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*Louisiana Statewide Oral Health Coalition  
Virtual Meeting Minutes  
Friday, January 22, 2021*

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The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. (attendee list from Zoom at end of minutes). Coalition vice chair, Dr. Billy Hall, welcomed attendees and new member of the Coalition Dr. LaTedra Collins.

Linda Matessino motioned to approve the minutes as presented from the October 2, 2020, meeting. The motion was seconded by Lisa Staples and passed unanimously.

***Old and New Business*** – Dr. Billy Hall

The Coalition's e-newsletter is set to go out quarterly. Missy Garcia asked that members email the Coalition with suggestions of topics or events. February is National Children's Dental Health (NCDHM) month and partners who are hosting events or activities for NCDHM should consider submitting that information.

The Dental Sealant Workgroup is working with Well-Ahead Louisiana to create the oral health report card. There is a meeting on Jan. 28.

The executive officers and workgroup chairs will also meet Jan. 26 to do an Oral Health Coalition State Plan Assessment and make adjustments to the state plan as necessary.

As previously reported, the Louisiana Oral Health Coalition is now registered as a 501c3 Non-Profit Organization with the Louisiana Secretary of State. The next step is to be recognized as a non-profit federally through the IRS.

***Events***

- 2021 Oral Health Summit in partnership with Well-Ahead Louisiana - Friday, March 12 (Virtual). Theme: Road to Addresses Oral Health Equity in Louisiana. The registration link should be shared with stakeholders in the next week or so.
- 2021 Children's Dental Health Month - Activities to occur throughout the month of February.
- Well-Ahead LA is working with Dr. Suzanne Fournier and Celeste Terry to do a precorded webinar training regarding challenges that school based oral health programs have throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Information and materials are available to schools statewide.

***Speaker: Dr. Tina Gunaldo***

Tina Patel Gunaldo, PhD, DPT, MHS is the director, Center for Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Practice, LSU Health Science Center New Orleans was the featured speaker. Dr. Gunaldo's specialty has been to pursue interprofessional collaboration (or education) as a tool pertaining to all

health professions coming together in a multidisciplinary fashion to work towards population health versus individual health. In the past, most training in graduate programs or degrees related to health care professionals specializing in a certain topic or part of the body. It is apparent now that it is important for us to work together collectively to collaborate to help many people at one time and maximize scope of practice, further proving that the mouth is a very important part of the body. Students are now being taught a more multidisciplinary method of care for team-based care. The plan at LSU started with immunizations. LSU School of Dentistry started out by getting access to Linx to be able to see what vaccines a patient has received. This began long before COVID-19. All oral health providers in Louisiana can get access to Linx. There was a big push for dentists to help advise patients on HPV but obviously now, there will be a great opportunity to look into Linx to see if a patient has gotten the COVID-19 vaccine.

Dr. Gualdo currently has a Merck Grant allowing her to go around the state educating and collaborating with dental components to educate oral health providers on the Linx system and the interprofessional collaboration for vaccines.

As part of the collaboration, Dr. Gualdo was a partner in the group who have been working together with the LA Dental Association to gain access to vaccines through hospitals for oral health providers. On Friday, Feb. 5, the group will offer a continuing education course to those dentists and hygienists who are interested in administering the COVID-19 vaccine.

### **Partner Updates**

*LDH/Well-Ahead LA Oral Health Promotion:* Terence Robinson said that they will be working to develop resources to be disseminated in schools and facilitating color contest materials to promote NCDHM in February. They are also developing alternate educational programs for kids, as well as expanding partnerships to increase school sealant programs for 2021-2022. They are also planning a community water fluoridation presentation for April 2021. Well-Ahead LA also hopes to have the previously mentioned oral health report card ready to be presented at the March 12 Summit after the Dental Sealant Workgroup meets Jan. 28. Terrence reported that he is putting together the data points for the report card.

*Louisiana Dental Association:* Annette Droddy reported that the LDA's main focus in January has been to work with dentists to gain access to vaccines through hospitals throughout the state. The dentists were initially going to try to work component by component to vaccinate themselves but since the Governor allowed all health care to get the vaccine earlier than expected, the LDA took a different route. As mentioned, we are offering a training course for dentists who are interested in administering the vaccine at any point, either through their office or in volunteering when it is available to everyone.

So far, there have not been many Give Kids A Smile Day events planned throughout the state that has treatment as part of the event. With the additional restrictions for numbers in dental offices and with schools restricting field trips and activities out of the school building, very few dentists have been able to schedule anything for GKAS. Many dentists have offered to "Zoom" in and speak to children if the school is interested.

LDA is still heavily involved in the MCO change to DentaQuest as many of our members are having trouble verifying eligibility in the portal and understanding the differences between the two programs.

Annette also mentioned that dentists in Monroe had asked her the previous day about any fluoridation efforts available through LDH. Apparently, there is an opportunity to look at fluoridating Monroe and they would like to partner with the state. Annette will connect MeChaune Butler and Jay Ray to Dr. Chris Robinson and Dr. King Scott.

The new dean of the LSU School of Dentistry, Dr. Rob Laughlin, has expressed an interest in working with the state to have a dentist as a dental director. At the appropriate time, Annette will connect MeChaune and Dr. Laughlin.

*Louisiana Primary Care Association:* Yvette Merritt reported that LPCA is also working with the vaccine rollout. LPCA also participated in a virtual lecture with the LSU School of Dentistry.

LPCA is also hosting a virtual conference March 2-4 and is accepting abstracts. Yvette also mentioned a Tri-State virtual conference being held Jan. 28 (Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee).

*Prevention Workgroup:*

- **Dental Sealant** (Dr. Billy Hall) – The workgroup is looking at a 3-year sustainability plan, as well as a dental champion program. The dental champion program would promote the mission of the coalition and oral health in general. The group is also looking at Medicaid reimbursements for dental sealants and is part of the team supporting Well-Ahead LA on the oral health report card.
- **Fluoride/Fluoride Varnish** (Jay Ray) – A one-pager on fluoride varnish has been done and should be finalized by end of January. The one-hour CWF webinar has been developed and was presented on Oct. 22, 2020 in partnership with the LA Rural Water Association and the Louisiana Municipal Association. Planning another webinar for 2021. Water inspections are still on hold because of COVID. Well-Ahead made two CWF presentations to two small groups of water operators. Well-Ahead also mailed out the CDC 2019 water quality fluoridation awards to 23 facilities. Terrebonne Parish water plant has also restarted CWF after being down several months because of plant renovations.

*Policy Workgroup:* Dr. Doug Cross reported that the teledentistry rules were filed in the Nov. 20 Louisiana Register. After completing the required timeframe, the rules should be adopted soon. Dr. Cross is also working with LPCA on D0190, the screening code for teledentistry. It would make the program more efficient and would make referrals a lot easier. The Workgroup would also like to research and discuss with LDH reimbursement for the Medicaid adult denture program. Other than the new value-added extractions being offered, the adult denture program has not had any changes or increases in nearly 20 years. With the increases in lab fees over 20 years, it makes it very difficult for dentists to participate in the program. Dr. Cross believes the state spends very little on this program and it does a lot of good and he would like to see an increase in this reimbursement rates for dentures.

*Medicaid Update (Kevin Guillory):* The DentaQuest program went live Jan. 1. LDH is working with partners to resolve problems that dentists are having getting credentialed or getting into the portal. Members have until March 31 to transfer plans. After that, they can switch again during open enrollment. LDH is also working with CMS to get higher utilization of fluoride varnish.

**Additional Member Updates:**

Lisa Staples reported that EatMoveGrow will have a newsletter going out throughout February with

educational videos, social media posts, games, etc. She invites everyone to sign up and there will be giveaways for people who share it on social media. Here is the survey link to sign up for the EatMoveGrow Oral Health News newsletter: <https://forms.gle/LUAjxgDVYHVnpGoX7>

**LOHC Trailblazer Award Presented to Dr. Douglas Cross**

The Trailblazer is an innovative leader blazing a trail to guide others on the path to advancing Oral Health throughout the state of Louisiana. They are mission driven and dedicated to improving Oral Health for all Louisianans. They exhibit leadership qualities pushing to increase access to care, contributing to the provision of oral health education, promoting the importance of improving preventive oral health interventions and supporting the efforts of the workforce in the dental community.

Congratulations Dr. Cross! Your efforts towards pursuing teledentistry rules for the State of Louisiana will long be remembered in the hearts of minds of oral health advocates.

**Next meeting will be April 23, 2021.**

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:12 a.m.

***Attendee List from Zoom***

MeChaune Butler  
Missy Garcia  
Douglas Cross  
Yvette Merritt  
Lisa Staples  
Shirley Merrick  
Shanna R. Warner  
CA Crain  
Annette Droddy  
Jay Ray  
Dr. Billy Hall  
Yasmeen M.  
LaTedra Collins  
Kevin Guillory  
Dr. Tina Gunaldo  
Faith Boudreaux  
Linda Matessino  
Inclusivcare (Dr. Shondra Williams)  
Liz Smith  
Jenni Hew  
Gabrielle Juneau  
Dr. YaSheka Adams  
Celeste Terry  
Michael - SWLAHEC

Shannon Robertson

Monica Roberts

LaTedra Collins

D. Gray

Shirley Merrick

Erica Rose-Crawford

Terence Robinson

Jabari Sullen

Andrea Perry

Jenni Hew

Lisa Staples