

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

2024

Let me start by saying thank you for allowing me to serve this past year.

My year as president started off with the Foundation Gala, followed by the ADA House of Delegates in October. The ADA is making changes at a fast rate with Executive Director Ray Cohlma. Some consider it long overdue. I have been impressed with his energy and fearless attitude toward change. I welcome bold changes at the ADA; change is necessary to address the evolving needs of our profession and our patients. The young doctors of today and tomorrow are looking for instant information tailored to their needs. Changing the Association model to cover costs through non-dues revenue is one way associations are going to continue to be affordable and relevant.

Of the many rewarding experiences I have had over the past year, the opportunity to travel to other districts, from Zumbrota to Fergus Falls, and meet dentists stands out as the most rewarding.

Speaking with members over the last year, I have found a few hot topics to be at the forefront of our members' minds. Workforce shortage and third-party payer issues are two hot topics no matter your practice modality. We all are dentists, we need our team members, and we need to be paid for our services.

The Executive Committee has been working on the workforce shortage issue from many angles. Following are a few items that have come to fruition; some continue to be in the works. I am sure you have read the many emails and articles bringing you updates. However, knowing that we tend to have science minds, a list helps summarize the issues.

1. The MDA submitted a proposal to Board of Dentistry to expand non-licensed dental assistant's duties. Digital scans and impressions and taking intraoral and extraoral photographs are now allowed. We continue to work on non-licensed assistants' authority to perform preliminary charting, taking vital signs, coronal polishing, monitoring and administering nitrous oxide, and applying sealants.
2. The Minnesota Board of Dentistry has authorized the limited Radiology Certification Program, unlicensed dental assistants can train to safely take x-rays. I have sent three team members through the program. If you have not, I encourage you to explore this option. The MDA is collaborating with Herzing University to bring limited radiology certification hands-on training throughout all districts, reducing the barriers to our rural areas. To serve our members through the state and make it more convenient for team members to learn new skills and further careers.
3. The Minnesota Board of Dentistry has authorized licensed dental assistants to train for the administration of local anesthesia. We continue to promote the need for licensed dental assistants elevating their role and recognizing the value the license holds.
4. I testified to the legislative Health and Human Services Committee in favor of our dental assistant bill. The goal of this legislation was to decrease barriers for licensed dental assistants moving to Minnesota from other states to become licensed in Minnesota. The bill was successfully advanced in the recent legislative session.
5. We continue to meet with Herzing University with a focus on increasing the dental hygiene program class size and delivering much-needed hygienists to our profession. We are partnering to bring benefits to our members in the form of tuition discounts for MDA member

1 employees allowing employees to grow professionally. We hope this results in improved
2 retention and decreased workforce burnout. Stay tuned for additional upcoming
3 opportunities.

- 4 6. We continue to challenge CODA on the rationale for student-to-faculty ratios imposed on
5 dental assisting and dental hygiene academic programs. We believe increased ratios may lead
6 to increased student enrollment capacity without a corresponding need to increase faculty.
7

8 The second largest concern for many members is third-party payer issues. In the last legislative
9 session, I presented testimony to the legislature on adopting a narrower definition of covered
10 services, which would lead to reducing excessive write-offs. Although we were unsuccessful in
11 advancing this legislation, we will continue to work toward its passage in the coming years and
12 explore transparency and fair contracting for all members.
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14 The MDA strives to have a working relationship with insurance carriers, including Delta Dental. We
15 do not have to agree on all issues, but a good working relationship has helped to implement insurance
16 reimbursement for the MinnesotaCare Tax (provider tax). We also continue to work on transparency
17 of the reimbursement rate schedule for all members. We will continue to push for accountability and
18 fairness from all third-party payers.
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20 I have had the opportunity to have dinner with dental students, listen to their concerns, and meet
21 with the administration at the dental school to communicate those concerns. I've also enjoyed
22 attending the dental school vendor fair, senior awards banquet, and commencement ceremony. We
23 are in good hands with Dean Keith Mays and an incredible group of young, intelligent, and motivated
24 dental students. Most want to own private practices and are eager to become entrepreneurs. Over 30
25 students attended the free entrepreneur program at the Star of the North annual convention. I am
26 also excited to note the leadership academy's first year was a huge success and is now taking
27 applications for the second year. I know Alejandro Aguirre will continue to evolve and improve the
28 program.
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30 The Star of the North was a success and has rebounded from the pandemic.
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32 The Mission of Mercy in Duluth in June served numerous patients. I am so proud of my colleagues
33 and the generosity of all the volunteers.
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35 Witnessing the participation of our young ASDA members on committees, the Board of Trustees, in
36 Washington DC, and volunteerism, shows dedication to our profession; for those of you who have
37 heard rumors that young doctors graduating today do not want to own and become entrepreneurs, I
38 am excited to report with confidence that is far from true. Our profession has a group of motivated
39 and competent leaders excited to join the career.
40

41 The MDA Town Hall meetings and Capital Corners are a few ways to get the word out to members.
42 Total CE events have been a success. Offering more member-only benefits and appealing to the next
43 generations are key to our success. Supporting dentists in all practice modalities is what our
44 members want and need, to stay connected.
45

46 What are my plans as I wrap up this year's last couple of months as President? I would like to continue
47 to serve the Minnesota Dental Association members. Following my presidency, I plan to work to bring
48 mental health support and wellness resources to our members. We currently have the Sand Creek
49 Group as a great underutilized resource, as well as Dentists Concerned for Dentists. I believe it is time
50 we expand our support of each other, and revisit how we can support each other and the young

1 doctors engaging in this great profession. This can be done by changing stigmas of mental health.
2 This initiative is still in the brainstorming phase. I also hope to continue to serve on the Minnesota
3 Dental Foundation Board.

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5 Again, thank you for entrusting me as the President of the MDA. I look forward to continue serving
6 in some capacity.

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8 Submitted by:

9
10 Rose Perpich, D.D.S.