

June 8, 2022

Adam Barefoot
Chief Dental Officer
Health Resources and Services Administration
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857

Dear Dr. Barefoot:

On behalf of our 162,000 members, the American Dental Association (ADA) would like to congratulate you on your appointment as Chief Dental Officer of the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA). The appointment of a Chief Dental Officer who could oversee and coordinate dental issues within HRSA was an important priority for the ADA, and we were thrilled to see a dentist of your caliber appointed to the position. We worked closely with Dr. Joskow and look forward to doing the same with you.

We would particularly like to draw your attention to the following issues, many of which ADA also discussed with Administrator Johnson earlier this year:

- Reforming health professional shortage area (HPSAs) scoring, including reiterating that the scoring criteria is not based solely on the population-to-provider ratio; fixing misleading scoring considerations, such as community water fluoridation or not counting National Health Service Corps providers; and utilizing ADA Health Policy Institute data on supply of dentists and geographic access to care to determine the HPSAs;
- Ensuring loan repayment equity for early career-dentists in Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) with added clarity on eligible HPSA scores;
- Addressing dental workforce shortages through Title VII oral health training grants;
- Expanding efforts to increase the dental workforce in underserved communities and among underserved populations through the Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education (THCGME) program;
- Improving public and medical provider education about oral health in order to meet the HHS Healthy People target for utilization of the oral health care system;
- Addressing oral health disparities in order to achieve optimal oral health for all people through research and data collection, positively impacting social determinants of oral health, reinforcing the integral role of oral health in overall health, supporting cultural competency and diversity in dental treatment, and advancing disease prevention education;
- Continuing to prioritize Integration of Oral Health and Primary Care Practice (IOHPCP);
- Addressing parity between dental case management and medical case management;
- Giving loan repayment to dentists collaborating with addiction specialists;
- Supporting medical-dental collaboration projects which integrate oral health into primary care settings, and “warm hand-offs” from hospital emergency departments into dental settings;
- Promoting the value of Community Water Fluoridation as a safe, cost effective, healthy, and equitable disease prevention strategy within community based programs; and
- Addressing maternal and child dental needs such as sealants and access to care for pregnant women.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how we can meet these challenges together. To schedule a meeting, or if you have any questions, please contact Mr. Corey McGee at 202-789-5175 or mcgeec@ada.org.

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Sincerely,

Cesar R. Sabates, D.D.S.
President

Raymond A. Cohlma, D.D.S.
Executive Director

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