

Please note the following items that the Council on Dental Practice has been working on this year.

DENTAL TEAM WELLNESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the activities and progress of the Dental Team Wellness Advisory Committee (DWAC) since the December 2025.

The Council's role is to provide guidance to dentists in practice. Its subject matter responsibility for dentist health and wellness includes:

- Dental professional well-being, wellness and ergonomics;
- Patient safety and wellness; and
- Liaison relationships with state well-being programs and related national organizations.

In 2026, DWAC priorities include:

- Increase awareness and utilization of Well Being Index (WBI), as outlined in DWAC Strategy set in 2022 and aligned with the National Academy of Medicine (NAM) National Plan for Health Workforce Well-Being
- Enhancing WBI resources with state-specific wellness resources
- Removing barriers for seeking well-being support, from licensure application questions to disability insurance.

WORKFORCE AMBASSADOR PROGRAM:

The Council's strategy to address dental workforce challenges is multi-faceted. The Workforce Ambassador Program launched in April 2025 to engage member dentists and state society leaders in collaborative efforts to strengthen the dental workforce. Program goals include expanding the dental team pipeline and improving workforce distribution, particularly in rural areas. Workforce Ambassadors work with their state dental societies, dental boards, and community workforce related organizations to positively impact their state's dental workforce by identifying and advancing a priority workforce goal.

Participation has expanded from 5 states at launch to 19 states currently: AL, AK, CT, FL, IN, IA, KY, IL, 11 MA, MT, NH, NJ, NY, OR, RI, SD, TX, VA, and WA. Ambassadors meet monthly to provide progress updates, share resources, and learn from one another. ADA

staff from the Federal and State Advocacy and Practice Institute teams support the program and regularly engage external subject matter experts to broaden Ambassadors' exposure to innovative workforce models.

WORKFORCE CAREER RESOURCES:

A digital strategy focused on awareness and education about dental careers was prioritized to create and disseminate content that appeals to younger audiences and is easily shared by stakeholders who help guide them.

Key elements of this strategy include:

Updating ADA.org/careers to provide updated, easy-to-use information and resources on dental careers.

Video contest hosted by CDP to encourage dental team members to submit videos on why they love their career.

Social media influencer strategy featuring dental team members sharing authentic stories and information about their careers and reach career seekers on the social platforms they are already looking for career information on. (CDP worked with communications team members to vet and approve the social media influencers featured in the campaign.)

The ADA.org/careers section of the ADA website has been completely revamped with updated information and links to videos created during this campaign with influencers and the CDP video contest.

ADA EDUCATIONAL TOOLS DESIGNED TO SUPPORT THE ONBOARDING OF NEW DENTAL ASSISTANTS IN STATES THAT ALLOW ON THE JOB TRAINING:

The Council believes that programs to onboard entry level allied dental team members may be a short-term solution to workforce shortages while supporting long term pipeline recruitment efforts. The Council on Dental Practice elected, to explore opportunities with virtual education entities to develop dental team educational programs.

ADA Board of Trustees authorized ADA staff to negotiate and execute a formal agreement with Immersify Education to develop robust, virtual education modules including training support for dental assistant hires. CDP provided feedback to the curriculum course content and will evaluate the program before it's release. Immersify's propriety platform

hosts educational courses for learners that can be accessed through mobile, tablet and desktop applications.