

**UNOFFICIAL REPORT OF MAJOR ACTIONS
COUNCIL ON COMMUNICATIONS
August 14, 2020**

The Council on Communications (CC) met virtually on August 14. Following is a summary of major actions taken by the Council.

1. Dr. Sarah Poteet announced the resignation of Dr. Barry Taylor from the Council. He has recently accepted the position of Executive Director with the Oregon Dental Association. She welcomed Dr. Jill Shelton Wagers as the interim member from the Eleventh District.
2. Dr. Kathleen O'Loughlin presented the State of the ADA: 2025 Strategic Plan update.
3. Dr. Sarah Poteet presented the final draft of the Council purpose, roles and responsibilities document that was developed as a result of discussions that took place during the November 2019 Strategic Planning meeting and March 2020 Council meeting. After discussion, the Council agreed that no edits were needed to this document, which will serve as a guidepost to help keep the Council focused on efforts that ladder up to the ADA's mission and overall strategic plan.
4. Council workgroup chairs provided updates on their efforts in support of the Strategic Plan: Common Ground 2025.

- **Membership Goal** (The ADA will have sufficient members to be the premier voice for oral health.)

Digital Member Experience Workgroup, Dr. Frank Iuorno, chair

The Workgroup provides feedback on milestones in the development of the new ADA.org user experience. The timeline of proposed events and launches, including a new "MyADA" and "ADA.org" has been postponed approximately six months due to COVID-19 efforts. However, with the work that has taken place thus far (significant site clean-up, promotion of COVID-19 content, etc.), the site has seen unprecedented traffic. A brief recap of the success of COVID-19 content performance (Feb-July 2020) was also reported:

- o **15.5MM** page views on ADA.org (82% increase over 2019)
- o **6.2MM** page views of COVID-19 content
- o **3.8MM** page views of ADA News content
- o **390K** COVID-19 YouTube video views

Integrated Marketing Workgroup, Dr. Rebecca De La Rosa, chair

The Workgroup provides strategic guidance for the ADA's integrated marketing campaigns. When COVID-19 hit, the Workgroup's priorities shifted to conduct brainstorming sessions to address COVID-19 content and promotional tactics, and ways to leverage COVID-19 content in the ADA's recruitment and retention campaigns. The Member Value COVID-19 Content Campaign, leveraging these insights, is scheduled to launch prior to the Annual Meeting.

Research Workgroup, Dr. Kerry Carney, chair

The Workgroup provides strategic input over the ADA Advisory Circle and other research projects. Working in conjunction with the Strategic Communications Plan Workgroup, the Research Workgroup is currently overseeing the development of dentist and consumer surveys now in the field. Topics focus on emerging issues and communications gaps between the ADA and members, and the ADA and the public. Results from the surveys will be published in the forthcoming Communications Trend Report, which is discussed below in the Strategic Communications Plan Workgroup update.

- **Public Goal** (The ADA will support the advancement of the health of the public AND the success of the profession.)

Strategic Communications Plan Workgroup, Dr. Stephen Pitmon, chair

The Workgroup identifies, recommends and maintains strategic communications plans for the ADA. It is leading the development of the new Communications Trend Report, which will help identify emerging issues from dentists and the public that may impact the reputation of the profession and serve as an additional input to national, state and local dental society decision-makers engaged in long-range reputation management and communications planning. The Report is currently in the research phase. Following the completion of the surveys, the Workgroup will oversee the development of the Report, which is scheduled to be completed by late September. Following final review by the Council, it will also be shared with ADA national, state and local leadership. The Workgroup is also overseeing the development of a new Crisis Communications Toolkit, leveraging learnings from the COVID-19 crisis, which will be completed in Q4. After discussion on the updates of this Workgroup, the Council adopted the following resolution:

Resolved, that the Council on Communications recommends that the Communications Trend Report be produced and distributed to the tripartite and appropriate stakeholders on an annual basis.

Volunteer Engagement Program (VEP) Workgroup, Dr. David Manzanares, chair

The Workgroup brings together ADA supporters engaged in closed, dentist-only social media groups to create a community of information-sharing and best practices. In Spring 2020, it expanded from a workgroup of the Council to now include over 80 participants from other ADA councils. The group works to dispel myths (most recently, misinformation about the ADA's response to the COVID-19 pandemic) and to ensure that information being promoted online regarding the ADA is positively represented.

Spokesperson Review Workgroup, Dr. Rhett Raum, chair

The roster of 13 consumer advisors and 31 expert spokespersons have helped to meet the significant volume of COVID-19 related media inquiries, resulting in over 4,000 news stories and 6 billion in media reach. The following spokespersons have resigned:

- Dr. Jeffrey Cole, Wilmington, DE (Business of Dentistry)
- Dr. Anthony Iacopino, Winnepeg, Manitoba (Eldercare)

The Workgroup is seeking a new spokesperson for the topic of Medicaid. The future focus of the Workgroup is new media, virtual interview training, and strengthening the spokespersons' use of social media.

Oral Health is Health Workgroup, Dr. Jeannette Hall, chair

The Workgroup provides strategic guidance on the Oral Health is Health campaign, which targets DC-based national opinion leaders such as legislators and staff, media and health influencers through a paid social media campaign. Q2 tactics shifted from their original plan to a new focus on COVID-19 content with messaging centered on keeping dental emergencies out of hospital emergency departments and new protocols to safely reopen dental offices. ADA's position as an oral health influencer among the target audience went from #11 prior to the campaign to #1 currently as a result of the campaign.

SPA Oversight Workgroup, Dr. Frank Luorno, Council on Communications representative

After thirteen years of operation, SPA continues to support Action for Dental Health; Native American initiatives; Third Party Payer issues with "FIIST" Fight Insurance Interference

Strategic Task Force; and workforce scope of practice issues. Most recently, the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) launched the first accredited dental therapy education program in Alaska, regarding remote credentialing/learning.

5. Dr. Manzanares, chair of the Volunteer Engagement Program, Ms. Jenn Sutherland, senior director of digital transformation, and Ms. Nicole Stephani, manager of social media, led a session on social media best practices, including tips for members to use in response to negative comments, how to use ADA resources to craft responses, and how to develop a quick elevator pitch to convey the benefits of ADA membership.
6. Dr. Poteet presented background on the ADA Advisory Task Force on Dental Practice Recovery appointed by Dr. Gehani. Through the efforts of this taskforce, significant resources designed to assist member dentists in returning to work, workplace safety, and understanding risk assessment were developed and launched: specifically, a Return to Work toolkit and hazard assessment launched in May and the Patient Return Resource Center launched in July.
7. Ms. Leslee Williams, senior director, Communications, presented highlights stemming from recent COVID-19 crisis communications efforts. The ADA COVID-19 resurgence strategy, which has recently been implemented, is a four-pillar strategy that will aid state dental societies in advocating their governors to include dentistry in the definition of “essential services” in order to keep dental offices open for the full range of dental services during the pandemic. The ad interim policy “Dentistry is Essential Health Care” and an advocacy toolkit for state dental societies are key components of the resurgence strategy. Additionally, an ADA response to the recent World Health Organization (WHO) recommendation was developed and distributed and Ms. Williams shared metrics related to the number of resultant news stories and audience reach, including a television broadcast segment on ABC’s Good Morning America.

From February 2020 to date, there have been more than 5,000 news stories on COVID-19 which cite ADA information with a cumulative audience reach of 6.7 billion. There has also been significant year over year increases in social media metrics attributable to ADA’s social media posts on COVID-19.

Ms. Williams noted that after discussion with Drs. Poteet, Mansour and Pitmon, it was determined that dental societies might benefit from a toolkit on crisis communications. The toolkit would not be specific to COVID-19 but rather draw upon general principles of crisis communications to serve as a resource for dental societies that may not have crisis communications experts on staff or resources to engage an agency. Ms. Williams shared an outline for the toolkit and noted that the Strategic Communications Plan Workgroup will oversee its development.

8. The Council elected Dr. Sam Mansour as chair and Dr. Rebecca De La Rosa as vice chair for the 2020-2021 term.

CC members:

Dr. Sarah Tevis Poteet, chair, TX
Dr. Sam Mansour, vice chair, PA
Dr. Lynse J. Briney, IL
Dr. Kerry K. Carney, CA
Dr. Rebecca De La Rosa, IN
Dr. Michael J. Frankman, SD
Dr. Jeannette Peña Hall, FL
Dr. Frank P. Luorno, VA
Dr. Prabha Krishnan, NY
Dr. Thomas J. Lambert, MI

Dr. Amber P. Lawson, GA
Dr. David J. Manzanares, NM
Dr. Angela P. Noguera, DC
Dr. Stephen M. Pitmon, VT
Dr. Rhett E. Raum, TN
Dr. Jill Shelton Wagers, ID
Dr. Stephanie B. Weaver, LA
Dr. Kevin Kai, New Dentist Committee, CA

Liaisons:

Dr. Julio H. Rodriguez, Ninth District Trustee, Board Liaison
Dr. Matthew Lee, American Student Dental Association, MA

Next Council on Communications meeting:

March 12-13, 2021