



ASTDD Roundup for November and December 2024

By Bev Isman, RDH, MPH, ELS



Organizational, Committee, and Consultant Subject Matter Experts (SME) Activities

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide an informal brief summary of ASTDD activities to keep our members and partners aware of what we do on your behalf and to highlight resources. We also like to share more personal stories as ASTDD really is a family.

ASTDD State Dental Directors, Board of Directors (BOD), Other National Activities

Julia Wacloff is stepping down from her position as Chief of the Arizona Office of Oral Health to accept a new position with the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB), as Region VI, Title V consultant. Her last day with the AZ program was December 27. Here is her farewell note.



Dear Colleagues,

As I prepare to step away from my role as State Dental Director with the Arizona Department of Health Services, I find myself filled with a mixture of emotions. While I am excited about the new opportunities that lie ahead, I also feel deep gratitude and appreciation for the incredible leadership and mentorship I have received during my time with ASTDD.

When I reflect on my career journey, it's hard to believe how far I've come—from a dental hygienist with a Bachelor's degree to a graduate of both Boston University and Arizona State University, and now having had the privilege of serving as Arizona's State Dental Director for the past fifteen years. Throughout all of these stages, ASTDD has been a beacon of support, helping to shape my understanding of how to effectively advance oral health across the country. The guidance I've received from so many of you has been invaluable. From our shared conversations to the resources provided, I've been given tools to succeed, not only in my role as a state dental director but also as a professional striving to make a difference in public health. Your insights and camaraderie have inspired me to push forward, and I've been fortunate to work alongside such dedicated individuals who share a common goal: improving the oral health and well-being of the nation.

Though I'm leaving the state level behind, I am excited to continue my public health work at the national level, and I hope to stay connected and contribute in new ways. While this is a farewell from my current position, I carry with me the lessons, values, and relationships that I've gained from ASTDD. You've helped shape my journey, and I look forward to crossing paths again as we all continue to advance the cause of public health. Thank you for everything.

With warmest regards,
Julia Wacloff

The BOD held ZOOM calls on November 28 and December 19. Much discussion centered on plans for the National Oral Health Conference (NOHC), changes with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) staffing, approval of policy statements, and people to serve on the Nominating and Awards Committees. In terms of partners, the American Association of Public Health Dentistry (AAPHD) has hired a new executive director (ED), David Pena, who was formerly ED for the Hispanic Dental Association. Some BOD members shared reports of their state activities. For instance, in partnership with the Alaska Tobacco Prevention and Control Program, the American Lung Association, and the American Cancer Society, the Alaska Oral Health Program developed a continuing education (CE) opportunity for dental hygienists focusing on tobacco and nicotine product cessation and counseling. Providing didactic training, motivational interviewing and referral components, and a maximum of 3 credits per session, this CE course was debuted in November at the Alaska Dental Hygienists' Association annual members' meeting by the organization's request. Northeast Delta Dental has funded a series of pop-up dental clinics throughout VT, coordinated by local health departments. These clinics feature the use of Minimally Invasive Care including Silver Diamine Fluoride (SDF) and Atraumatic Restorative Treatment (ART).

CareQuest has posted the *Minimally Invasive Care Advocacy Brief* on their website with dissemination on the [ASTDD](#), dental public Health, National Network for Oral Health Access (NNOHA) and Oral Health Equity and Progress Network (OPEN) listservs. It was also highlighted in the Santa Fe Institute and the Oral Health Nursing Education and Practice (OHNEP) newsletters.

A dental director call was held on December 18 with 29 people attending from 25 states. Dr. Mike John from the University of Minnesota presented on the Oral Health Impact Profile-5 (OHIP-5) and discussed 1) who uses it, 2) where is it used, 3) how is it used, and 4) when is it used. OHIP-5 looks at the patient's perspective regarding oral health related quality of life: psycho-social impact, oral function, oral pain, and orofacial appearance. Dr. John is also the Editor in Chief of the *Journal of Evidence-Based Dental Practice*.

Dr. Russ Dunkel, ASTDD president, has been asked to participate in a national workgroup meeting facilitated by the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Chicago on Thursday, January 16, 2025. The topic to be addressed by the virtual panel experts is "Oral Health and Dental Care Needs and Experiences of Children with Special Health Care Needs (CSHCN)." Other panel experts include Dr. Natalia Chalmers from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), Katrina Holt from the Oral Health Resource Center (OHRC), and Dr. Chelsea Fosse from the American Association of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD).

The NOHC is "the premier meeting" for those interested in continuing education and networking opportunities within the discipline of Dental Public Health. The 2025 NOHC will be in Orlando, Florida April 7-9, 2025 with weekend workshops on April 5 and 6, 2025. [Registration](#) is now open! Early bird registration ends on January 31. All meetings and events will be held at the [DoubleTree by Hilton](#) at the Entrance to Universal Orlando.

All consultants are busily writing their annual committee or consultant reports for ASTDD. Bev uses these to help write the 2024 ASTDD Annual Report. CDC consultants for the past six years assisted Bev in writing the 86+ page final report for CDC DP-1811 as well as final performance measure status for each year. Thanks to

everyone for their help! All consultants submit monthly reports to ASTDD that are used to create monthly consultant summaries and shared with the BOD and consultants.



Peer and Member Support Program (PSP)

State dental directors/program managers participating in the PSP still currently include Nicole Reynolds (OK) mentored by Charles “Fritz” Craft (NE), and Elizabeth Lewis (GA) mentored by Robin Miller (VT). Kimberlie Payne reports there were 24 new associate members in November and December. The PSP discussion group was held on November 21 with Barb Park, ASTDD and National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD consultant), presenting on “Resources for the Relationship between Oral Health and Chronic Disease.” ASTDD consultants continue to share ASTDD resources supporting state oral health programs.

Fluorides Committee (FC)

At its December 2024 meeting, the FC finalized and approved its annual review of the American Dental Association (ADA)-ASTDD-CDC Annual Fluoridation Awards criteria, adding two new awards that will recognize communities for 10 and 25 years of community water fluoridation (CWF). The new awards were proposed some months ago and the FC agreed these new awards could be more meaningful and effective for ongoing promotion than starting with a 50-year anniversary; these will be in addition to the existing 50- and 75-year awards.

On December 9 ASTDD hosted a webinar, *An Analysis of the National Toxicology Program (NTP) Monograph Concerning Fluoride*, with Dr. Jay Kumar, former California and New York state dental director and an ASTDD consultant. Dr. Kumar was a member of the 2006 National Research Council Committee that evaluated the adequacy of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) fluoride standards to protect public health, as well as a reviewer of the 2020 and 2021 National Academies reports that reviewed the NTP draft reports and a faculty member of the National Institutes of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) Dental Public Health Research Fellowship. Close to 80 people attended the webinar, which was very well-received.

The CWF Community of Practice (CoP) was convened for an introductory and organizational meeting in mid-November attended by 25 people representing 14 of the 15 CDC-funded states. They discussed the purpose of these meetings, planning/logistics for future sessions, and topics of mutual interest. The next meeting is scheduled for January 22, 2025.

Communications Committee (CC)



Members of the CC worked with Chris Wood and Bradley Cummins, our IT contractor, to update and refresh the ASTDD website homepage. There now are only five left-hand, vertical, purple tabs (Home, About ASTDD, State/Territorial Oral Health Programs,

ASTDD National Oral Health Data Portal, and Services/Program Support). Three of the purple, left-hand tabs have drop down menus that allow you to select the page you wish to view. Everything related to membership (Membership Directory, New Membership Application, Members Only, Membership Renewal, and New

Member Services/Peer Support) now can be found by clicking on the horizontal tab labeled Membership. As before, you also can click on A-Z on the upper, right-hand side of your screen for an extensive list of resources. The Spotlight on January 11 will help orient our membership to the changes. If you missed any previous Spotlights, you can access the links for the 2023 and 2024 Spotlights on the [2023 ASTDD Documents, Publications, Webinar Recordings, Toolkits](#) and [2024 ASTDD Documents, Publications, Webinar Recordings, Toolkits](#) pages or the [Spotlight Presentations page](#), or by contacting Kimberlie Payne at kyinemanbhs@gmail.com.

The CC met November 20 . Bev Isman completed the [September/October Roundup](#) that is posted on the website. Discussion focused on upcoming activities. The Social Media Workgroup (SMWG) met on December 11. The discussion included adding Instagram to the social media posts, social media presence at NOHC, and possible special projects for the SMWG in 2025. The Communication CoP was held on December 11. The discussion topic was “Communication campaigns are a proven strategy for raising public awareness about oral health.” A 2025 NOHC seminar will offer guidance on how a state/territorial oral health program can strengthen its capacity to develop and implement communication campaigns to support their work. The CCoP included input from participants about how to make this NOHC seminar as relevant and impactful as possible.

Michelle Rathman, host of *The Rural Impact* podcast, which explores how public health challenges affect rural America, interviewed Matt Jacob on her podcast, and released the latest episode <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=XILMWjIxtSc>. Mostly, Michelle wanted Matt’s thoughts on what public health leaders can do to rebuild trust in these challenging times.

Dental Public Health Policy Committee (DPHPC), Best Practices Committee (BPC), and Healthy Aging Committee (HAC), School and Adolescent Oral Health Committee (SAOHC) and Dental Sealant Subject Matter Expert

The DPHPC met in December. [The Integrating Oral Health into Schools Using the CDC Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child School Health Model \[WSCC\] Policy Statement](#), an update developed in conjunction with the SAOHC , is now posted on the ASTDD website. [Older Adults and Oral Health: A Continuing Challenge Policy Statement](#), developed in conjunction with the HAC, is also posted on the website.

ASTDD has learned that the Gary and Mary West Foundation (GMWF) will fund a portion of an Advocacy Playbook project proposal and will have conversations with the other interested organizations in January to determine potential additional funding.

Lori Cofano from the SAOHC participated on the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) workgroup to discuss SDF in the medical setting. This is a workgroup Chris had asked Lori to participate on to represent ASTDD. She and Sandy Tesch are working together to create an Evidence Based Preventive Dental Services (EBPDS) CoP that will meet the CDC-funded states needs. The first EBPDS CoP was held on December 18. Sarah Stream from the Association for Dental Safety (ADS) presented on infection prevention/control (IPC) and ADS resources. Sandy continues to monitor the dental sealant group listserv and post information on upcoming sealant and IPC-related events.

Evaluation Activities

The ASTDD Emory evaluators, Kristin Giordano and Maggie Pustinger, have been working with ASTDD on evaluation plans and activities including data collection methods, evaluation questions for polling CoP participants, an outline template for case studies for the CDC new cooperative agreement, portions of the CDC final ASTDD 1811 report, and provided final 1810 report preparation assistance to states. Evaluation is a key component of future CDC activities.

Data and Oral Health Surveillance Technical Assistance and Training

Kathy Phipps and Brooke Mehner, ASTDD data and surveillance consultants, provided TA to states for Basic Screening Survey (BSS) or other surveillance assistance for 15.5 hours these past two months to Illinois, Montana, Florida, Idaho, and New Jersey. Brooke completed state BSS results in the National Oral Health Surveillance System (NOHSS) and finished updating our [Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey \(BRFSS\)/Pregnancy Risk Assessment Survey \(PRAMS\)/Youth Risk Assessment Survey \(YRBS\) document](#). Kathy used the publicly available 2022 BRFSS dataset to generate state estimates for dental visit and tooth loss among adults with and without diabetes stratified by age group and distributed the results to ASTDD consultants and CDC funded states as part of our activities for CDC Component 3. Kathy also participated in a data webinar for the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)-funded Consortium for Oral Health.



Congratulations to Brooke and the rest of the family on the birth of their new daughter, Jovie Ann, on November 20 at 6:15 am weighing 8lbs 4oz. And of course Brooke was sending information for the data section of the CDC final report right after this despite being on maternity leave for these two months!!!

National Center on Health, Behavioral Health, and Safety (NCHBHS)

The OHRC is pleased to welcome Jenna Linden, BSDH, RDH, CDHC, to the Head Start team. In October 2024, Jenna joined the OHRC, serving as the oral health education specialist for the NCHBHS project. Jenna is involved in an array of NCHBHS activities including developing educational materials; conducting national and regional training for Head Start staff, families, and health professionals; and supporting the Dental Hygienist Liaison (DHL) project. Please welcome Jenna to OHRC and the Head Start team! She can be reached at jl3311@georgetown.edu.



Before joining OHRC, Jenna dedicated her dental hygiene career to public health, successfully pioneering oral health promotion and oral disease prevention initiatives for pregnant women and children. Her commitment to innovation is reflected in her efforts related to community-based oral health advocacy, implementing successful school-based oral health programs, and promoting the integration of oral health care and primary care.

NCHBHS’s DHL project provides technical assistance to the Head Start community (e.g., Head Start staff, Head Start regional health specialists, state dental directors and other partners) to enhance oral health services in Head Start programs. Examples of TA provided include:

- Clarifying the difference between an oral exam and oral health screening, including specifying the types of health professionals authorized to perform the two procedures
- Reviewing Head Start Program Information Report (PIR)oral health data to identify challenges to accessing oral health care
- Enhancing oral health education for Head Start staff and families
- Offering Head Start staff strategies to share with parents to help them establish toothbrushing routines at home
- Recruiting dental offices and clinics that accept Medicaid and CHIP to provide care to pregnant women and children enrolled in Head Start
- Incorporating oral hygiene practices into the Head Start staff wellness program.

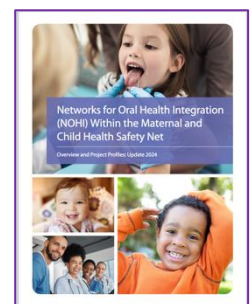
Starting in January 2025, state DHLs will send the DHL Technical Assistance Feedback Survey to TA recipients and will encourage them to provide feedback about services provided by DHLs.

ASTDD continues operational support and guidance for Regional DHL Coordinators and State DHLs. The DHLs submit quarterly Survey Monkey reports that the ASTDD consultants then turn into a combined quarterly report for the NCHBHS and eventually an annual report. These efforts reflect our ongoing dedication to strengthening the DHL Project, enhancing communication, and driving progress toward better oral health outcomes in Head Start programs nationwide.

Consortium for Oral Health (COH) Update

The Consortium for Oral Health is pleased to share the report, [Networks for Oral Health Integration \(NOHI\) Within the Maternal and Child Health Safety Net: Overview and Project Profiles—Update 2024](#). The report highlights the significant accomplishments of three projects that were awarded funding from the Maternal and Child Health Bureau for a 5-year period (2019–2024) to improve access to and use of oral health care for pregnant women, infants, and children at high risk for oral disease.

- [Midwest Network for Oral Health Integration \(MNOHI\)](#): Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, and Ohio
- [Rocky Mountain Network of Oral Health \(RoMoNOH\)](#): Arizona, Colorado, Montana, and Wyoming
- [Transforming Oral Health for Families \(TOHF\)](#): District of Columbia, Maryland, New York, and Virginia



The projects were charged with developing, implementing, and evaluating models of care. The report provides information about each specific project, including project partners, approach, settings, models of care, strategies to help sustain models of care in community health centers (CHCs), and core function activities.

Despite a global pandemic, the projects implemented their models of care in 88 primary care clinics within selected CHCs in 11 states and Washington, DC, and provided more than 1,300 primary care providers, community health workers, and care coordinators with training on preventive oral health care and on the key

components of integrating oral health care into primary care. Participating CHCs provided more than 369,700 preventive oral health services to infants and children during the project period. Congratulations to the projects on their excellent work!

Find more information about the NOHI projects including resources such as [community health center assessments, environmental scans to inform policy change at the state level, and training tools](#) online.

Meetings and Webinars

(Links aren't available if they were a member only or pre-registration event)

Announcements about meetings and webinars are regularly included in the ASTDD Weekly Digest. These are just some examples of meetings attended.



National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. [Advancing Oral Health Across the Lifespan: A Workshop](#). (Both in-person and virtual). November 18 - 19, 2024, Washington, DC.

A planning committee of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine conducted a public workshop that brought together experts and key partners to explore innovative practices and models for advancing oral health in the US across the lifespan. More than 100 people attended the workshop in person, with more than 1100 unique users attending virtually. Registrants represented all 50 states and DC and 17 foreign countries. The workshop's vision was "To create a future where every American, regardless of background or circumstances, has equitable access to comprehensive oral health care across their lifetime—empowered by a deep understanding of oral health's impact on overall well-being and supported by inclusive policies, a diverse and accessible workforce, integrated care models, affordable services, lifelong health education, and strong community advocacy."

Group Sessions included the following in addition to breakout groups:

- SESSION I: Framing the Workshop's Vision and Goal
- SESSION II: World Health Organization Strategy and Action Plan on Oral Health and the Economic Rationale for a Global Commitment to Invest in Oral Health
- SESSION III: Overview of America's Oral Health Priorities (Federal Perspective)
- SESSION IV: Overview of America's Oral Health Priorities (Non-Federal Perspective)
- SESSION V: Empowering All Individuals to Improve Their Oral Health
- SESSION VI: Creating a Sustainable, Diverse, and Integrated Workforce
- SESSION VII: Improving Oral Health Access and Affordability: Role of Public and Private Payers
- SESSION VIII: Oral Health Equity for Special Populations in the United States
- SESSION IX: Dentistry in 2035: Will You be the Disruptor or the Disrupted?
- SESSION X: Enhancing Oral Health Research and Innovation: A Window into the Future
- SESSION XI: National Alignment, Organizing, and Actions for System Transformation.

Topics discussed at the workshop included consideration of:

- National oral health goals for “Zero at Six” (zero cavities at six years of age for all children), and “Twenty at Eighty” (all 80-year-old seniors to have 20 teeth)
- Sustainable solutions that improve access to oral health services in public and private spaces (urban, suburban, rural, and Tribal communities and territories)
- Models that achieve meaningful oral and systemic health integration
- Models to empower all consumers to make informed choices related to oral health and models that encourage healthy workplace and school policies
- Investments in public oral health education campaigns, including celebrity and social media influencer voices
- Innovations that will improve oral health in the next 5-10 years.

ASTDD ED Chris Wood and other ASTDD members attended various presentations throughout the two days. See the link above for videos and meeting materials including presentations. Next steps proposed at the workshop:

- Creation of a listserv: To facilitate ongoing communication and collaboration among participants beyond the meeting project, it was suggested an independent listserv be established. This platform will allow registrants, attendees, and others to continue to share updates, resources, and opportunities while fostering dialogue and collaboration across networks. If you are interested in receiving communications or participating in this independent listserv, please opt in by sending an email to the American Coalition for Oral Health (ACOH) americancoalitionfororalhealth@gmail.com (including your name, organization, and email address).
- Formation of the ACOH: Building on the enthusiasm from the workshop, many expressed support for efforts to establish the ACOH. This independent coalition will serve as a unified voice to advance oral health equity, innovation, and policy. It was further envisioned as a dynamic platform for engagement, collaboration and collective action. Please opt in to the listserv above so that you can continue to receive updates on this exciting opportunity.

Send any questions, comments, or articles to Bev Isman at bev.isman@comcast.net