



The newly installed NYCDS leadership (left to right): President-Elect Vera W.L. Tang, Vice President Andrew S. Deutch, President Suchie Chawla, Immediate Past President Mina C. Kim, Treasurer Jaskaren Randhawa and Secretary Egidio A. Farone



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

TOGETHER WE RISE, TOGETHER WE THRIVE

Suchie Chawla, DMD, MD

I sincerely thank you all for entrusting me with the honor of serving as president of the New York County Dental Society. In the immortal words of Queen Elizabeth, "Life lived in service is not a sacrifice; it is an honor."

Please allow me to share a glimpse of my journey. Born in Prague, Czechoslovakia, and navigating through Warsaw, Poland; Kathmandu, Nepal; and India, my experiences have shaped me. At age 15, we embarked on a new chapter in the USA. I take pride in being the daughter of a diplomat from the Indian foreign service, a man who instilled in me compassion, hard work, and empathy. I believe behind every fearless woman is a loving and supportive father and mother. His reminder that, "At my worst day, my life was better than the billions in this world," resonates as my guiding mantra.

Becoming an oral & maxillofacial surgeon and president of the New York County Dental Society has been both challenging and fulfilling. As one of very few women in the specialty to graduate from both dental and medical school, I know that my father is smiling upon me. I can't believe that it's already been nearly 17 years since completion of subspecialty training.

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Continuing Education

Allow Me to Introduce Myself

Irvind Khurana, DDS

Education Director



As the newly appointed continuing education director, let me introduce myself to many newer members who many not know me from my years as NYCDS president.

After graduating from NYU in 1982, I immediately became an ADA member because of all the benefits ADA membership provides to young graduates. I also wanted to “give back” to my profession and became involved in voluntary participation on various committees at NYCDS (then known as

First District Dental Society) and the Greater New York Dental Meeting (GNYDM). After a few years of being on the Board of Directors and in other leadership positions, I was elected president of NYCDS in 2016. Thereafter, I held several leadership positions at GNYDM for the last six years.

After my good friend Mitchell Rubenstein decided to step down from the Continuing Education Director position last fall and recommended me as his successor based on my vast experience with CE programs at the GNYDM. I was initially concerned about accepting this position -- thinking “How am I going to match Mitch’s outstanding success he achieved in the past six years?” -- especially during and after the challenging pandemic years!

My vision for this program is to provide quality education to our membership from a wide range of nationally recognized clinicians and speakers at our headquarters. In order to achieve this goal I seek your input on the types of courses you would prefer - lectures or hands-on, which subjects, half-day or full-day programs, preferred days of the week? Is there a particular clinician you would like to have lecture at NYCDS?

Please feel free to email me at ikhuranadds@yahoo.com or Valerie Burgos at vburgos@nycdentalsociety.org with your suggestions. Your input will help us tremendously in our efforts to lineup a series of quality presentations in the future.



A snapshot from one of our many CE classes.

Be sure to see our upcoming scheduled courses on page 14. Visit www.nycdentalsociety.org and follow us on social media @NYCDS622 as new courses are added regularly.

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Judy Chei

NYCDS

(212) 573-8500

Editor

Susan Schiano Ingoglia

Design & Production

Catherine Corn

Dentists' Quarterly, ISSN #017522153, is published four times a year by the New York County Dental Society, 622 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017. © 2021, New York County Dental Society.

The opinions and information in the articles in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor or the Officers and Board of Directors of the NYCDS. Subscription \$20 per year.

Dentists' Quarterly

New York County Dental Society

622 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS



Dr. Suchie Chawla and her husband, oncologist Dr. Scott Tagawa.

The Installation of Officers at the New York Yacht Club in midtown on January 23rd celebrated the Society's newest leaders and gave members the opportunity to experience the elegant club for an evening. Surrounded by nautical and architectural history, the Society's 2024 officers were officially installed: President Suchie Chawla, President-Elect Vera W. L. Tang, Vice President Andrew Deutch, Secretary Egidio A. Farone, and Treasurer Jaskaren Randhawa will serve alongside Immediate Past President Mina C. Kim. Congratulations to all for their dedication and service to NYCDS.

Distinguished speakers included NYSDA President Anthony Cuomo, who shared why he chose to be a dentist and a leader of organized dentistry, and encouraged attendees to find their "why" – a thought-provoking question echoed by Immediate Past President Mina Kim in her outgoing president's speech (see page 8). Former ADA Vice President and current candidate for ADA President-Elect Maria Maranga, who chairs the New



NYSDA President Anthony Cuomo addressing attendees at the Installation on January 23rd.

York State Dental Foundation, spoke about the NYSDF's new mission and goal of being the leading oral health champions of the vulnerable and underserved. Lastly, it was an honor to have ADA President-Elect Brett Kessler address members to share ADA updates and future goals. Dr. Kessler graciously served as the installing officer for the evening. Dr. Chawla's mentor, Dr. Andre Montazem, shared fond memories of getting to know Dr. Chawla during her residency and beyond.

During the program Dr. Guy Minoli was recognized for his years of service to the Board of Directors and Dr. David Shipper was thanked for his work once again leading last year's charity golf outing which raised over \$10,000 for New York Special Olympics. Many thanks to Dr. Mina Kim for overseeing the formal proceedings for the evening which were followed by a lovely cocktail reception.



NYCDS President Suchie Chawla surrounded by mentor Dr. Andre Montazem (left) and ADA President-Elect Brett Kessler.

In addition to the special guests mentioned above, we were pleased to have the following special guests attend: NYSDA was represented by President-Elect Prabha Krishnan, Vice President Maurice Edwards, Secretary-Treasurer Paul Leary, Trustees John Demas, Amarilis Jacobo, Lois Jackson, Guenter Jonke, Gary Scharoff, and Executive Director Greg Hill. Local components were represented by former ADA President and current Executive Director of Queens County Dental Society Chad Gehani, Second District Dental Society officers President Tricia Quartey-Sagaille, Vice President Valerie Venterina, Treasurer Phyllis Merlino, and Secretary Cherry Libramonte, Nassau County President Douglas Schildaus and Suffolk County President Steven Feigleson and Executive Director William Panzarino. Greater New York Dental Meeting General Manager Tom Loughran attended along with several members of the Organization Committee and Troubleshooters.

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS



Dr. Chawla with past President Ioanna Mentzelopoulou, Treasurer Jaskaren Randhawa, Community Outreach Chair Anna Viron, Board Member JoAnna Pufnock and Board Member Whitney Mostafiz-Levinson.

In her acceptance speech (see cover page) Dr. Chawla detailed her extraordinary journey to becoming an oral surgeon. The daughter of a diplomat, she arrived in the United States at 15 years old, and became one of a small number of female oral surgeons who also obtained a medical degree. Now Dr. Chawla is mentoring the next generation of oral and maxillofacial surgeons through her adjunct academic appointments at Mount Sinai Medical Center and New York Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center. In her role as president, Dr. Chawla is committed to working in partnership with the executive committee and board of directors to enhance membership value with meaningful programs that can have a positive impact both personally and professionally and to shine a light on an ongoing concern -- low insurance reimbursements. As noted in Dr. Chawla's acceptance speech, "Let's continue to lift while we climb, recognizing that our collective strength lies in supporting each other."

We thank our corporate friends AmWins Group Benefits, Bank of America Practice Solutions, Mandelbaum Barrett, MLMIC, and Straumann for their ongoing support for NYCDS.



ADA President-Elect candidate Maria Maranga with Secretary Egidio Farone and member Angelo Ostuni.



Attendees mingling during the reception in the historic New York Yacht Club.



Past NYCDS President David Shipper and Immediate Past President Mina Kim present the proceeds from the 2023 Charity Golf Outing to Diane Colonna on behalf of New York Special Olympics.



(left to right) Former resident of Dr. Chawla's Joyce Suh with members Janet Youn, President-Elect Vera Tang and Nancy Ekelman catching up during the cocktail reception.

Give Kids A Smile – Uplifting and Impactful!



(left to right) GKAS Co-Chair Anna Viron, GKAS Site Leaders JoAnna Pufnock, Megan Chin, and Reginald Moncrieff; GKAS Co-Chair Maggie Romao, NYCDS President Suchie Chawla and NYCDS Staff Member Susan Ingolia meet up during GKAS.

NYCDS spread smiles and raised awareness of the importance of dental health on February 2nd at Give Kids A Smile NYC (GKAS) in East Harlem School District 4. Nearly 1,300 children ages 3 – 14, from nine schools, received oral health screenings, preventive fluoride treatment, and oral hygiene education in a fun atmosphere. Prior to the event an even greater number of students watched age-specific videos created by the Give Kids A Smile Committee covering tooth-friendly foods, cavity prevention, good oral hygiene and more. A virtual Parent Workshop was held in late January led by Dr. Maggie Romao and Dr. Anne Kossowan. The workshop provides parents/caretakers with information that reinforces good oral health habits. Our GKAS event is the only one in the country that offers a parent workshop component.

Each child screened received a dental “report card” that indicated the treatment received and if there was a need for routine or urgent follow-up care. This year, the report card was provided in both English and Spanish to reflect the demographics of the community. Another program enhancement is the immediate identification of the students in need of urgent care. The list was compiled and provided to school leadership after the event. The GKAS Committee is committed to working with school leadership to see that all students in need of urgent follow up care are cared for. All of the children screened received referrals to several neighborhood health clinics where care will be rendered at no (or low) cost. Several of the schools have relationships with dental providers established through the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and students are encouraged to seek follow up care with them.

For the past eight years, Dr. Deborah Weisfuse was committed to growing Give Kids A Smile into a highly successful, large-scale community event and laid the foundation for the future success of the initiative. This year, there was new leadership -- Community Outreach Committee Chair Anna Viron and Board Member Maggie Romao – served as co-chairs of the GKAS Committee. They put generous amounts of time and energy into ensuring the volunteers were ready to carry out their various roles, updating and guiding site leaders, and working with school administrators to be ready for the event.

NYCDS was pleased to have Dr. David Tepel, director of Oral Health at the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, attend the event. GKAS leadership is working closely with the city to do even more to improve the oral health of children in underserved communities in Manhattan. The need is great. Forty-five percent of the students screened were referred for urgent/non-urgent treatment. In one school, thirty-four percent of students were in need of urgent care.

One particular story highlights the impact GKAS can have on an individual and the community. Oral surgeon James Choi screened a student who he discovered had a severe cleft palate. Alarmed, Dr. Choi worked with the school’s parent coordinator and took steps to have the student evaluated by NYU’s cleft



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GIVE KIDS A SMILE 2024

palate program, where she will have life-changing surgery that will be covered by Medicaid. This is a remarkable intervention for the student and demonstrates how GKAS can make a difference.

We truly couldn't hold such a successful large-scale event without our GKAS volunteers (over 150 this year...our most ever!) and generous sponsors. Lastly, thank you to the GKAS Committee members and site leaders who are dedicated to providing better oral health for the broader community. GKAS Co-Chairs Anna Viron and Maggie Romao extend their thanks and appreciation to their "dream team" on the GKAS Committee: Drs. Bruce Blau, Megan Chin, Ken Cooperman, Mina Kim, Anne Kossowan, Michelle Lee, Robert Lipner, Ioanna Mentzelopoulou, Reginald Moncrieff, Whitney Mostafiz-Levenson, Jae Park, Yassmin Parsaei, Irina Reyzelman, Chloe Tsang, former GKAS Chair Deborah Weisfuse and staff member Susan Ingolia.

Candid photos from the day capture the uplifting spirit of the day better than words can! [HERE](#)

Professional group photos can be found [HERE](#).



Students learning proper brushing techniques at Give Kids A Smile NYC on February 2.

NYCDS President Suchie Chawla overseeing one of nearly 1,300 oral health screenings during GKAS



Dr. David Tepel (far left), director of Oral Health for the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, seen here with Site Leader Dr. Reginald Moncrieff.

Thank you to our volunteers who made a difference for students at these East Harlem schools:



Top: Volunteers at T.A.G.
Middle: Volunteers at Central Park East 1
Bottom: Volunteers at PS 146 / D75

**Save the Date for GKAS 2025!
Friday, February 7th**



Top: Volunteers at PS 83 / PS182
Middle: Volunteers at PS / MS 7
Bottom: Volunteers at Mosaic Prep

In addition to my practice, it's been rewarding to train and mentor the next generation of oral and maxillofacial surgeons through my adjunct academic appointments at Mount Sinai and Cornell.

Organized dentistry is my belief, and unity is our strength, especially in these challenging times of digitization, AI, and the corporate world. Staying current while staying true to our roots is our commitment.

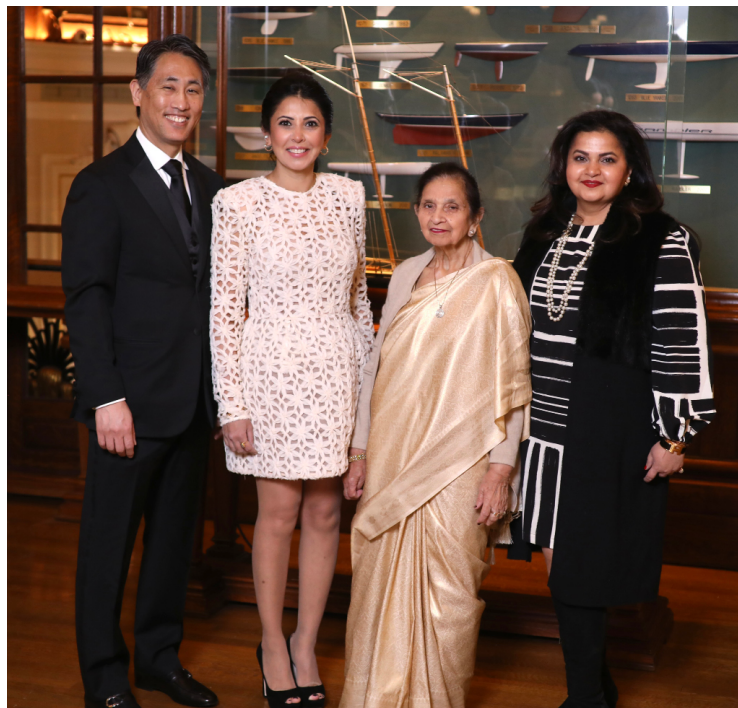
I want to acknowledge NYSDA Trustee Lois Jackson (the only president of NYCDS to serve two terms and helped guide us through COVID-19), as well as Board Member Gabriela Lee, and Past President David Shipper for their invaluable support and friendship. Together, we initiated impactful projects while facing challenges and overcoming obstacles. Accomplishments like the charity golf outing and Give Kids A Smile are two examples of great teamwork. The mentorship program, initiated under NYSDA Vice President Maurice Edwards's leadership, showcased the strength of our collaboration and late-night dedication.

I would be remiss if I did not thank Diane Laurenzo – our one and only executive director who has not only been instrumental in guiding us, but has become a friend over the years. Thank you to the NYCDS staff: Susan Ingoglia, member communications and services manager; Valerie Burgos, program planning and operations manager; Judy Chei, finance administrator who is retiring – we wish her a happy retirement; and Catherine Corn, marketing and membership coordinator. I would also like to thank Susan Apsley who retired but was always a joy with whom to work.

Importantly, I'd like to thank past, current, and new members of New York County. We would be nothing without the membership. I would like to thank my executive committee and board in advance. All your support and friendships are invaluable to me.

Thank you to Dr. Peter Schlegel and Dr. Samantha Pfeifer for sponsoring my installation at the New York Yacht Club.

Looking ahead, I am eager to continue our trajectory of growth and initiate impactful programs, including the development of an anonymous helpline for struggling dentists to address the emotional, financial, personal, and professional challenges we may encounter. Tackling insurance reimbursements is crucial for the sustainability and success of our profession, and I commit to addressing this concern.



Dr. Suchie Chawla with her husband Dr. Scott Tagawa, mother Indu Chawla and sister Ruchi Chawla.

I wouldn't be standing before you today without the support and influence of countless others. I don't have time to go through them all, but I trust that mentioning these few will represent the rest.

I would like to thank Dr. Andre Montazem for being an example of a technically brilliant surgeon with a tremendous breadth of knowledge. I extend heartfelt thanks to my mother for her sacrifices and tolerating my madness, to my sister Ruchiee (yes, Ruchiee and Suchie – Indian parents love rhyming names) who is my best friend and my die-hard for her unwavering support, to my sister-from-another-mister June Wu (a craniofacial surgeon) for pushing me personally and professionally, and to my husband Scott (an oncologist), whose goal is to help the world and cure cancer while keeping me on my toes. Lastly, I express profound gratitude to my Dad—my source of inspiration and style.

Let's continue to lift while we climb, recognizing that our collective strength lies in supporting each other. Thank you for the opportunity to serve, and I eagerly anticipate the journey ahead. Together we rise, together we thrive.

Mina C. Kim, DDS
Immediate Past President



What is My Why?

Being president gave me the opportunity to connect with so many of our members. One of the most common questions I received was “Why do you do this?”

What is my “why”? To be frank, I am having trouble answering this. I’ve made a lot of friends through the ADA, NYSDA and NYCDS, but is this a compelling enough reason to spend less time at my office, less time with my friends or family? Why do I volunteer?

One of my New Year’s resolutions was to watch less Bravo and read more “real books.” Like most resolutions, we start with the best intentions and it peters away pretty fast. I started the year listening to podcasts and reading books, and they were just so boring. Just when I was ready to scrap the whole resolution thing, I listened to a podcast by Simon Sinek. He wrote the book “Start with Why.” What he said resonated with me. I needed to figure out my inspiration.

Even as president, although I enjoyed the work, I couldn’t articulate why I spent all this time volunteering with organized dentistry and why it was important. I took a step back and asked myself, “Why am I a practicing dentist?” We spend a good portion of our day in the office, so I better know exactly why I am doing this. Right away, I knew my favorite days are when I come to work with a hole in my schedule and that hole gets filled by an emergency. You have that patient who comes with an abscess because they were afraid to get that root canal so they just delayed or you have the patient who has to give a presentation later that day and comes in with a fractured #9. When you can help your patients and see them transform from a place of fear and panic to one of comfort and trust -- that’s when I feel really good about what we’re doing. Of course, I am also happy to make money and do a good job technically, but what is most rewarding about dentistry to me is being able to provide the best patient care and building strong relationships with my patients. This is my why.

Taking a step back, how does NYCDS, NYSDA, ADA (collectively called the tripartite) – help me with my why? The tripartite not only gives me more opportunities to help patients but fights for all of us with the obstacles we face every day that prevent us from delivering the best patient care. Programs



Immediate Past President Mina Kim receiving her President’s Award, with newly installed President Suchie Chawla.

like Give Kids A Smile NYC, now led by Drs. Anna Viron and Maggie Romao, gives us the opportunity to provide dental education and screenings to underserved children. We also are fighting against low dental insurance reimbursements, helping staffing issues by finding qualified team members and dealing with student loan forgiveness.

Organized dentistry supports me in my WHY and that’s why I am involved. So many of our past presidents, Drs. Ioanna Mentzelopoulou, Lois Jackson, James Jacobs, David Shipper, Ken Cooperman, Irvind Khurana, Maurice Edwards, and Maitreya Padukone told me to enjoy it, that it would go fast. Now I want to say the same to President Suchie Chawla.

I cannot list everyone who has helped me this year, but I want to say thank you. You made my job easy. I have to recognize my board, you guys are the best board ever. Our staff, Susan, Valerie, Judy, newcomer Catherine and of course Diane – you are indispensable -- and not just the hands but also the heart of our organization. I only accomplished a small portion of what I wanted to do, but now it is my duty as past president to pass the torch to Dr. Chawla and to support her and the rest of our board in moving our society forward.

I’m proud of this group that I can call my friends. Welcome Dr. Jaskaran Randhawa to the executive committee and congratulations to Drs. Egidio Farone, Andrew Deutch, Vera Tang and of course Dr. Suchie Chawla. I look forward to seeing all you will accomplish.

As I officially end my term as NYCDS president and welcome our new leaders, I would like to leave you with one last charge: I challenge all of you to find your why!

New Dentists Learn About Managing Their Finances



“Money Matters” speakers David Goodman, CPA (center left) and Mitchell Brill, Esq. surrounded by New Dentist Committee members Jacqueline Katz (left) and Jessie Reisig and New Dentist Committee Chair Greg Shank.



“Money Matters” attendees socializing before the program.

The Society’s New Dentist Committee held a program on January 18th that sought to address the financial complexities and unique challenges many new dentists face practicing in Manhattan. *Money Matters for New Dentists: Personal Finance and Accounting for Employees, Independent Contractors, and Owners* was a great opportunity for attendees to learn how to optimize their personal finances. David Goodman, a partner with the accounting firm PKF O’Connor Davies and Mitchell Brill, a managing director with the financial firm Altium Wealth Management, led an informal but highly informative program – inviting and receiving -- numerous questions from attendees. Both speakers have extensive experience working with the dental community and were able to bring clarity to many of the core financial concerns new dentists have.

New Dentist Committee Chair Greg Shank had this to say about the program which was very popular with attendees: “Mr. Brill and Mr. Goodman graciously led a productive session demystifying accounting and financial anxieties for a group of eager and appreciative new dentists. This event generated a lot of enthusiasm from those who attended and there was a clear demand for a second session.” A follow up program, *Money Matters: Start Now and Retire When and How you Want* is being held on March 27th at NYCDS.

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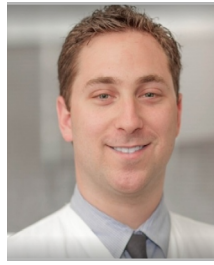

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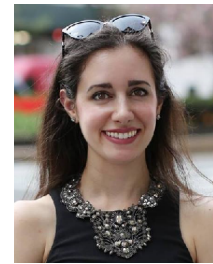
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GNYDM Returns for its 99th Year!

Jayne McNiff Spicciatie
Program Manager, GNYDM

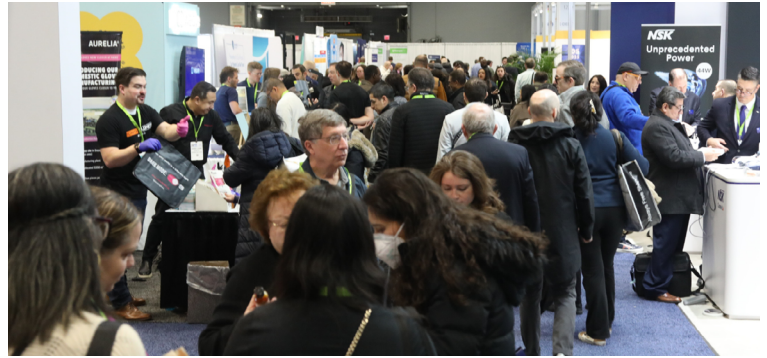


There were no empty seats at this popular seminar at the GNYDM.

The Greater New York Dental Meeting (GNYDM) thanks you for making it the largest face-to-face dental event in the United States. At its 99th Annual session, the GNYDM registered 36,081 (7% increase), including 13,302 dentists (9% increase), 2,793 dental students and residents, 2,027 dental assistants, and 2,320 dental hygienists from 139 countries. The GNYDM remains the largest dental convention and event in the United States.

The Greater New York Dental Meeting hopes that you took the opportunity to make new friends, renew old acquaintances, and make new contacts with decision-makers and partners for your continued success. The exhibit floor offers special discounts and giveaways. Professionals visited over 1,020 exhibit booths. It was a great week of business, learning, and networking. The GNYDM education included 265+ seminars and hands-on workshops with Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, and Chinese programs. In addition, over 200 scientific posters displayed new research in the dental field.

The GNYDM continues to include meetings for specialists: World Implant EXPO, Global Orthodontic Conference, Pediatric Dentistry Summit, Sleep Apnea Symposium, 3D Printing & Digital Dentistry Conference, Public Health Symposium, Oral Cancer Symposium, Special Care Dentistry Forum, Women Dentists Leadership Conference and the GNYDM Lab Symposium. The specialty meetings continue to increase attendance and revenue for the GNYDM as they welcome world-renowned clinicians to New York City. The nurse's program continued; it is a collaborative effort to train nurses about proper oral health and the importance of referring patients to dentists for yearly checkups and overall health care. Added to the nurse's program included volunteer efforts and RAM (Remote Area Medical). The GNYDM will work closely with additional organizers to grow this program in 2024.



The Exhibit Hall at the 2024 GNYDM.

The Organizational Committee of the GNYDM works tirelessly to ensure the meeting's success throughout the year. With the leadership of the General Chair, Dr. Richard L. Oshrain, the General Chair-Elect, Dr. John J. Young, Jr., and the New York County Dental Society chairs on the GNYDM Organization Committee: Dr. Lois A. Jackson, Dr. David M. Momtameni, Dr. Ioanna G. Mentzelopoulou, and Dr. Steven S. Moss, the meeting continued its success in 2023. Of course, additional thanks for allowing the meeting to run smoothly and effortlessly must go to the countless NYCDS member volunteers who were a part of the many sub-committees.

While the meeting is a remarkable achievement, the GNYDM is acutely aware that close friends such as you make the meeting's accomplishment unique. The warmth and collegiality shared by the Greater New York Dental Meeting family create an atmosphere often not evident at other venues. The GNYDM's achievements always translate to financial accomplishments for NYCDS. Through the GNYDM, NYCDS has continued its long tradition of low-cost, high-quality continuing education and member services.



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Navigating Dental Spa Ownership and Operation in New York

William Barrett, Esq.

CEO, Mandelbaum Barrett PC



Bill Barrett is the CEO of the full-service law firm Mandelbaum Barrett PC, co-chair of the firm's National Dental Law Group, and an unparalleled dental dealmaker who has successfully closed hundreds of transactions nationwide. With two best-selling books, "Pain Free Dental Deals" and "The DSO Decision: Winning Answer from Every Angle," Bill's expertise extends beyond the written word, as he is also a nationally recognized speaker for events and dental study clubs throughout the country. Mandelbaum Barrett PC is a Corporate Friend of NYCDS.

Much Misinformation

A quick internet search reveals a plethora of advertisements by dentists or Dental Spas in the metropolitan area stating that you can: "Have Your Teeth Whitened & Eliminate Forehead Lines All in One Visit."

The major suppliers and distributors of Botox, Juvéderm, and Restylane all offer instructional courses and bulk purchase discounts for dentists to administer these pharmacologic injectables for purely cosmetic purposes for the faces and necks of their patients. These companies insist they have opinions from their attorneys that it is legal and within the scope of practice for dentists to provide these purely cosmetic services for their patients. But when we pressed one major company to provide this legal opinion, the silence of the response was deafening.

Because this is a scope of practice issue, it is very important for dentists to understand the regulatory limitations on their use of these pharmacologic injectables. One complaint from a dissatisfied patient to the New York State Board of Dentistry, (the "Board"), no matter how unjustified, is enough to place a dentist's license at risk for exceeding their scope of practice in using these injectables for purely cosmetic reasons.

Prohibition on Dentist Cosmetic Use of Injectable Pharmacologies

Paraphrasing the State Board of Dentistry, the scope of practice for dentists is limited to restoring and maintaining dental health in the oral and maxillofacial areas. In a 2008 written opinion, the Board stated that dentists can use Botox, collagen fillers, and other similar injectable pharmacologies only in the oral and maxillofacial area

and only "as long as it is related to restoring and maintaining dental health."

It is clear from this opinion that New York dentists are not permitted to perform any purely cosmetic procedures with these injectables, even within the scope of practice of the oral and maxillofacial area, unless the use of these injectables in this area is "related to restoring and maintaining dental health." Given this restriction, it is clear that dentists cannot perform any such cosmetic procedures anywhere else on the face, such as around the eyes and the forehead. Since this 2008 opinion, there does not appear to be any more recent pronouncement from the Board on this issue.

At least one dentist, admittedly 11 years ago, was disciplined by the Board for using Botox when it was not related to treating a dental condition within the scope of the practice of dentistry.

Dentist Use Of Lasers For Cosmetic Treatments

Twenty years ago the New York State Board of Medicine adopted a resolution stating that the use of lasers and intense pulsed light for purely cosmetic purposes constituted the practice of medicine and thus must be performed by a physician or under direct physician supervision. Notwithstanding this resolution, presently there is no statute, rule or regulation in New York that only licensed healthcare professionals are permitted to use lasers for cosmetic procedures and aestheticians, who are considered technicians not professionals, routinely use lasers for facial hair removal.

This current legal situation on the use of lasers for cosmetic procedures still does not permit dentists to perform these procedures. This is because the procedures which dentists can perform is still circumscribed by the statute which limits their scope of practice to restoring and maintaining dental health in the oral and maxillofacial areas.

Consequently, while dentists in New York State can use lasers for various dental procedures, they are prohibited from using them for purely cosmetic purposes, even within the oral and maxillofacial area. Stated bluntly; laser cosmetic treatments are totally unrelated to dental health and a dentist's legal scope of practice is limited to using lasers for procedures to restore or maintain dental health.

Limitations on Dentist Business Arrangement

New York has some of the strictest limitations on permitted business arrangements for dentists. A dentist cannot employ a dermatologist or any other physician and cannot be an owner, not even a minority owner, with such a physician in a practice who can perform these purely cosmetic procedures.

Advice of Dental Regulatory Attorney

According to a recent survey, as many as 5% of dental practices in the United States operate dental spas. Notwithstanding all the above-described regulatory restrictions, there still may be a regulatorily compliant business arrangement for a dentist to perform these dental spa cosmetic procedures in their practice. However, because there is no direction from the Board on this issue, advice of a dental regulatory attorney is highly advisable before a dentist considers providing dental spa services.

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New York County Dental Society

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