



Michigan Dental Association
Unofficial Board Actions
February 27-28, 2020

Trustee Report: Dr. Vincent Lizzio

The Michigan Board of Trustees met in Okemos at the MDA Headquarters for our Board meeting on Thursday, February 27 and Friday, February 28. Dr. Margaret Gingrich led one of her final board meetings for her term as president. Throughout her tenure as President of the MDA, the association was led with passion and vision. Her hard work is always greatly appreciated.

Particularly meaningful was the powerful presentation that Dr. Todd Ester, Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion from the University of Michigan, gave on diversity and dentistry. He is a practicing endodontist in the Detroit area. His enthusiastic presentation explained the importance of diversity and described some of the initiatives that the University of Michigan has taken to improve the number of underrepresented students in dental school. The Board had an in-depth generative discussion on diversity and dentistry. Research has shown that diversity is a key influence in helping organizations and groups be able to make better decisions. Science has shown that diversity will increase creativity in groups. From these generative discussions, the Board committed to actively work toward achieving diversity of both our board and in our profession.

Another highlight of our meeting was a presentation from ADA President-Elect Dr. Daniel J. Klemmedson. He shared his vision for our future. He is committed to keeping the association moving forward and adapting to change in the dental arena. I believe we are in good hands in the upcoming year.

One topic that I thought was particularly important was support for the component dental societies. The Board agreed with the component workgroup's recommendation to create a support program to address tasks such as maintaining records, managing finances, communicating with members, developing leaders and meeting its legal obligations. The component workgroup did an amazing job creating recommendations to help strengthen the local societies, and I believe these actions should help ease the burden of these administrative tasks on our local component societies.

Also new, the Board approved the creation of an award that would recognize an outstanding dental faculty member from each dental school. Additionally, another award will recognize an outstanding allied dental professional educator for either hygiene or dental assisting. The board approved member recommendations for the Michigan Board of Dentistry as well as gave our recommendations to the 9th District Trustee for ADA council positions. It is wonderful to see so many amazing and talented individuals willing to give back to their profession.

We look forward to seeing everyone at the Annual Session in Grand Rapids!

Highlights from the Board of Trustees Meeting

Board Development

The Board meeting kicked off on Thursday, February 27, with a presentation by Dr. Todd Ester, Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion from the University of Michigan on diversity and inclusion in dental education and the dental profession. He discussed critical issues facing higher education, including projected demographics, economic issues and political and legal challenges as well addressing the importance of diversity in dentistry.

Dr. Ester noted that diversity has a positive impact on the educational experience as well as the school, and helps students and faculty learn to interact in a complex and diverse society. It promotes mutual respect and facilitates everyone's ability to use all their talents and abilities. It also promotes innovation and creativity. He noted, however, that diversity initiatives may fail if they are considered only symbolic gestures – even millions of dollars cannot overcome apathy.

The University of Michigan dental school's Profile for Success Program was created 25 years ago to attract college juniors and seniors from educationally and financially disadvantaged backgrounds to increase diversity, including of underrepresented minorities in the pool of applicants who apply to dental schools each year. Many of the individuals who participated in the program did go on to apply and subsequently graduate from dental school.

On Friday, as a follow-up to Dr. Ester's presentation, the Board held a generative discussion on diversity and dentistry from several perspectives including demographics, patient care, organized dentistry and leadership. The Board discussed many ways in which it can be more intentional with diversity and inclusion with its membership and leadership, and ways in which MDA can assist the dental schools with the pipeline programs. Issues associated with health equity, and the barriers that patients may face in accessing dental health care, were also discussed. The Board plans a follow-up to these discussions.

The Board also viewed a leadership development video from organizational psychologist Adam Grant titled "[Are You a Giver or a Taker?](#)" The takeaways focused on the business benefits to a culture of generosity and steps that can be taken to build that culture.

American Dental Association

Report from ADA President-Elect: Dr. Daniel Klemmedson, ADA President-Elect, provided the Board with key issues facing the ADA currently and his priorities as president-elect. Some of the issues discussed included the ADA strategic plan, licensure, elder care, vaping policy, student debt, ADA foundation, McCarran-Ferguson Act, ADAPT and ADA Science and Research Institute.

Governance

Component Workgroup Recommendations: The workgroup was appointed to advise the Board on ways to help components succeed by evaluating the existing structure, governance, and member service of the MDA component societies, identify challenges, and propose options to address those challenges. Surveys and interviews showed interest in greater support from the MDA for components. Dr. Gregory Maxson, chair, was in attendance to present the workgroup recommendations to the Board. Below is a brief description of the actions taken.

Component Expectations: The Board approved a document titled “Component Expectations,” which are guidelines to outline what is expected of a component society.

Component Relations Program: A Component Relations Program was approved that will be available to all components at no charge. Some of the areas where MDA assistance will be available include bylaws, website, e-newsletter, templates for budget and financial management, CERP recognition, live CE via the web, Leadership Roadshow, and a process and procedure manual. MDA will create a coordinator position to manage this program within existing staff resources.

Mechanism for Component Merger: The Board agreed to forward to the House of Delegates a Bylaws amendment that would allow two or more components to combine if they wished to do so. The current Bylaws state how new components are formed, but not how components are merged. The proposed Bylaws amendment would add a sentence to the appropriate paragraph in Chapter II to address the process. The Bylaws Language Review Committee will review prior to submission to the 2020 House of Delegates. The workgroup’s intention was to allow for two or more components to merge administratively, while maintaining the ability to hold local CE and social meetings as a “branch” of the component. This would reduce the administrative and leadership burden, but allow for flexibility. Each branch would need a minimum of one volunteer to organize local events, but there would no longer be a need for each component to be run as an independent dental society. No current component would be required to combine if they do not wish to do so.

Delegate Allocation: The workgroup noted that because of the formula for delegate allocation, it is not possible to say that merging components would maintain the same number of delegates. The workgroup recommended that the formula be assessed to minimize the impact of mergers in order to maintain representation.

Faculty Awards: The MDA approved guidelines for a Dental Faculty Award that gives public recognition to two dentist members actively involved in the education of dental or graduate dental students, one from each of Michigan’s two dental schools, who have demonstrated outstanding commitment to organized dentistry. Also approved were guidelines for an Allied Dental Professional Educator Award that gives public recognition to one allied dental professional educator, employed by a CODA-approved institution, who has demonstrated

outstanding commitment to the advancement of oral health. The first awards will be given in 2021.

Strategic Planning: Executive Director Burgess gave an update on the progress of the 2016-2020 MDA Strategic Plan. The report noted significant progress on all the strategic plan objectives and strategies. The Board will hold a Strategic Planning Retreat in the summer of 2020.

Policy

ProSites Endorsement: At the recommendation of the MDAIFG Board, the MDA Board approved endorsement of ProSites for website development and hosting, subject to a suitable contract. ProSites is endorsed by 13 state dental associations and provides members with an affordable and comprehensive marketing solution to help attract, engage and retain loyal patients.

MDA Diversity Policy: MDA's definition of diversity was updated based on changes made by the 2019 ADA House of Delegates and expanded to incorporate gender identity and gender expression. The policy now reads:

Resolved, that the Michigan Dental Association defines diversity through many dimensions, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, physical abilities/qualities, sexual orientation, religious and ideological beliefs, professional practice choices and personal lifestyle preferences.

Vaping Policy: The MDA adopted the ADA's interim policy on vaping. The policy calls for a total ban on vaping products that are not approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for tobacco cessation purposes and advocates for research funding to study the safety and effectiveness of e-cigarettes and vaping products for tobacco cessation purposes and their effects on the oral cavity.

Statement on Access to Care: MDA approved a statement on access to care, which includes the following solutions: more effective use of registered dental assistants through expanded duties; increases in the adult Medicaid reimbursement rate; more resources devoted to recruitment of dentists into remote areas, including loan repayment programs; and required dental screenings for all children entering kindergarten (similar to the already required screenings for vision and hearing). An MDA-supported bill recently passed the Michigan House of Representatives.

Fair and Equal Michigan: Fair and Equal Michigan is an advocacy group formed for the purpose of making Michigan's Civil Rights Act inclusive of gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity or gender expression. The Board agreed to support amending the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act to define "sex" as gender, sexual orientation and gender identity or expression and "religion" as religious beliefs of an individual. The Board also decided to include more information about this initiative in an upcoming issue of the *MDA Journal*.

Marketing

Dental Assistant Marketing Proposal: In February 2019, the Board approved the Dental Assistant Workgroup's recommendation to investigate the development of a marketing campaign aimed at encouraging teens to pursue the RDA profession. The marketing effort would highlight the RDA as a profession, not just a job. Subsequently, the workgroup came forward with a proposal for a pilot program. The Board approved this marketing proposal to educate teens and young adults ages 15-20 about dental careers with a key message on dental assisting as a career. The Board updated the Public Education Campaign to include this objective.

Membership

MDA App: The Board approved funding for an MDA app; the app should be available before Annual Session. App features are expected to include: Your Membership, ADA Member Card, Continuing Education/Calendar, Legislative Center, News/MDA Journal, Practice Resources, Students/New Dentists, Job Board & Classifieds, Annual Session, MDA Insurance/Services, MDA Foundation, and Contact Us.

In-Office Dental Plan Guide: The Board received an update on the development of a guide to help members implement an in-office dental plan. Members had requested a resource to help them offer affordable dental care to their uninsured or underinsured patients. The [Guide to In-Office Dental Plans](#) is now available to members on the MDA website.

MDA Foundation

Nancy Maier, MDA Foundation Executive Director, provided a report on the MDA Foundation that included the Foundation's new committee structure, Sparkling Smiles Celebration during the MDA Annual Session, and the 2020 Mission of Mercy. The Sparkling Smiles Celebration will be held Wednesday, April 29 from 6-9pm. Registration for the 2020 [Mission of Mercy](#) is now open. The event will be held May 28-31 in Flint, Michigan at the Dort Federal Credit Union Event Center. To date, there are 640 volunteers. Fundraising is going well.

Appointments

Action on Board Nominations: The Board approved directors for the MDA Insurance & Financial Group and a new director for the MDA Foundation. It also forwarded nominees for appointment to the Michigan Board of Dentistry and put forward ADA Council appointments for the consideration of Ninth District trustee, Dr. Julio Rodriguez.

2020-2021 Committee Appointments: The Board approved the slate of committee members for 2020-2021 as well as committee scopes.