

1 **MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL ON ADVOCACY FOR ACCESS AND PREVENTION**
2 **ADA HEADQUARTERS, CHICAGO, IL**
3 **January 23-24, 2026**

4 **Call to Order:** The Council on Advocacy for Access and Prevention (CAAP/the Council) met
5 virtually January 23-24, 2026. The meeting was called to order by Dr. Emily Mattingly, chair, at
6 12:00 p.m., CT on January 23, 2026.

7 **Roll Call:** The following Council members and liaisons were present for all or part of the
8 meeting: Dr. Emily Mattingly (chair), Dr. Mark Vitale (vice chair); Dr. James H. Bekker; Dr.
9 Deborah Brown; Dr. Janine Burkhardt; Dr. Sara Ehsani, (CND liaison); Dr. Tiffany Green; Miguel
10 Ortiz Gonzalez (*American Student Dental Association*); Dr. Johnny Johnson; Dr. Jeffrey Kahl
11 (*Trustee*); Dr. Sean McClaren, Dr. Greg Millwood; Dr. Alexandria Otto, Dr. Sharon Perlman; Dr.
12 Kadambari Rawal, Dr. Nick Paul Rogers; Dr. Megha Sata; Dr. Michelle Scholtz; and Dr.
13 Caroline Zeller.

14 **Association Staff in attendance (for all or portions of the meeting):** Mike Kendall Esq.; Mr.
15 Paul O'Connor; Mr. Robert Burns, Mr. Jim Schultz; Dr. Betsy Shapiro.

16 **Dental Practice Staff in attendance (for all or portions of the meeting):** Dr. Krishna
17 Aravamudhan; Ms. Laura Jarosz, Dr. Elizabeth Lense, Mr. Earl Sewell, Mr. Ian Hedges, Mr. Jon
18 Zink.

19 **Guests present (for part of the meeting):** Ansen Ali (Dental Student), Dr. Chris Delecki
20 (NFAC Chair), Dr. Shailee Gupta (NOLHA Chair), Dr. David Miller, Dr. Nader Nadershahi, and
21 Dr. Sam Zwetchkenbaum.

22 Following the roll call, the presence of a quorum was noted.

23 **PRELIMINARY BUSINESS**

24 **Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement and Confidentiality Statement:** The Chair
25 referenced the Conflict-of-Interest Disclosure Statement included on the agenda and called for
26 disclosures of potential conflicts of interest. The Confidentiality Statement was also discussed.

27 **Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was unanimously adopted and approved by general consent
28 with the permission for the chair to reorder items as needed.

29 **Approval of Consent Calendar:** A consent calendar was prepared to expedite the business of
30 the Council. Council members had the opportunity to remove any item from the consent
31 calendar for consideration during the general meeting.

32 **Resolved**, that the resolutions contained within the following reports be approved by
33 consent.

- 34 • Recording of Results of E-ballots
- 35 • Appointment of Consultants

36 **Resolved**, that the following reports be filed.

- 37 • 2025-2026 Subcommittee Appointments
- 38 • Appointment of Consultants
- 39 • ASDA Consultant Report
- 40 • DQA Update
- 41 • Future Council Meeting Dates
- 42 • Post-Meeting Evaluation
- 43 • Report of the New Dentist Committee

44 **Dr. Emily Mattingly, Chair**, welcomed the Council members and encouraged them to actively
45 participate and share updates on regulatory, legislative, and other ongoing issues within their
46 respective districts.

47 **Dr. Jeffrey Kahl, Trustee liaison, Fourteenth District**, provided an overview of the current
48 state of the ADA, including the Association’s finances and leadership’s forward-looking
49 approaches to developing new revenue streams. He also provided updates on the resolution of
50 membership software issues, ongoing efforts to select a new Executive Director, and the
51 reimagining of the SmileCon Convention.

52
53 **Mr. Jim Schultz, Senior Vice President of the ADA Government and Public Affairs**,
54 provided a Washington, D.C., perspective on how the new administration is influencing the
55 national climate surrounding community water fluoridation. He noted that recent appointments to
56 certain federal agencies have made efforts to defend water fluoridation more challenging. This
57 update prompted a candid discussion among Council members regarding strategies to address
58 antifuoridation advocacy efforts aimed at discontinuing the use of fluoridated water in
59 communities nationwide.

60 **Mr. Paul O’Connor, Senior Legislative Liaison, State Government Affairs**, provided a key
61 overview of legislative activities in various states, particularly those that impact community water
62 fluoridation. He also gave an update on Medicaid programs by the current political
63 administration.

64 **2025 House of Delegates Actions and Resolution 332 Discussion:** The Council engaged in
65 a robust discussion of Resolution 332, focusing on gaps that remain unaddressed in community
66 water fluoridation efforts. The Council identified these gaps and discussed anticipated actions
67 related to Resolution 332 following consideration by the 2025 ADA House of Delegates. In
68 2026, the Council will advance its efforts through intensified member continuing education,
69 enhanced spokesperson training, and expanded state grassroots engagement, including the
70 use of rapid response talking points and publications in state dental association journals.

71 **Dr. Shailee Gupta, Chair NACHLD**, provided an overview of health literacy committee activities
72 over the past several months, including the continued success of the Dental Student Health
73 Literacy Video Contest, (the Council viewed the 2025 winning video), the National Health
74 Literacy Toolkit, and upcoming collaborations with other health organizations to provide health
75 literacy in dentistry educational materials. Dr. Gupta also presented resolutions to change the
76 committee’s name from the National Advisory Committee on Health Literacy in Dentistry
77 (NACHLD) to the National Oral Health Literacy Alliance (NOHLA) and to adopt the NOHLA
78 Action Plan for 2026–2028. The Council approved the committee’s name change to the National
79 Oral Health Literacy Alliance (NOHLA) and approved the NOHLA Action Plan for 2026–2028.

80 **Resolved**, that the advisory committee known as the National Advisory Committee on
81 Health Literacy in Dentistry be changed to the National Oral Health Literacy Alliance and
82 be it further
83

84 **Resolved**, that the Action Plan for 2026-2028 be approved.
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87 **WATER FLUORIDATION UPDATE:** The Council received a report from the National
88 Fluoridation Advisory Committee (NFAC) that prompted much discussion about current member
89 education and state level advocacy which took place in 2025 calendar year. Special attention
90 was paid to the Fluoridation Ambassador program which began in February and has continued
91 to gather interested advocates, especially from dental students.
92

93 **STRATEGIC DISCUSSION-SPECIAL NEEDS POPULATIONS:** The Council participated in a
94 strategic discussion on Special Needs patient populations led by topic experts. Issues of
95 particular interest were access barriers, dental staff education, funding aspects, and provider
96 training to meet the needs of this population. Additionally, the Council approved moving forward
97 with policy review on this topic and noted that Geriatrics should be a separate population
98 consideration from Special Needs.
99

100 **MEDICAID PROGRAM UPDATE:** The Council approved the Dental Access Partnership Across
101 States (DAPS) and Perinatal Early Action for Resilient Little Smiles (PEARLS) pilot programs to
102 address Age 1 dental visits with anticipatory guidance and network adequacy in Medicaid to
103 include interested states, with defined evaluation metrics and reporting back to the Council to
104 support long term sustainability.
105
106

107 **Resolved**, the Dental Access Partnership Across States (DAPS) and Perinatal Early
108 Action for Resilient Little Smiles (PEARLS) pilot programs be launched to address Age 1
109 dental visits with anticipatory guidance and network adequacy in Medicaid to include
110 interested states, with defined evaluation metrics and reporting to support long term
111 sustainability.
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113 **ADA FOUNDATION UPDATE:** A written report from the Foundation was included in the
114 Agenda Book
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116 **POLICIES FOR UPCOMING REVIEW:** The Council received the list of ADA policies which are
117 currently due for review.
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120 **RURAL WORKFORCE ACTIVITY:** A report of the Workforce Joint Subcommittee was shared
121 with the Council. Of particular interest was the information obtained from the Health Occupation
122 Student Association (HOSA) which focuses on dental career promotion for high school students.
123 A Council member offered information on the significant loan repayment opportunities within the
124 rural areas of her state.
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127 **COUNCIL OPERATIONS**

128 **Council Meeting Dates:** The in-person Council meeting will be held July 23-24, 2026. The
129 January 2027 virtual meeting dates will be January 21-22, 2027. The 2027 in-person meeting will be
130 tentatively scheduled for July 22-23, 2027.

131 **Adjournment:** There being no further business, the Council meeting was adjourned at 12:00
132 pm CT on Friday, January 24, 2026.