ideal candidate is proficient in most aspects of general dentistry with at least two (2) year of experience. Having skills/interests in one or more specialty areas including Endodontics, Orthodontics, Oral Surgery, periodontist, Sedation, and/or

Pediatrics would be an added benefit.

Our 16 operatory office is state of the art and fully digital, including digital radiographs, Trios Intraoral scanners, and CBCT machine. We are mostly fee for service and only in network with Delta Dental insurance. The owners love teaching and will help guide and mentor anyone looking to improve their clinical skills. If you are looking to join a great culture with unlimited opportunities and a fun environment then this might be the place for you!

Qualified applicants should submit a curriculum vitae and cover letter by email to:

mjourver@taylorbrookdental.com
Taylor Brook Dental Associates
27 Millett Drive
Auburn, ME 04210

Full Time Associate Dentist

Second generation family office looking for a full time associate. Senior doctor is transitioning into retirement and will be in the office one day a week in 2025. Office is open Monday-Thursday. We are a rapidly growing office, booking out restorative dentistry and new patients for five to six months. We currently refer out a majority of extractions, implants, root canals, and pediatric dentistry. Our ideal associate will be able to expand the services that we currently offer. Our office is equipped with primescan, primemill, and a brand new primeprint.

Father daughter dental office located rural Waterboro, Maine. Office has been in the same location for 42 years. Our staff is well established and high performing. We have recently expanded and renovated our office. Over the last couple of years, we have integrated digital dentistry into our daily workflows. Our office has a long history of conservative gold inlays/onlays and are now performing conservative/biomimetic porcelain inlays/onlays. Both doctors are

continuously expanding our skills sets with high quality continuing education. We have a wonderful local reputation. Email resume to waterborodentist@gmail.com

For Sale

Dental Equipment Sale - Bangor, ME

For sale: (7) operatory packages featuring high-quality equipment used daily in a Bangor, ME dental office.

Equipment Included per Package:

- Engle 300 Traverse Chair
- Ergonomics Products Universal Workstation and Work Center

Details:

- All equipment is well cared for and in excellent condition
- Available for individual package purchase at \$7,000 per package
- Free local pick-up available
- Photos available upon request

If you're interested in outfitting your dental practice with reliable, well-maintained equipment, don't miss out on this opportunity. For more information or to arrange a viewing, contact mike@beautifulsmile.com.

MEMBERS:

The Maine Dental Association offers classified listings in the quarterly MDA News and on the MDA website. Listings of up to 50 words are free of charge to member dentists. Each additional word costs \$0.25. Listings will run in one quarterly issue of the MDA News and for three months on the MDA website. Please contact the MDA Office to cancel your listing prior to requested run. If you wish to continue your listing, contact the MDA office, and if there are changes, resubmit the listing in writing by mail or email. MDA members may also purchase a boxed listing (printed MDA News only) with larger type and prominent placement for a reduced fee.

1 placement - \$50 2-3 placements - \$45 each 4 placements - \$40 each



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