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ASDA Advisor

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Addressing the needs of Dentist in the
State of Arkansas

New Sealant Recommendations

By: Wendell Garrett, DDS - ASDA President

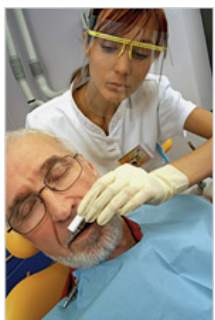


While everyone was enjoying the snow on Friday afternoon, March 7 th, I participated in a teleconference call from the ADA Chicago Headquarters. Dr. Mark Feldman (ADA President) and Dr. Jim Bramson (ADA Executive Director) hosted “Dental

Sealant Recommendations”. I know I now have your attention because this really excites you, but there were a couple of items that caught my attention. The March JADA issue (Vol 139 No.3) will present Evidence-Based Clinical (EBC) Recommendations for the dental profession to use when applying dental sealants. The recommendations developed by a Council on Scientific Affairs (CSA) expert panel reinforces that sealants are effective when placed properly, monitored and replaced when needed, as well as have increased reten-

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New Sedation Guidelines



The ASBDE has begun preparations to update Article XIII which regulates analgesia, sedation, and general anesthesia. This update will closely mirror the American Dental Association’s new recommendations. The ASBDE has worked with representatives from each specialty group to ensure all concerns and suggestions are given equal consideration prior to the rule change. After

a great deal of work from these individuals a draft of Article XIII has been completed. ASDA members have been invited to review the draft and offer comments prior to April 18, 2008. If you would like the opportunity to review the draft, please call the ASDA at 501-834-7650 or 800-501-2732 to request a copy or go to the ASDA website ardental.org to download a copy. **Remember: All comments or suggestions must be received by the ASDA office no later than Friday, April 18, 2008.**

Our special thanks to the members of the ASBDE’s Rules and Regulations committee and Task Force members Drs. Alfonso, Tortorich, Sundell, Boone, Suffridge & Hill for their diligence on this important project.

If Your Conscience Could Talk

By: Chester J. Gray, DDS, JD

Wake up! This is your conscience. The study and practice of dentistry has forced you to meet me countless times in your career. Overall, we have endured a constructive relationship. I preach, you listen; usually. Lately, however, when I advise you how to respond to an ethical dilemma, more than ever, you struggle to do the right thing. It is time I spoke for the collective consciences of all dentists and dental students. I know the secret, the answer that will make your ethical decision making much simpler in our challenging world. However, like everything in the professional ethics arena, it is easy to say but hard to do. **The secret requires you to discover in your own lives why doing the right thing is essential, not optional, in meeting your personal and professional goals and stands as the key to your long term success.**

As your conscience, I know your goals. You want to earn a strong professional and personal reputation and arrive at the end of the day with your self respect. I know you understand this involves acting in the best interests of your patients and your profession. Generally, you understand the principles of the Code of Professional Responsibility. Although a refresher course would not hurt, you know “what” to do.

Even though you know what to do, doing the right thing is not always easy. In your dental career from school to private practice, you have encountered constant challenges to your long term goals; in school, abiding by the honor code; in practice, maintaining clinical quality while faced with student loans, growing office overhead and insurers’ cost containment schemes.

Furthermore, certain trends in society add to these challenges. Consumerism transforms the doctor-patient relationship into a market transaction where you become a provider of a commodity with less time to care for the patient. Commercialism in dental publications with disguised bias

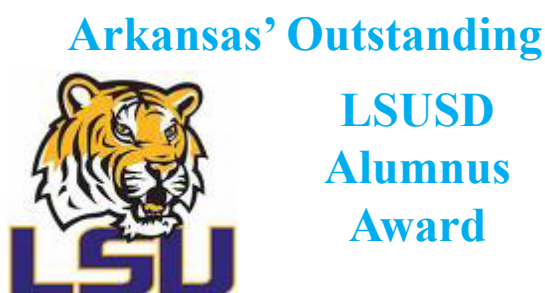
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can make ethical selection of treatment modalities difficult. Finally, there is the underlying cultural theme in today's media that "only the good die young", or that it is somehow admirable to be "bad". It seems our society is allowing individual self interest to trump what is right. It sends the message that ethical people are the losers in the immediate gratification game. I am here to tell you ethics is for winners and is the only prescription for your long term success.

Don't think I intend to give you excuses not to succeed. You need to know what challenges you will face in order to overcome them. However, your biggest challenge is to unequivocally accept "why" you must act ethically. Part of you rationalizes that you can act unethically in the short term and still meet your long term goals as long as you don't get caught. Immediate gratification for short-term gain or enjoyment, based upon unethical conduct, actually impedes long term success. It is a lose-lose-lose for the patient, the profession and yourself. As Dr. Bertolami alluded to in "Why Our Ethics Curricula Don't Work", Journal of Dental Education, April 2004, you need to avoid the self delusion that succumbing to your immediate needs and desires to the detriment of your patients, peers or profession will somehow not harm your pursuit of your long term goals. In the end, the pursuit of long term success entails a level of self denial or avoiding the quick fix and, in its place, embracing a strategic plan which centers on implementing ethical principles in your practice and personal life.

I'm your conscience. I have confidence you know what right things to do. I hope my advice on why you must act ethically contributes to your success. I know we will meet again.

Please address any questions or comments to Chester J. Gary, DDS, JD at garyddsjd@roadrunner.com



The Arkansas LSU Alumni Chapter is pleased to present the first annual "Arkansas Outstanding Alumni Award" during the LSU Alumni Reception in conjunction with the ASDA Annual Meeting.

This award is awarded to an Arkansas dentist who graduated from LSU Dental School. Recipients must exhibit integrity, a high standard of ethics, and meritorious service in promoting the dental profession in the state of Arkansas.

tion when four-handed placement technique is used. Nothing new with those recs ! The panel also stated dental sealants are effective in preventing dental decay, both children and adults can benefit from them, they can stop "noncavitated" incipient lesions from progressing AND in most cases, removing tooth structure before placing a sealant is NOT recommended – no mechanical instrumentation is necessary! WHOA, Nellie! Now that's new to me. Sealing in decay? I wasn't taught that at LSUSD ! Other concerns that caught my attention were comments such as x-rays nor dental explorers are necessary for dental sealant placement. "Visual Examination is All that is needed" was quoted by several of the presenters. That is scary stuff !! I know there is a national war to fight caries with "Access to Care" being a hot topic, but I think we need to be ethical when placing sealants !! We need to know if decay is present. Sometimes the combination of my magnification loops and trusted trifocals just aren't enough to find Mr. Cavity Bug !! Let's be careful and ethical when down in the pits and do the right thing !!

Wendell Garrett, DDS