



Signature

CENTRAL COAST DENTAL SOCIETY

Volume 33, Number 6

Dec 2023/Jan 2024



CCDS President Dr. Keyla Springe

Dear Members and Fellow Dentists,

It's with a mix of gratitude and nostalgia that I share my final message in this newsletter. Serving as the President of the Central Coast California Dental Society has been an incredibly rewarding journey. During this privileged experience, twice, I had the opportunity to visit Sacramento and witness the House of Delegates in action. That's where every dentist present has a chance of voicing their opinions and vote for what they want from the Association. This experience provided firsthand insight into the role played by the California Dental Association in supporting our dental community. It's very impressive to see how we are all empowered to either implement or modify the rules that pave the path of our profession. It's Democracy at its finest!

My observations have sparked a desire in me to

encourage more dentists to actively participate in, and belong to their local Dental Society, CDA, and ADA. As in any profession, we need our Association to protect us and fight for our best interests. The more members the Association has, the louder our voices, and the stronger our profession becomes. It may seem obvious but, we will achieve more when we are united than when we are alone. In a post Covid era, the Association deeply needs participation and membership from all dentists.

To my colleagues, I urge you to consider the benefits of active involvement. By joining these associations, you gain access to resources, a supportive community, and the opportunity for networking, among other things. Your participation not only benefits you, but also strengthens our profession as a whole.

As I transition out of this role, I want to express my deepest appreciation to each member of the Board. Your support, kindness in teaching me about my role, and dedication to the profession, have made this journey truly memorable. It's been an honor to serve alongside such passionate individuals committed to advancing dentistry. Remember, our strength lies in our unity, our passion, and our dedication to the field we love.

I leave this position with a heart full of gratitude, admiration, and hope - a hope that each one of us continues to carry the torch forward, and inspire others to join us in shaping the future of dentistry. I am left with a sense of pride, feeling that my profession is thoroughly respected and honorable. My hope is that each of you continues to engage actively, triggering others to join in and contribute to the growth and betterment of our extraordinary profession.

President (cont. on page 2)

CENTRAL COAST DENTAL SOCIETY

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All expressions of opinion and supposed fact are those of the individual author and do not necessarily represent the views and policies of the Central Coast Dental Society.

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:

Free to members of CCDS (limit 25 words). \$50.00 per issue for non-members (\$.50 per word after first 25 words)

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President (cont. from page 1)

The time has come to pass the baton to the next President, Dr. Craig Fitch. By our interactions I can affirm that he will do amazing in this position. Congratulations, Dr. Fitch, I hope you find it as gratifying as I did!

With warmest regards,

Keyla Springe, DDS, MAGD, FICOI
CCDS President



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

I look forward to hearing from you.

**Jon Fu, DDS
CCDS Editor**

CCDS WELL REPRESENTED AT CDA HOUSE OF DELEGATES



Speaking to resolutions are Drs. Lynn Sayre-Carstairs and Bruce Whitcher



CCDS Representatives
Drs. Lynn Sayre-Carstairs, Bruce Whitcher, Keyla Springe,
Craig Fitch and Executive Director Laurie Torgerson



SMILEDIRECTCLUB ABRUPTLY CLOSING GLOBAL OPERATIONS, ABANDONING CUSTOMERS MID-TREATMENT

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With SmileDirectClub shuttering operations immediately, California Dentist should prepare for influx of patients needing orthodontic treatment.

On Dec. 8, SmileDirectClub [announced to its customers through its website](#) that it would be shutting down operations after filing for bankruptcy in September.

In its official statement, SmileDirectClub expressed regret for the inconvenience caused by its immediate global shutdown and encouraged customers to seek guidance from local dentists for future orthodontic treatment.

While it is unknown how many California customers the direct-to-consumer orthodontic company had, SmileDirectClub claims to have served over 2 million customers worldwide. With the company's sudden closure this month, dentists throughout the state will likely be approached by SmileDirectClub customers for a variety of reasons including incomplete treatment plans, maintenance of completed treatment plans or corrective treatment.

CDA was proud to support [successful legislation in 2019](#) that addressed the proliferation of direct-to-consumer orthodontic companies by establishing fundamental consumer protections for patients receiving care through teledentistry. Assembly Bill 1519 (1) added transparency requirements for dentists to disclose basic identifying information prior to treatment, (2) preserved patients' ability to report problematic care to the dental board rather than being held hostage by non-disclosure agreements and (3) created explicit parity in the standard of care for patients undergoing orthodontic care, including reviewing recent X-rays.

CDA's frequently asked questions addressing treatment concerns

CDA is disturbed by SmileDirectClub's announcement of abrupt shutdown, which raises concerns about potential patient abandonment and serious financial implications for patients. CDA has created this FAQ to address the most pressing concerns of SmileDirectClub customers who are navigating the future of their dental treatment as your new and prospective patients.

Q: How can I receive a refund for care if I am either unsatisfied with my orthodontic care or was unable to complete my treatment plan?

It is currently unknown how a refund process will work. SmileDirectClub stated it will provide more information as the bankruptcy proceedings unfold.

Q: What are the risks of failing to continue payments on my SmilePay Plan?

Failure to continue payments per your original treatment payment plan may have consequences, including legal action and potential damage to your credit score. SmileDirectClub has directed customers to contact Healthcare Finance Direct (HFD) at 877.874.3877 or support@gohfd.com with any questions.

Q: What should I do if I am unable to contact my SmileDirectClub dentist or believe I received substandard care?

Any dentist providing care to a person residing in California must be licensed by the Dental Board of California, regardless of where the dentist is physically located. If you believed you were abandoned or received substandard care, [you can file a complaint](#) with the Dental Board of California for further investigation.

Q: How can I find a local dentist or orthodontist to continue my orthodontic treatment?

You can use [CDA's Find a Dentist directory](#) and [Medi-Cal's Smile, California directory](#) or you can [contact your community's local dental society](#) for help locating a new dentist in your area. It is crucial to choose a dentist who can provide or facilitate both emergent and ongoing care. This ensures that your dental health is consistently monitored and any issues can be addressed promptly to prevent complications in the long run. With the collapse of the SmileDirectClub platform, your local dentist or orthodontist will likely need to restart your treatment.

Q: How can I get a copy of my dental records for future treatment?

California law requires that a treating dentist provide their contact information to all patients and mandates that patients receive a copy of their dental records if requested. Customers can contact SmileDirectClub and their treating dentist to request a copy of those records. In addition to contacting SmileDirectClub directly, look at any past communications or packaging on aligners you received that might have the name, license number or other contact information about your treating dentist to request dental records directly from the provider. It is unclear if SmileDirectClub has established a process for customers to request and receive their health records. The inability to receive records should not prevent customers from seeking the care of a dentist for corrective or continued treatment.

Q: How can I stay informed about updates and developments in this situation, including participating in collective legal action?

Due to the terms established by SmileDirectClub, it is likely that any collective action will be pursued via mass arbitration by affected customers. You should regularly [check SmileDirectClub's website](#) for updates. Additionally, consider joining relevant online forums or communities where affected individuals may share information and experiences. CDA will continue to share in the [newsroom](#) any major developments in how the winding down of SmileDirectClub's operations impacts customers.

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California Law Requires Use of Lead or Lead-equivalent Aprons During Dental X-rays

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Recommendations to discontinue patient shielding are increasing, but dentists must follow state law

Technical improvements to dental radiographic equipment combined with enhanced imaging techniques have decreased patients' radiation exposure substantially over the last three decades.

Meanwhile, reviews of recent studies and reports by radiation protection organizations on the use of patient shielding during dental X-rays have led researchers and organizations to conclude that radiation doses from dentomaxillofacial imaging pose negligible risk.

Also considering that lead aprons provide no protection from internal scattered radiation, the American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology recommends that thyroid and gonadal shielding during diagnostic intraoral, panoramic, cephalometric and CBCT imaging be discontinued as routine practice.

"There is ample evidence in scientific literature that shows that the apron and thyroid collar do not provide any additional benefit," said Aruna Ramesh, DMD, a co-author of the **article outlining the recommendation**, which was published in the Journal of the American Dental Association in September.

The academy goes further to state that federal, state and local regulations and guidance "should be revised to remove any actual or implied requirement." The American Association of Physicists in Medicine and the British Institute of Radiology have issued similar recommendations.

California regulation requires the use of lead aprons

Dentists may be reading these studies with interest and concern for how the discontinuation of required patient shielding would bear out in their practices, but, for now, **section 30311 of California's Code of Regulations** still stands:

- Each patient undergoing dental radiography shall be draped with a protective apron of not less than 0.25-millimeter lead-equivalent to cover the gonadal area.

This protective apron can be lead-impregnated leather or vinyl and must cover the reproductive organs of all patients, including pregnant patients, who undergo dental X-ray examinations.

A specially designed lead-impregnated thyroid collar can but is not required to be used to protect the thyroid gland from excessive or unnecessary radiation during intraoral X-ray exposures.

CDA's member-only resources **Radiation Safety in Dental Practice: A Study Guide** and **Radiation Safety Instructions** provide more information on patient protection, the care and inspection of protective aprons and the responsibilities of dental personnel who operate X-ray equipment.

CDA will communicate any change in state's radiographic regulations

With a sizable and growing body of evidence that refutes the protective benefit of lead aprons, CDA anticipates discussing regulatory changes with the California Department of Public Health in the near future and would communicate any forthcoming changes early and thoroughly with dentists.

Discontinuing the requirement to use protective aprons during dental X-rays would likely require new safety training for the dental team and cohesive patient communications. Dentists would need to explain why the dental office is no longer required to use lead aprons and be prepared to address patient questions and concerns with careful consideration given to pediatric patients and patients who may be apprehensive.

Looking for more guidance on complying with regulations? See CDA's full library of **environment and radiation resources** or [contact an expert analyst](#).

December 7, 2023

**HOLIDAY SOCIAL
THANK YOU
DRS. JAC & JEWELENE PEDERSEN**



**UPCOMING 2023 & 2024
CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSES**

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

“SuperGeneralist: The Pathway to Independence and Fulfillment”

Mark Malterud, DDS, MAGD

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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