

**UNOFFICIAL REPORT OF MAJOR ACTIONS  
COUNCIL ON COMMUNICATIONS  
February 17-18, 2023**

The Council on Communications (CC) met on February 17-18, 2023 in Chicago, Illinois. Following is a summary of major actions taken by the Council.

1. Council Chair Dr. Prabha Krishnan highlighted the Council's statement of purpose, as well as duties of responsibility pursuant to the ADA *Bylaws*, to reiterate the Council's charge.
2. Executive Director Dr. Raymond A. Cohlmiya presented "Continuing Our New Day at the ADA: Defining Our Future", which outlined how the ADA is shifting from divisional-based operations to a customer-based model, focusing on five customer groups: public/professional, direct-to-dentist, tripartite, business, and enterprise. Dr. Cohlmiya also discussed strategic forecasting implementation.
3. The Council participated in a two-hour interactive workshop, with the goal of delivering a clear and compelling presentation to state and local leadership about the "Culture of Change" movement to foster more leader awareness and engagement with ADA Diversity Equity & Inclusion (DEI) initiatives that create a culture of welcome and acceptance for all dentists.
4. The Council heard reports from its workgroups regarding efforts to support the Council's purpose, which complement priorities of the ADA 2020-2025 Strategic Plan."
  - **Membership Goal** (The ADA will have sufficient members to be the premier voice for oral health.)

**Communication Innovation Workgroup, Dr. Jill Wagers, chair**

The workgroup examines existing member and stakeholder research to identify potential gaps and collect further research, resulting in strategic recommendations and potential innovations to existing communications channels. The workgroup was tasked with developing a response to Resolution 304H—Social Media Reviews and Reputation Management, in collaboration with the Council on Dental Practice, as subject matter experts. The workgroup developed a toolkit framework to repackage existing resources and promotional strategy for new and established dentists to reference when responding to social media postings. For the remainder of 2023, the workgroup will shift its focus to strengthening communications between the ADA and key stakeholder audiences, assessing needs, and developing a strategic recommendation.

**Culture of Change Workgroup, Dr. Angela Noguera, chair**

The workgroup provides strategic oversight and guidance to "Culture of Change" communications plans throughout the year, based on the input and insights from the CoC and ADA Diversity & Inclusion leaders, including New Dentist Committee, The Council on Membership, and the Diversity & Inclusion Committee of the Board of Trustees. In collaboration with the ADA Staff Team, and to meet communications goals of this plan, this workgroup also advises on communications plan adjustments. The initial phase 1 plan will focus on a leader-to-leader audience of national Council members, state and local Presidents and President-elects and state and local Executive Directors. A launch event is planned for late March featuring a nationally recognized speaker.

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

**Strategic Communications Workgroup, Dr. Rhett Raum, chair**

The workgroup helps to develop, interpret, present and distribute the annual ADA Communications Trend Report. This is the fourth year of the report, which helps surface trends and issues affecting the profession and public health and aids in longer-term strategic communications planning. The 2023 ADA Communications Trend Report utilizes a member dentist and consumer survey. The dentist survey is nearing completion, and the workgroup is now focused on refining the consumer survey. Results are nationally representative of ADA membership and the U.S. population. The dentists survey focuses on three main issues— inflation and its impact on dental practices, mental wellness, and pain management prescribing. A communications plan will be developed to share the 2023 Communications Trend Report with all levels of the Tripartite.

5. The Council heard reports from its representatives on the Board of Trustees Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee, and the State Public Affairs Oversight Workgroup regarding their respective efforts.

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

**Board of Trustees Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Dr. Rachel Lewin, Council on Communications Consultant**

The Committee on Diversity and Inclusion monitors and makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees on diversity and inclusion initiatives throughout the Association that are in support of the Association's strategic plan. Dr. Lewin shared observations from the initial Committee meeting and their enthusiasm to move forward with improving and innovating current DE&I strategies for the ADA, being mindful to consider the needs of various stakeholders. The Committee is considering ways to foster collaboration and make the needed changes within the Association. In the light of the Culture of Change work, this Committee invited a Council on Communications member to join them as a non-voting consultant for the 2023 Committee meetings through August.

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

**State Public Affairs (SPA) Oversight Workgroup, Dr. Rhett Raum, Council on Communications representative**

SPA continues to support the following: Action for Dental Health; Native American initiatives, including increased involvement with the Society of American Indian Dentists and partnership with Native News Online; Third Party Payer issues with "FIIST", the Fight Insurance Interference Strategic Task Force; and workforce issues, including states experiencing shortages of auxiliaries or dealing with dental therapy legislation. Per the written report submitted by Dr. Raum and Chad Olson, Director, State Government Affairs, SPA will continue a working relationship with the Consumer Choice Center as an independent third-party think-tank dedicated to analyzing and advocating for consumer-friendly policy. The Consumer Choice Center (CCC) has published commentary on the value of medical loss ratio laws and the positive impacts of assignment of benefit policies. CCC is currently in the planning stages of the engagement with ADA, deliverables. will likely include state-specific support on op-eds, legislative testimonials where appropriate and issue-focused primers on Dental Insurance Reform (DIR) issues.

6. Sr. Director, Digital Marketing, Ms. Jenn Sutherland provided a brief update on the My ADA Member App that allows members connect with peers, plus access ADA resources and app-exclusive features. Currently 12,000 members have downloaded and started using the app. and new features are forthcoming.
7. Director of Client Services, Ms. Christine Chico and Sr. Manager, DEI Program Innovation & Engagement, Ms. Susana Galvan provided an overview of the ADA's DE&I programs and tools, which have been created out of a need to advance inclusion, while also growing diversity across the tripartite. Important programs for 2023 will focus on developing national leaders to actively encourage diversity, equity, and a culture of inclusion by creating a welcoming environment and a sense of belonging for everyone. The Culture of Change communications plan intends to promote many of these strategic offerings to leaders.
8. Guest chairs from other ADA councils shared their respective councils' main priorities for 2023 and collaborative opportunities. The following councils were represented:
  - Council on Advocacy for Access and Prevention
  - Council on Dental Practice
  - Council on Government Affairs
  - Council on Membership

**Council on Communications members:**

Dr. Prabha Krishnan, chair, NY  
Dr. Laura J. Schott, vice chair, TX  
Dr. Carol A. Baker, SC  
Dr. Amber D. Cziok, MN  
Dr. Ann Hammi Blue, AZ  
Dr. Lynse J. Briney, IL  
Dr. T. Stotts Isbell, AR  
Dr. Lindsey D. Jackson, NH  
Dr. Amir Kazim, CA  
Dr. Rachel L. Lewin, PA  
Dr. Mark A. Limosani, FL  
Dr. Angela P. Noguera, DC  
Dr. James J. Phillips, Jr., AL  
Dr. Rhett E. Raum, TN  
Dr. Riley A. Schaff, MI  
Dr. Jill Shelton Wagers, ID  
Dr. Andrew W. Zucker, OH  
Dr. Tanya Sue Maestas, New Dentist Committee, TX

**Liaisons:**

Dr. Terry Fiddler, Twelfth District Trustee, Board Liaison  
Ms. Shafa Nathani, American Student Dental Association, MA

**Next Council on Communications meeting:**

July 15-16, 2023