



# Signature

CENTRAL COAST DENTAL SOCIETY

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**CCDS President Dr. Keyla Springe**

Dear Friends,

Cultivating a Positive Office Culture in Dentistry: Forbes Magazine defines workplace culture as: “The shared values, belief systems, attitudes, and the set of assumptions that people in a workplace share.” As we all know, dentistry is a very demanding field, and in order to create a harmonious and productive work environment for everyone, it is extremely important for us as dentists and/or business owners to cultivate a positive office culture. A positive office culture not only boosts the morale and job satisfaction of our employees, but can also *enhance* patient experiences and outcomes. In this article I will share some general strategies I have learned that are tailored to the field of dentistry and healthcare that can help create a positive office culture.

As a leader, your behavior sets the tone for the

entire office. Lead by example, and do your best to always show your communication skills and positive attitude to encourage your team to follow a strong example. Being able to communicate clearly and rationally is an essential skill that can help us give proper patient care, and smooth over the day-to-day operations. Regular team meetings, morning huddles, and making sure that our communication stays calm, honest, and rational, will help keep everyone on the same page.

Respect among colleagues is fundamental to a positive office culture. Regardless of roles, every team member's contribution should be acknowledged and appreciated. Encouraging input from various perspectives can lead to innovative solutions and a sense of ownership among employees. Foster an environment where all team members, from dentists and hygienists to administrative staff, feel valued.

Investing in ongoing training for your staff is also essential. It not only enhances their skills but also shows that you value their growth. Having your team regularly attend conferences, webinars, and continuing education courses can keep them updated with the latest advancements in dentistry. Don't forget to celebrate both individual and team achievements. Whether it's positive patient feedback, reaching a specific milestone, or even a routine procedure done properly, recognizing these accomplishments boosts morale and reinforces a sense of accomplishment.

It is also important to recognize the importance of a healthy work-life balance, especially in a high-stress field like healthcare. Encourage your team to take breaks, use their vacation days, and avoid excessive overtime. A refreshed and well rested team is more likely to have a positive attitude, and provide

**President (cont. on page 2)**

# CENTRAL COAST DENTAL SOCIETY

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This publication solicits announcements, essays, and articles of interest to the general membership of the CCDS. All contributions are subject to space and/or content editing at the editor's discretion.

### CLASSIFIEDS:

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Interested in serving on the  
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**“IF YOU LOVE WHAT YOU DO  
MAKE TIME TO VOLUNTEER,  
HELP LEAD AND PRESERVE  
THE INTEGRITY OF THE  
PROFESSION OF DENTISTRY  
FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS”**

*Art Dugoni, DDS*

Contact CCDS President

**Keyla Springe, DDS**

**Kspringe@sbcglobal.net**  
or Laurie

**CCDS@charter.net**

**805.544.1113**

## President (cont. from page 1)

quality patient care. We cannot forget that physical and mental well-being directly influence productivity and job satisfaction.

Lastly, and perhaps the most important of all, create an environment where patient satisfaction is a top priority. When team members feel their efforts directly impact patients' lives, they become more motivated to provide exceptional care. Encourage empathy in your office and regularly gather patient feedback to always improve your services. Again, leading by example encourages your team to follow suit.

In the fast paced world of dentistry and healthcare, a positive office culture is one of our most powerful tools, which contribute to the overall success of our offices. By prioritizing communication, collaboration, and the overall well being of your team, we can create an environment that is driven by mutual respect. A positive culture isn't built overnight. Consistent effort and dedication are needed to shape a workplace where everyone feels motivated to deliver their best work with a positive attitude.

Sincerely,  
Keyla Springe, DDS  
CCDS President

## **CDA-SPONSORED BILL SIGNED INTO LAW, IMPROVES DENTAL PLAN DISCLOSURES FOR DENTISTS, PATIENTS**

*Provided by CDA Aug 3, 2023*

In a victory for California dentists and their patients that builds on CDA’s multi-year advocacy to reform dental benefit plans, Gov. Gavin Newsom last week signed CDA-sponsored legislation that will help dental offices communicate the details of dental plan coverage to their patients. The law will provide greater clarity by requiring dental plans to clearly disclose, at the time of determining coverage, whether a patient’s plan is state or federally regulated.

Assemblymember Jim Wood (D-Healdsburg), DDS, authored the bill, AB 952, which will take effect in January 2025 so that dental plans can fully implement the required changes to comply with the new law.

### **40% of Californians are enrolled in federally regulated plans: What this means for dentists**

Most dental benefit plans are “fully insured” and regulated at the state level by the California Department of Managed Health Care or the California Department of Insurance.

Fully insured plans must comply with all California’s rules and regulations; however, many employers offer “self-insured” plans. These plans are regulated at the federal level according to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, known as ERISA, and are exempt from state rules and regulations. Employer plans that are more likely to be ERISA are those covering unions, municipalities, school districts, multi-state employers and large employer groups.

As CDA first reported when announcing the bill in February, an estimated 40% of Californians are enrolled in federally regulated self-insured plans. The differences between California-regulated and federally regulated plans can be extensive, and because ERISA plans are not required to comply with California’s laws, the billing process can be difficult and frustrating for patients and providers alike.

The new law addresses a common concern CDA hears from members who report not having clarity on the type of plan they are dealing with until after the billing process has been completed — when the plan has denied coverage or cited a billing exemption for services already rendered.

The new law helps to resolve this concern by requiring dental benefit plans to disclose in multiple ways whether a plan is state or federally regulated.

### **State or federally regulated? New law removes the difficulty from ERISA billing process**

The federal ERISA law can cause a variety of complications when it comes to regulating employee benefits. While it cannot be amended at the state level, the state can put measures in place to reduce the resulting confusion and increase plan transparency, which is what the new state law accomplishes.

Beginning Jan. 1, 2025, dental benefit plans must disclose, at the time of determining coverage, whether a patient’s plan is regulated by the state — either DMHC or CDI. They must:

Disclose through their online patient portal whether the patient’s plan is state regulated.

Disclose upon the dental office’s request whether the patient’s plan is state regulated. This requirement is especially relevant for plans that do not have a patient portal.

Include the phrase “state regulated” on the patient’s electronic or physical insurance identification card — or both, if they exist.

The improved disclosure will also be particularly helpful when a conflict occurs with a plan, making it easier for patients and dentists to identify which regulatory entity to contact.

**CDA-Sponsored Bill (cont. on page 4)**

## CDA-Sponsored Bill (cont. from page 3)

“It is vital for patients and providers to be aware of which laws apply to a patient’s dental plan,” **said Assemblyman Wood in February.** “What we have now instead is a profound lack of clarity about the standards the plans must meet and where patients and dentists can go to resolve a conflict with a plan. The ERISA notification will provide that clarity for the millions of Californians enrolled in these plans and will help alleviate confounding billing processes for dental offices too.”

With dental plans soon required to disclose through their patient portal whether the patient’s plan is state regulated, CDA especially encourages dentists to sign up to use portals offered by plans.

Dental offices will find that many plans’ portals provide access to patients’ eligibility, benefits, treatment history, frequencies, remaining maximums and deductibles in addition to the regulatory disclosure starting in 2025. Many plans also have features to transmit claims and predeterminations free of charge, and the direct connection to the plan’s processing system makes payment and processing very fast in most cases. Some portals allow offices to enroll in electronic funds transfer.

Until AB 952 goes into effect in 2025, dentists can sign up for an account at no cost at [freerisa.com](http://freerisa.com) to check if a patient’s dental plan is ERISA.

Members with questions about dental plan portals and how to use them can always contact [CDA’s dental benefits analyst](#) by phone or email.

### **Second CDA-sponsored dental-reform bill progresses through Legislature**

The signing of AB 952 follows other successful pieces of legislation **CDA has sponsored** in recent years to improve dental plans and provide more transparency about their eroding value.

Meanwhile, **CDA-sponsored AB 1048** (Wicks, D-Oakland) continues to progress through the Legislature and will be voted on in the Senate Appropriations Committee by Aug. 31. The bill seeks to strengthen regulatory oversight of dental plans and eliminate loopholes that increase out-of-pocket costs and deny patient coverage. CDA will inform members on the bill’s progress and share periodic reminders about the success of AB 952 up to its full implementation in January 2025.

## **CALIFORNIA DENTAL STUDENTS, RECENT DENTAL GRADS AND DEN- TAL PROFESSIONALS CAN APPLY FOR FOUNDATION GRANT UP TO \$5K**

*Published by CDA August 21, 2023*

### ***Apply for CDA Foundation’s Webb Family Grant by Sept. 15; grant also open to board-approved educational programs***

Recent graduates of a California dental school or board-approved dental assisting or dental hygiene educational program who meet eligibility requirements can apply for up to \$5,000 through the **CDA Foundation’s Webb Family Grant** to support their education or training expenses.

Eligible educational programs may also apply for the grant.

The 2023 application cycle closes Friday, Sept. 15.

### **Webb Family Grant returns with expanded purpose: More care for more patients**

Founded in 2014 and named for Russell Webb, DDS, and Kathi Webb, founding contributors of the CDA Foundation, the grant was last awarded in 2019 — to Priyadarshini Agrawal, DMD, who continues to work in public health today and is now a Foundation board member.

The grant resumes its annual application cycle and continues with its original purpose to support California dental students’ education and efforts to increase access to care, but the grant has expanded eligibility to include (1) students or recent graduates of a board-approved dental assisting or hygiene program and (2) educational programs approved by the Dental Board of California or Dental Hygiene Board of California.

Richard Graham, DDS, CDA Foundation chair, said, “Although we’re starting to see some strong gains in dental office staffing throughout the state as a result of some grants and training programs, including CDA’s own Smile Crew CA and Dental Assistant Training curriculum, practices across California are still struggling to hire auxiliary staff.”

“The retooled Webb Family Grant expands eligibility to dental assistants and hygienists to support their education and training and ultimately help with relief

**CDA Grant (cont. on page 6)**

**DENTAL OFFICE SPACE  
FOR LEASE**

**1338 Santa Rosa, San Luis Obispo**

**Long-time Dental Office  
with 6 treatment rooms and  
a private office  
in a full Dental Layout**

**Approximately 1,906 square feet**

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With 30 years of experience in the dental industry, including 12 years as a dental practice broker, Darren has built a strong network of dental professionals in California, especially in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties. He possesses extensive knowledge of dental practice sales, transitions, financing, and market trends. **Reach out to Darren by calling or texting (805) 878-0633 today.**

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## **SLO NOOR DENTAL CLINIC SEEKING DENTIST /PART-TIME**

SLO Noor Dental Clinic is looking for a skilled dentist to join our dental family. We are a local nonprofit serving uninsured and low-income adults here on the beautiful Central Coast and are committed to delivering dental treatment in a caring and compassionate manner.

This is a perfect opportunity for an experienced doctor to practice direct patient care without the pressures of billing, bottom lines, and production. Our practice is a friendly, positive, patient focused setting to help our patients feel supported and cared for.

General responsibilities:  
General dentistry  
Restorative  
Dentures/Partials  
Crowns and Bridges  
Address Periodontal concerns

Requirements:  
Licensed dentist in the State of California including current healthcare provider CPR.  
Supports the mission of SLO Noor Foundation and can offer encouragement to patients.  
Demonstrates effective communication and interpersonal skills.

Pay- \$90-\$100 per hour.  
Two days per week.

Contact:  
Annie Steel - [asteel@slonoorfoundation.org](mailto:asteel@slonoorfoundation.org)

### **CDA Grant (cont. from page 4)**

efforts for dental offices and deliver more care to underserved populations,” Dr. Graham added.

#### **Eligibility criteria, funding preferences and application process**

Interested applicants should **read the guidelines** for complete details on funding preferences, eligibility criteria, award distribution and reasons for disqualification, but eligibility criteria for individuals include:

- Be a graduate of a CODA-accredited predoctoral dental education program within the last three years of the award cycle or be positioned to graduate from such a program within six months of the time of application; or
- Be a graduate of a Dental Board of California-approved dental assisting educational program within the last three years or be positioned to graduate from a such a program within six months of the time of application; or
- Be a graduate of a Dental Hygiene Board of California-approved dental hygiene educational program within the last three years or be positioned to graduate from such a program within six months of the time of application.

Applicants who have a disadvantaged background with economic, social or other obstacles and who have past or current experience living or working in a rural, highly disadvantaged or health professional shortage area will receive funding preference.

Educational programs may apply if they are approved by either the Dental Board of California or the Dental Hygiene Board of California and provide a summary of their educational program. They will also be required to provide the Foundation with a report on how the grant disbursement was used after one year.

#### **Apply online through the CDA Foundation by Sept. 15**

The 2023 application cycle opened Aug. 15 and closes at 11:59 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 15. Access the **Webb Family Grant guidelines and application**. From there, you can also learn more about past grant recipients and the CDA Foundation’s mission to support dentists, dental professionals and organizations statewide in their efforts to provide care to underserved communities.

# NEW DENTISTS' FAMILY BEACH BBQ



**UPCOMING 2023 & 2024  
CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSES**

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2023**

**\*In Person and Virtual—you choose\***

**“Infection Control, OSHA, Ethics and CA Dental Practice Act”**

**Nancy Dewhirst, RDH, BA**

**\*FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2023**

**(Date Change from October 20)**

**\*In Person and Virtual—you choose\***

**“The Myths of Pediatric Dentistry”**

**David Rothman, DDS**

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 26, 2024**

**\*In Person and Virtual—you choose\***

**“Responsibilities and Requirements of Prescribing Schedule II Opioids”**

**& “Medically Compromised Patients”**

**Patrick Quaranta, DMD**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 22, 2024**

**\*In Person and Virtual—you choose\***

**“Quality Care in a Material World”**

**Daniel Ward, DDS**

**FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 2024**

**\*In Person and Virtual—you choose\***

**TBD**

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2024**

**\*In Person and Virtual—you choose\***

**“Infection Control, OSHA, Ethics and CA Dental Practice Act”**

**Nancy Dewhirst, RDH, BA**

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2024**

**\*In Person and Virtual—you choose\***

**Brian Novy, DDS**



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SUITE 109  
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA  
APPROX. 1,870 SF  
\$795,000

MARK ANDERSON

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798 PALM ST, SLO, CA 93401  
[AndersonCommercialRE.com](http://AndersonCommercialRE.com)  
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[cameron@pasoroblesdentalcare.com](mailto:cameron@pasoroblesdentalcare.com)

## EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues,

I would like to encourage our members to submit articles, events, birth announcements or local news to me to include in our newsletter. Please forward them to my email address:

[Jonfu.dds@gmail.com](mailto:Jonfu.dds@gmail.com)

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,  
Jon Fu, DDS  
CCDS Editor

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS  
TO SUPPORT  
TOLOSA CHILDREN'S DENTAL CENTER**

Tolosa Children's Dental Center is celebrating 20 years of providing oral health care to underserved children throughout San Luis Obispo County.

Thank you for the amazing community support and we look forward to the next 20 years!

Join us to SIP- SNACK- SUPPORT Tolosa Children's Dental Center at  
"Sip for Smiles"

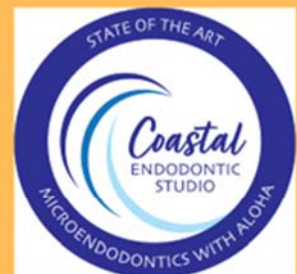
on Sunday, October 15

at Filipponi Ranch Winery from 2-5 pm.

Enjoy a relaxing fall afternoon with music from DJ Bob, and delicious tacos paired with Filipponi Ranch Wines while supporting SLO County's only nonprofit pediatric dental center. Get your tickets today at [TolosaChildrensDental.org](http://TolosaChildrensDental.org)

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SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2023 2-5 PM



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