



TENNESSEE

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2024 VOLUME 30, ISSUE 6

# DENTAL

ASSOCIATION NEWS

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**VOLUME 30, ISSUE 6**

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# FACES OF THE TDA

## Get to Know Our Team

At the core of our association is a dedicated team committed to supporting our members and the broader dental community. This feature highlights the individuals who keep the TDA running smoothly — our hardworking staff. Through these profiles, you'll gain insight into their roles, what they love most about being part of the team, and a peek into their lives beyond work, including their hobbies, interesting facts, and career lessons they've learned along the way. We hope these stories foster a stronger connection with the team that's always here for you.



**ANDREA HAYES**  
*Executive Director*



**Tell us a little about your role and what you enjoy most about working here?**

As the Executive Director, I connect the vision and plans of the board leadership with the day-to-day operations. This takes me into all types of adventures from meeting planning to legislative advocacy. That variety is one of the things I enjoy most about working at TDA. It comes second only to the people — the members, the leaders and our outstanding staff.

**Outside of work, what are some of your hobbies and interests?**

Outside of work, I'm tagging along with my family — they love SEC Football, Nashville Soccer Club, Disney World — whatever they are doing is what I am interested in.

**What have been some of the most important lessons you've learned throughout your career?**

I've learned so many things from mentors, board members and others, but maybe that's the most important lesson: Keep learning!

**Members can email me at [andrea@tndental.org](mailto:andrea@tndental.org) and reach out about:**

All the things — even the things we aren't doing well. I want TDA to be the best state dental association and serve members well. Reach out and let us know how we can support you!

**MEGHANN PORTER**  
*Director of Finance & Operations*



**Tell us a little about your role and what you enjoy most about working here?**

I manage day-to-day activities of the accounting department and ensure accuracy of Financial Reports. I enjoy working with the group. It's a happy, positive, and extremely well managed organization.

**Outside of work, what are some of your hobbies and interests?**

I love hiking, bowling, and watching one hour drama shows. I love spending time with my family and friends. I have two children who keep me busy!

**What's a fun fact or something about you that most people might not know?**

I like the way numbers tell a story. There is no gray area with numbers, they are absolute. The story always ends without suspense.

**What have been some of the most important lessons you've learned throughout your career?**

Some of the most important lessons I've learned throughout my career have been learned through times of discouragement. To be a good boss, co-worker, teammate, etc., you must possess the power of empathy and understanding, while also having clear communication and expectations. I think collaborations beat individualism and you must always be ready to adapt. People tend to only look at things from one perspective, but when you do so, you lose sight of the bigger picture. And last but definitely not least, the importance of being kind, yet firm, is often overlooked.

**Members can email me at [meghann@tndental.org](mailto:meghann@tndental.org) and reach out about:** any and all accounting issues.

## SARA BORDEN

*Marketing & Advocacy Communications Manager*



### **Tell us a little about your role and what you enjoy most about working here?**

I oversee TDA communications and marketing, but I am increasingly involved in advocacy efforts. My favorite part about working for the TDA is the opportunity to combine my graphic design skills with my passion for advocacy.

### **Outside of work, what are some of your hobbies and interests?**

I enjoy writing music, singing, and performing. I'm always learning new instruments! I'm also an animal lover and enjoy spending time with my dogs, Ruby and Huckleberry, and my cat, Haiku.

### **What's a fun fact or something about you that most people might not know?**

I have taken up a unique hobby of befriending crows after learning about their remarkable intelligence. I now have a small group of crow friends who frequently visit my window ledge at the TDA office!

### **What have been some of the most important lessons you've learned throughout your career?**

Adaptability is essential — every new challenge brings an opportunity for creative problem-solving and growth.

### **Members can email me at [sara@tndental.org](mailto:sara@tndental.org) and reach out about:**

The Music City Dental Conference, marketing, communications, and advocacy initiatives.

## AMY WILLIAMS

*Governance Manager*



### **Tell us a little about your role and what you enjoy most about working here?**

After working 18 years at TDA, I am now semi-retired. I work part-time as staff liaison in Governance Management, meaning with the Board of Trustees, House of Delegates, and committees. I obviously love TDA! The members have been so nice and encouraging to me throughout the years. I like administrative details, which fits well with a membership organization.

### **Outside of work, what are some of your hobbies and interests?**

My 3 grandchildren keep me busy! I'm also involved in my church, love to travel and hear about different cultures, and, of course, spend time with my husband!

### **What's a fun fact or something about you that most people might not know?**

I traveled extensively in my young adult years — 48 US states, over 20 countries and 4 continents.

### **What have been some of the most important lessons you've learned throughout your career?**

Excellence matters. Do your best at every task and try to learn from every job. It becomes a tapestry of skills that fit a job you didn't know existed.

### **Members can email me at [amy@tndental.org](mailto:amy@tndental.org) and reach out about:**

Involvement in the TDA committees or other governance questions.



## GRACE CZOSEK

*Membership Services Coordinator*



### **Tell us a little about your role and what you enjoy most about working here?**

I serve as the Membership Coordinator at TDA. I particularly enjoy engaging with our members, hearing about their careers in dentistry, and discovering how the TDA can support them in their professional lives.

### **Outside of work, what are some of your hobbies and interests?**

In my free time, I enjoy spending time with friends, exploring Nashville, reading, trying new restaurants, working out, and taking walks with my dog.

### **What's a fun fact or something about you that most people might not know?**

I love learning to cook or bake new things, I used to be a horrible cook but have started to love it!

### **What have been some of the most important lessons you've learned throughout your career?**

One of the most valuable lessons I've learned and remind myself, is the importance of approaching challenges with solutions in mind, rather than just presenting problems.

### **Members can email me at [grace@tndental.org](mailto:grace@tndental.org) and reach out about:**

All things membership – any aspect of it, from early career to retirement.

## JANIE ROBBINS

*Marketing & Communications Coordinator*



### **Tell us a little about your role and what you enjoy most about working here?**

I am the Marketing and Communications Coordinator; I handle all things social media and advertising alongside Sara!

### **Outside of work, what are some of your hobbies and interests?**

Reading, drawing, travel, watching the Vols!

### **What's a fun fact or something about you that most people might not know?**

I attended The University of Tennessee and was on the field when we beat Alabama in 2022! #GoVols

### **What have been some of the most important lessons you've learned throughout your career?**

Never take anything too personally and there is always room to be kind!

### **Members can email me at [janie@tndental.org](mailto:janie@tndental.org) and reach out about:**

All your advertising needs & general social media questions!

**LISA JOHNSON**  
*Office Coordinator*



**Tell us a little about your role and what you enjoy most about working here?**

In my role, I assist in tracking continuing education (CE) for our members, coordinate as an event assistant for MCDC, and handle various office-related tasks. One of the things I enjoy most is getting to work closely with dentists and their staff over the phone – understanding their needs and offering support.

**Outside of work, what are some of your hobbies and interests?**

Reading and cheering for my kids sporting events.

**What's a fun fact or something about you that most people might not know?**

I coach middle school volleyball and have won 5 championships.

**What have been some of the most important lessons you've learned throughout your career?**

I've learned that being open to new ideas is essential for growth and adapting to change. Another key lesson is the power of good customer service — taking time to listen and understand people's needs creates strong relationships and lasting positive impressions

**Members can email me at [lisa@tndental.org](mailto:lisa@tndental.org) and reach out about:** Continuing Education questions and tracking.

**LOURDES AREVALO**  
*Communications*



**Tell us a little about your role and what you enjoy most about working here?**

I'm behind the scenes overseeing TDA's bimonthly publication, *TDA News*. I have been with the association for six years now, and what I love the most is the welcoming, open-door policy our Executive Director maintains.

**Outside of work, what are some of your hobbies and interests?**

When I'm not at work, you can usually find me diving into a good book, playing the piano or planning our next Disney World adventure – we're a big Disney family!

**What's a fun fact or something about you that most people might not know?**

I've had the chance to work alongside celebrities and award-winning chefs, doing everything from planning big campaigns and launching products to working on a Broadway show. It's been an adventure!

**What have been some of the most important lessons you've learned throughout your career?**

I've learned many lessons from bosses, mentors, and colleagues. Among the most valuable lessons is the importance of nurturing curiosity and continuous learning. Some of my fondest relationships and experiences have begun with a simple "why" or "what if?" The more I've listened, and taken the time to research, learn and explore, the greater my cup (both personal and professional) has been filled. The other is being creative when things go differently than planned. In communications, being quick on your feet and thinking outside the box is helpful.

**Members can email me at [lourdes@tndental.org](mailto:lourdes@tndental.org) and reach out about:**

Anything related to *TDA News*! If you have ideas, or would like to contribute to the newsletter, don't hesitate to reach out. We'd love to hear from you.



# THANK *You!*

## FOR BEING A MEMBER!

**T**he ADA, TDA, and your local component are committed to supporting your personal and professional growth at every stage of your career.

We offer a wide range of resources to help you manage your patients, practice, and personal life more effectively. Whether it's staying informed on the latest clinical guidelines or accessing financial management tools like insurance and retirement plans, we're here to provide everything you need to succeed and maintain a healthy work-life balance.

If there's anything we can do to further support your membership experience, please don't hesitate to reach out at 615.628.0208 or email us at [tda@tndental.org](mailto:tda@tndental.org). We'd love to hear from you!

The TDA welcomes the following dentists as our new and reinstated members.

### **Second District Dental Society**

Dr. Nicholas Odum

### **Chattanooga Area Dental Society**

Dr. Megan Harris

Dr. Kent White

### **Nashville Dental Society**

Dr. McKinnon Brown Forbes

Dr. Nisha Patel

Dr. Keely Stofer

### **Memphis Dental Society**

Dr. Bryce McPherson

# TDA GROUP HEALTH PLAN

**OPEN ENROLLMENT IS HERE!**



The Tennessee Dental Association is committed to providing members with top-notch insurance products and services. We are excited to announce that open enrollment for the TDA group health plan has begun. Don't miss this valuable opportunity—enrollment is only available through December 13, 2024, for coverage starting January 1, 2025. If you miss this window, you'll have to wait until next year to enroll.

This exclusive member benefit has been specifically developed for TDA members. The plan offers guaranteed issue coverage, with no health questions and no pre-existing condition exclusions. You could see substantial savings compared to your current rates. There are four health benefit plan options available, plus a stand-alone vision plan. Eligibility includes options for solo practitioners with at least one W-2 employee working 30+ hours per week. Even if your current plan renews at a different time of the year, you can switch to this plan effective January 1st! Just ask us—we'll guide you through the process.

**DON'T MISS OUT!** Quickly view the [rates](#), get more [information](#), and [enroll](#). Or, contact your TDA Insurance representative, Mike Harmon, at 423.648.0247 or [MichaelH@assoc-admin.com](mailto:MichaelH@assoc-admin.com).

## Happy Holidays

### TDA Executive Office Closed for the Holidays

The TDA Executive Office will close Thursday, November 28 and Friday, November 29 for the Thanksgiving holiday. The office will also close Tuesday, December 24 and Wednesday, December 25.

The TDA staff wishes everyone a happy and safe Holiday Season.



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# STAY INFORMED

## UPDATE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS

Are you missing out on important updates from the TDA?

If you've unsubscribed from TDA emails in the past, you might not be receiving critical information from both the TDA and the ADA. Each week, the TDA sends out a news bulletin with the latest updates and alerts at the local, state, and national levels.

If you have not received emails from the TDA, please make sure to check your spam or junk mail folder and mark **[tda@tndental.org](mailto:tda@tndental.org)** as a safe sender. To be included in the mailing list or to update your email address please email us at **[tda@tndental.org](mailto:tda@tndental.org)**.



# IN MEMORIAM

*The TDA honors the memory and passing of the following members:*

### **Dr. Richard Dycus**

Dr. Richard Dycus was a Past-President of the Tennessee Dental Association (2017-2018), and a member of the American Dental Association, the Tennessee Dental Association, and the Fourth District Dental Society.



# Numbers to Know

## **American Dental Association**

(800) 621-8099 or (312) 440-2500

## **Tennessee Board of Dentistry**

(615) 532-5073

## **Tennessee Department of Health**

(615) 741-3011

## **Tennessee Dental Association**

(615) 628-0208 | Fax: (615) 628-0214

[tda@tndental.org](mailto:tda@tndental.org)

## **STAFFED COMPONENT SOCIETIES**

### **First District Dental Society**

Executive Director: Savannah Bolick

(423) 552-0222

[firstdistrictdental@gmail.com](mailto:firstdistrictdental@gmail.com)

### **Second District Dental Society**

Executive Director: Janet Lawlor

(865) 919-6464

[sddsoffice@gmail.com](mailto:sddsoffice@gmail.com)

### **Chattanooga Area Dental Society**

Executive Director: Lacey Heftka

(423) 886-9191

[Info@ChattAreaDent.com](mailto:Info@ChattAreaDent.com)

### **Nashville Dental Society**

Executive Director: Kristen Stewart

(615) 628-3300

[director@nashvilledental.org](mailto:director@nashvilledental.org)

### **Seventh District Dental Society**

Executive Secretary: Dr. Larry Chambers

(731) 217-5614

[7thdistrictdental@gmail.com](mailto:7thdistrictdental@gmail.com)

### **Eighth District Dental Society**

Executive Secretary: Ruby Batson

(931) 245-3333

### **Memphis Dental Society**

Executive Director: Katie Nelson

(901) 682-4928

[info@memphisdentalsociety.org](mailto:info@memphisdentalsociety.org)





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# Share Your 2025 Resolutions

## for the January-February Newsletter!

**As we approach the new year, we want to hear how you're setting goals for success and growth in your dental practice.** If you've set any resolutions for 2025 – whether they focus on continuing education, patient care, practice management, or any other professional goals – we encourage you to share them with us. Your experiences and ideas could inspire fellow dentists across the state.

Select submissions will be featured in the newsletter. Don't miss this opportunity to be a part of the conversation!

[SUBMIT RESPONSE](#)

# EIGHT TENNESSEE DENTISTS HONORED

## AS FELLOWS BY THE INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE OF DENTISTS

Eight distinguished Tennessee dentists were recently inducted into Fellowship in the USA Section of the International College of Dentists (ICD) at the 2024 Annual Meeting. Since its founding in 1920, the ICD has brought together over 12,000 Fellows from more than 140 countries, recognizing dentists who exemplify outstanding contributions to the profession, their communities, and society at large. We extend our congratulations to this year's honorees for their dedication and achievements.

**Dr. Leela Subhashini Alluri**  
Nashville – Nashville Dental Society

**Dr. Shaza Mardini\***  
Knoxville – Second District Dental Society

**Dr. James E. Tyus\***  
Nashville – Nashville Dental Society

**Dr. James Ellis Cade\***  
Nashville – Fourth District Dental Society

**Dr. G. Drew Osborne\***  
Maryville – Second District Dental Society

**Dr. Qi Wang\***  
Knoxville – Second District Dental Society

**Dr. Keith Gilmore\***  
Dickson – Eighth District Dental Society

**Dr. Rhett E. Raum\***  
Lafayette – Nashville Dental Society

*\*Denotes TDA Member Dentist*

# TDA MEMBERS AWARDED

## American College of Dentists Fellowship

The American College of Dentists (ACD) held its Annual Meeting and Convocation in New Orleans on October 16-17, an event celebrating excellence and leadership in the dental profession. This year's convocation welcomed newly inducted Fellows, marking a notable achievement in their careers. Founded as the oldest major honorary organization for dentists, the ACD extends membership by invitation only, with fewer than 4% of dentists attaining the title of Fellow. Fellows are nominated by their peers and selected for their significant contributions to organized dentistry, oral health care, dental research, education, and service to the profession and society. Congratulations to our Tennessee members and inductees on their well-deserved recognition as ACD Fellows.

**Dr. Leela Alluri**  
Nashville, TN

**Dr. Gerald Davis**  
Nashville, TN

**Dr. Taylor Bolland\***  
Antioch, TN – Nashville Dental Society

**Dr. Julie Gray\***  
Nashville, TN – Nashville Dental Society

**Dr. Robin Daniels**  
Nashville, TN – Nashville Dental Society

**Dr. Jeffrey Kalmowicz\***  
Memphis, TN – Memphis Dental Society

*\*Denotes TDA Member Dentist*

# TDA LEADERSHIP POSITIONS FOR 2025-2026

## House Elected positions for TDA Officer / Deadline February 28, 2025

TDA members interested in being nominated for one of the following officer positions must submit the following documents to the TDA by February 28, 2025 (required for new nominees only):

1. Letter of Interest
2. CV
3. Conflict of Interest Statement

### POSITIONS FOR ELECTION:

#### President-elect

- Active or life member of the TDA for at least five years
- One-year term which automatically succeeds to the office of President for one-year and Immediate Past President for one-year.
- Board policy suggests candidates be from Chattanooga Area, Fourth District, and Sixth District.
- Duties found in TDA Bylaws, Chapter VII, Section 80.B.

#### Speaker of the TDA House of Delegates

(Speaker Ken Randall is eligible for re-election)

- Active or life member of the TDA for at least five years
- One-year term and limited to six terms
- Duties found in TDA Bylaws, Chapter VII, Section 80.D.

#### Secretary (Robert Carney III is eligible for re-election)

- Active or life member of the TDA for at least five years
- One-year term and limited to six terms
- Duties found in TDA Bylaws, Chapter VII, Section 80.E.

#### Treasurer (Jay Davis is eligible for re-election)

- Active or life member of the TDA for at least five years
- One-year term and limited to six terms
- Duties found in TDA Bylaws, Chapter VII, Section 80.F.

#### East Tennessee Vice President

- Active or Life member of the Association
- Two-year term on the TDA Board of Trustees
- Bylaws require candidates to be from the East Tennessee Grand Division. Trustee agreement suggests candidates be from the Second District.
- Duties found in TDA Bylaws, Chapter VII, Section 80.C.

## Trustee Positions Election by Components / Deadline one week prior to election

Eligibility for trustee positions must be confirmed by the TDA Executive Office **before election** by their component society. Send Conflict of Interest Statement to the TDA Executive Office at least one week prior to component election meeting.

Trustee Positions for election or re-election for term beginning May 3, 2025:

- Trustee / Second District (Hope Watson is not eligible for re-election.)
- Trustee / Chattanooga Area (Kevin Bryant is eligible for re-election.)
- Trustee / Fourth District (Bob Tuma is eligible for re-election)

#### Basic information:

**Eligibility:** Must an active or life member, in good standing of the TDA for at least five years and a fully privileged member of his/her component society for at least three years.

**Term:** Three-year term and limited to two terms.

**Duties:** Found in TDA Bylaws, Chapter IV, Section 70.

#### Committee member positions for state committees / Deadline February 28, 2025

The TDA committees play a vital role in supporting our association's mission. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the Board of Trustees will appoint committee members from across the state. Selections will be based on members' interests and qualifications. If you would like to be involved, please complete the Volunteer Interest Form.

**Complete Volunteer Interest Form**

# SLEEP ON IT

## HOW SNOOZING STRENGTHENS MEMORIES



When you learn something new, the best way to remember it is to sleep on it. That's because sleeping helps strengthen memories you've formed throughout the day. It also helps to link new memories to earlier ones. You might even come up with creative new ideas while you slumber.

What happens to memories in your brain while you sleep? And how does lack of sleep affect your ability to learn and remember? NIH-funded scientists have been gathering clues about the complex relationship between sleep and memory.

Their findings might eventually lead to new approaches to help students learn or help older people hold onto memories as they age.

"We've learned that sleep before learning helps prepare your brain for initial formation of memories," says Dr. Matthew Walker, a sleep scientist at the University of California, Berkeley. "And then, sleep after learning is essential to help save and cement that new information into the architecture of the brain, meaning that you're less likely to forget it."

While you snooze, your brain cycles through different phases of sleep, including light sleep, deep sleep, and rapid eye movement (REM) sleep, when dreaming often occurs. The cycles repeat about every 90 minutes.

The non-REM stages of sleep seem to prime the brain for good learning the next day. If you haven't slept, your ability to learn new things could drop by up to 40%. "You can't pull an all-nighter and still learn effectively," Walker says. Lack of sleep affects a part of the brain called the hippocampus, which is key for making new memories.

You accumulate many memories, moment by moment, while you're awake. Most will be forgotten during the day. "When we first form memories, they're in a very raw and fragile form," says sleep expert Dr. Robert Stickgold of Harvard Medical School.

But when you doze off, "sleep seems to be a privileged time when the brain goes back through recent memories and decides both what to keep and what not to keep," Stickgold explains.

**“ You accumulate many memories, moment by moment, while you're awake. Most will be forgotten during the day. “When we first form memories, they're in a very raw and fragile form,” says sleep expert Dr. Robert Stickgold of Harvard Medical School.**



“

The non-REM stages of sleep seem to prime the brain for good learning the next day.”



“During a night of sleep, some memories are strengthened.” Research has shown that memories of certain procedures, like playing a melody on a piano, can actually improve while you sleep.

Memories seem to become more stable in the brain during the deep stages of sleep. After that, REM—the most active stage of sleep—seems to play a role in linking together related memories, sometimes in unexpected ways. That’s why a full night of sleep may help with problem-solving. REM sleep also helps you process emotional memories, which can reduce the intensity of emotions.

It’s well known that sleep patterns tend to change as we age. Unfortunately, the deep memory-strengthening stages of sleep start to decline in our late 30s. A study by Walker and colleagues found that adults older than 60 had a 70% loss of deep sleep compared to young adults ages 18 to 25. Older adults had a harder time remembering things the next day, and memory impairment was linked to reductions in deep sleep. The researchers are now exploring options for enhancing deep stages of sleep in this older age group.

“While we have limited medical treatments for memory impairment in aging, sleep actually is a potentially treatable target,” Walker says. “By restoring sleep, it might be possible to improve memory in older people.”

For younger people, especially students, Stickgold offers additional advice. “Realize that the sleep you get the night after you study is at least as important as the sleep you get the night before you study.” When it comes to sleep and memory, he says, “you get very little benefit from cutting corners.”

Source: NIH News in Health. For the latest news from the National Institute of Health, part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, visit [newsinhealth.nih.gov](https://newsinhealth.nih.gov).

## WISE CHOICES SLEEPING TO LEARN

Research suggests these tips may aid students and other learners:

### Get a good night’s sleep before learning.

Lack of sleep can cut learning ability by up to 40%.

Get a full night of sleep within 24 hours after learning to strengthen new memories and build connections between different pieces of information.

### Get enough sleep each night—7 to 8 hours for most adults.

Memories won’t be strengthened with 4 hours or less of nighttime sleep.

### Naps might help or hinder.

A 90-minute nap can strengthen memories, but naps late in the day may make it harder to get to sleep at night.



# NEW DENTIST CORNER

## Patient autonomy vs. patient-pleasing as a new dentist



The day we obtain our dental license, our role changes from student to doctor.

After a lifetime of being told what to do by “grown-ups,” teachers and professors, the roles reverse.

It can be challenging when confronted by patients asking us to do things we are not comfortable with doing, especially if we want to please our patients.

However, doing what the patient wants can harm the patient and put our license in jeopardy.

In dental school we learned about patient autonomy the ADA Principles of Ethics and Code of Professional Conduct. This means to “recognize the dignity and intrinsic worth of individuals and their right to make personal choices,” according to the American College of Dentists’ Ethics Handbook for Dentists. At the same time we were taught not to allow our patients to dictate the treatment plan.

When I started out as a new grad, this concept was confusing for me. Once I began teaching dental students, I saw that they were equally confused about this concept.

### Here are some examples of statements from my students:

“My patient said he does not want me to perio chart, and that he only wants a prophyl.”

“My patient does not want me to cold test the tooth.”

“My patient is declining the SRP and root canals. She only wants the filling on #8.”

When I explained to students that this is not acceptable, the students have asked me, “But what about patient autonomy? Aren’t we supposed to let the patient choose?” Yes and no. Here is why.

Yes, you can let your patient choose, for example, when it comes to tooth replacement. You should discuss the risks,

benefits, costs, alternatives of no treatment, a removable partial denture, a bridge, an implant, or orthodontic treatment to close the space.

Examples of when patients should not be given a choice is when the patient is preventing you from diagnosing or treating active disease. If a patient is preventing you from diagnosing and/or treating active disease, here is my advice:

**1. Seek to understand the patient’s reason for their request.** The patient may not understand your rationale; they may be fearful; have a time constraint; or have financial concerns.

**2. Educate the patient.** Let them know that untreated dental disease is like a ticking time bomb.

**3. Don’t just listen to your gut, act on your gut.** If a patient is trying to twist your arm into doing something you’re not comfortable with and something goes wrong, you will be the first to be blamed because the patient didn’t go to dental school, and you did.

In dental school we learned about **patient autonomy** the ADA Principles of Ethics and Code of Professional Conduct. This means to “recognize the dignity and intrinsic worth of individuals and their right to make personal choices,” according to the American College of Dentists’ Ethics Handbook for Dentists.

**4. Most importantly, remember that a patient cannot consent to substandard care.**

So, if the patient is still adamant about what they want, here are some useful responses:

“Without a proper diagnosis with endo testing, I cannot treat you.”

“Without taking radiographs, I am working in the dark.”

“This is what I am willing to do.”

“It sounds like I am not the right doctor for you.”

“I will need you to sign the informed refusal form, and here is a list of local clinics.”

“I recommend you consult with another dentist to see if they can meet your expectations.”

How did I gain this wisdom? The combination of experience and from consulting with my wonderful, bright faculty colleagues at UCSF School of Dentistry

I hope this advice helps clarify and better prepare you when faced with these scenarios.

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For more information, visit [williamjacobson.net](https://williamjacobson.net).

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