

A photograph of a winter scene. A snow-covered path leads into the distance, flanked by a red wooden fence on the right and snow-covered evergreen trees on the left. The sky is overcast and grey.

# 8<sup>th</sup> District Bulletin

Volume 61 | Number 4 | Winter 2025

## IN THIS ISSUE

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- \* TRUSTEE'S CORNER
- \* RISK MANGEMENT INSIGHTS

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## 8th District BULLETIN

### Eighth District Dental Society of the State of New York

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#### Member Publication

##### American Association of Dental Editors

The Bulletin of the Eighth District Dental Society (USPS 909-900) is published four times a year by the Eighth District Dental Society for its members. Unless officially adopted by the Eighth District Dental Society and so indicated, opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily the views of the association. Address all communications pertaining to this Bulletin to the Editor, Eighth District Dental Society, 3831 Harlem Road, Buffalo, New York 14215.

The Eighth District Dental Society is organized for the purpose of encouraging improvement of the health of the public, to promote the art and science of dentistry, and to represent the interests of the members of the profession and the public which it serves.

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## From The Editor

I recently turned 73 years of age. I mention this to let you know I have had a lot of experience over those 73 years. I have now outlived my father by two years. I consider that a milestone. My mother passed away when she was 76. So, I may have a few good years left. I hope so. But you never know when that time will come and I have been reminiscing over the last few months about life, my place in it, and have I done everything I wanted to in my life. I can safely say I have done pretty much everything I wanted to throughout my life.



One of my goals was to become a member of the dental profession, particularly as an orthodontist. I have been blessed to have achieved this goal. I love being an orthodontist, interacting with my patients, giving them stable occlusions and beautiful smiles. I like to make them laugh, so I am sort of a comedian in the office. Most of my jokes get eyerolls, which is why I never wanted to be a stand-up comic. I succeed in the office because it is a captive audience. Standing on a stage and making people laugh is not in my DNA. Captive audiences are the best because they are captive. They actually have to listen to me while I straighten their teeth!

(Continued on Page 4)

# From The Editor

*(Continued from Page 3)*

I have been active in organized dentistry pretty much my entire professional life. I joined the ADA as a student member while in dental school. I kept my membership while I studied orthodontics at the University of Connecticut School of Dental Medicine. I kept it when I graduated from the ortho program and taught in the UCONN ortho department for three years and when I left there for a private practice, I kept my membership. But I was never an “active” member. I never went to meetings, volunteered to the society for any projects, or anything like that.

This all changed when I returned to Buffalo in 1986 and joined Dr. Gerry Gugino in his orthodontic practice on the corner of Englewood and Main Street. Dr. Gugino was instrumental in getting me involved in organized dentistry in a huge way. He was the one who took me under his wing and showed me the importance of the Erie County Dental Society, the Eighth District Dental Society, the New York State Dental Association (then known as the Dental Society of the State of New York) and the American Dental Association. It was Dr. Gerry who encouraged me to join the Eighth District Bulletin as a contributing author. This ultimately led me to becoming its editor in 1989 when Dr. John Twist retired from the editorship. The Bulletin has gone through many changes through the years. I have been there for most of them. I semi-retired in 2001 when I became the President-Elect of the Eighth District. Another terrific editor, Dr. Chet Gary, took over the reins and guided it for the next 16 years. I was still involved, though, as an associate editor during that time.

In 1995, I was appointed to the Publications Council of the New York State Dental Association and served on that Council until it was disbanded in 2003. Also in 2003, I was appointed to the Board of Governors of the New York State Dental Association when Dr. John Asaro was elected its Secretary/Treasurer. I served as a Governor until 2009 when the Society adopted a new governance structure, replacing the Board of Governors with a House of Delegates. I was appointed as Associate Editor of the New York State Dental Journal in 2003. In 2009, I became editor of the Journal when Dr. Elliot Moskowicz termed out. I held that position until I termed out at the end of 2016. Coincidentally, Dr. Chet Gary followed me as Journal editor for the next eight years. I retook the reins of the Bulletin at that time and have been editor ever since. Finally, I served as the Trustee of the Eighth District to NYSDA from 2019 to 2022.

But membership in organized dentistry has rewarded me in other ways. When I suffered a heart attack in 2007, then Executive Director David Kinyon immediately contacted orthodontists to see who would be able to cover my office during my convalescence. If it weren't for the connections I had made through my participation in the District, that may have never happened. It saved my practice. I have earned most of my continuing education hours by attending seminars sponsored by the Eighth District and the Erie County Dental Society. I get my malpractice insurance through our endorsed carrier, Fortress Insurance. Through Shred Day, I have been able to get numerous boxes of sensitive documents shredded at no cost to me. And I have made many close friendships.

I mention this not to brag but to show you there are many opportunities to serve organized dentistry in many ways. It just depends on your talents and how you use them for the betterment of your dental society. However, the dental societies here and in the rest of the country are having difficulty attracting new members. Younger dentists, those of the GenZ and Millennial generations, do not join organizations as a rule. It's not only organized dentistry having difficulty attracting new members. All organizations around the country are experiencing the same problems. You may ask, so what? If they don't want to join, how does that affect me?

*(Continued on Page 7)*

# From The President

Friends and Colleagues,

As the year ends, and my time as the president of the Eighth District Dental Society comes to a close, I should be reflecting on the “long, strange trip it’s been,” but actually the year flew by, and it went pretty much the way I thought it would. You see, the role of president (as outlined in the bylaws) is really just the next step in the succession plan for district leadership, i.e. you start as the secretary, move to vice president, then to president-elect and finally president.



I had the privilege of following some pretty good leaders along the way. Their hard work and dedication, along with the great staff (Kari, Dana and Dr. John Craig) at the society office made it easy for me to contribute. In fact, I received a reminder from Kari today that I needed to write this message.

The Eighth District Dental Society is in a great place. It comes up at almost every NYSDA Ethics Council meeting (because I sit next to the representative from Rochester) that the Seventh District is the “greatest district.” I’ve never been a fan of the “we’re number 2” slogans. Perhaps the Seventh is like the guy that buys the really large truck... Anyway, the Eighth is pretty darn good. Financially, we’re strong. While some districts have directors working out of their homes, we own a building. We have paid staff. We have an active leadership group, and there are always fresh faces around the table who will carry the torch when people like me are phased out.

I’d love to list the things that were accomplished in the past year, but I didn’t do anything special to push an agenda forward. I hope I helped keep the ship upright and perhaps educate or inspire my successors. At the beginning of my term, I spoke about how I didn’t really want to be president. I just wanted to contribute and do what was asked of me, and president was just the next step. Now that it’s over, I’ll miss collaborating with leadership on a regular basis, but I’ll be happy to help if and when needed.

I won’t be headed out to pasture right away, as I’ll be immediate past president, and I’ll be continuing my role on the Council on Ethics for another 4-year term. Thanks to my fellow officers, members of the executive council and Eighth District staff for all of their support, and hesitate a little if you need me in the future.

Best wishes,

Dr. Joseph Rumfola  
EDDS President



## Executive Director's Note

It is hard to believe another member service year is trending into 2026. As I look back on my tenure here at the Society, I am now beginning my fifth year in this role; that is hard to believe. I am continuing to learn many things as well better understand the changing role of the profession and various forms of business as well as practice work. As we move into the new year, there are some changes coming and you should be aware of those efforts to remain fiscally responsible while maintaining quality service support.

In 2026, we are moving to an all-digital Bulletin format. You will no longer receive a hard copy of this publication in 2026. We are doing this for a variety of reasons, but the largest one is cost savings and reach. We print 550 copies each quarter and they are mailed out by our printer; not every member receives one, but they can read it via the website online. These costs alone are between \$5,000 - \$6,000 annually to create four publications. We also made the change two years ago with the Membership Directory, moving away from the print version to a digital copy available on the secured side of the website. The Bulletin will also be available there and we plan to send out notices via the Weekly Update with the link to view it. Also, a digital version will be more interactive with live web links to vendors, programs and services with just a mouse click.

In another member engagement matter, the Program Committee has been meeting and discussing the need to expand and/or enhance our Continuing Education outreach. **I just would like to say a quick Thank you to those members and dental school faculty that sent in a response to this work.** In total, we received eighty-one responses. We intend to coordinate an effort to run the Chautauqua Dental meeting in June, which has been done in the past by the UB Dental School Office of Continuing Education. We are also planning next December to hold an Oncology CE that has been done every six years and will be held at the dental school. In the past, over 100+ dental professionals have participated in this session. We are also planning to utilize more local presenters and researchers and move away from nationally recognized speakers one might see at the annual association conference at the Convention Center. We recognize members are getting their CE in diverse ways and from various sources.

I am finalizing our membership calendar of activities and meetings in the coming weeks and hope to share that via the Weekly Update during the holiday season upon us. The ADA has launched a new member service last month in the form of a credit union. There are likely many value-added services and rates for consideration of establishing a new banking relationship. More information on the credit union is available on the ADA website. We are updating our website Classified Ads portal for members. We will announce the new platform when it is ready to roll out.

Finally, it has been a good year working with Dr. Rumfola during his Presidency. There have been more challenges at the national offices than locally, but we have had to manage a few obstacles. We thank him for his service to the district and organized dentistry. Dr. Michael Ehlers will be installed as your next President on Saturday, January 31, 2026, at Orchard Park Country Club. Enjoy the upcoming holiday season and if you have any questions or concerns, please call the office or email me at [jcraig@8ddsny.org](mailto:jcraig@8ddsny.org)

*(Continued from Page 4)*

This all comes down to political influence. The magic number for organizations and political influence is 50%. If your organization has a membership of over 50% of possible members, politicians tend to pay attention to you. If your numbers fall below that 50% level, your organization tends to be ignored. The latest figures on membership shows the ADA has approximately 159,000 members out of a pool of 202,000 dentists. That's a healthy market share. However, as current members in organized dentistry retire, those members need to be replaced by younger members. It is expected most baby boomer dentists will age out of the work force by the late 2020s. These are the members needing replacement to keep a healthy market share of dentists in organized dentistry.

Organized dentistry is important to our professional lives. Just recently, the Eighth District was instrumental in getting fluoride reintroduced into the City of Buffalo's water supply, something it had been lacking since 2015. When a member of the Erie County Legislature wanted to have a written verification of all materials going in and out of dental offices in Erie County, members of the Eighth District were able work with the legislators to squash that proposal. When everyone went into lockdown in 2020, NYSDA was instrumental in getting the Governor to re-open dental offices. All these things were possible because we had a voice in the political arena.

Why don't these two generations join organizations like earlier generations did? These two generations were raised connected to the internet. They are extremely tech savvy and do most of their professional interactions come via a computer or other internet connected devices, like their phones. Our organizations need to approach these potential members through these portals. Traditional means of communication, such as snail mail and email, are not as effective as social media platforms in engaging these two generations. We need to relate to them at their level, not our old, outdated level of communication. Our communications need to be more personalized and more current. They also need to be eye-catching. The normal attention span of a Gen Zer is said to be 8 seconds! If you don't grab them fast, you won't grab them at all.

Cost of membership is also a big barrier to membership. Our organizations need to make our membership more affordable. The ADA and NYSDA are working on this right now. Paying dues over a year's time is much more attractive than making one lump-sum payment once a year, particularly with younger dentists, many who have a tremendous student debt load.

If we want to stay relevant, we must attract younger dentists to our cause. If we don't, our influence in the political arena will diminish significantly. This is never an attractive idea and one we need to avoid.

Best Wishes,

Kevin Hanley, DDS

**Disclaimer: The views expressed here are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the views of the Eighth District Dental Society.**



Attention New Dentists! If you or someone you know in the dental field is a new dentist (working 10 years or less) and would like to be featured in our **NEW DENTIST SPOTLIGHT** in our quarterly Bulletin, please reach out to us! It's a great way to gain exposure and have other members learn about you and your accomplishments to date. Interested dentists can email [admin@8ddsny.org](mailto:admin@8ddsny.org).

# New Dentist Event

The Eighth District would like to thank our sponsors and supporters for the New Dentist social event held at Big Ditch in Lockport in mid-October. A big thanks for supporting us from the ADA Arc Grant, Walsh Insurance, Fortress, DDSMatch, Ivoclar, Vital, and Genesee Regional Bank. We look forward to hosting another new dentist happy hour next Fall.



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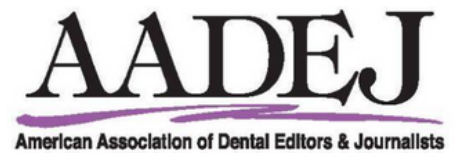


We would like to send out a special thank you to our great partners at Fortress Insurance Company! In mid-October, Fortress CEO Matthew Nielsen, VP Frode Brudvik, Kimberly Gensler, J.D., as well as our host Christine Garvelli from Walsh Insurance entertained members of our EDDS Executive Council with a fantastic dinner and presentation.

We here at the Eighth District value our high quality relationship for well over 25 years with Fortress, and over 50 years with Walsh.

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## 2025 Gies Editorial Awards



The American Association of Dental Editors and Journalists handed out their annual awards in September, and one of our very own received two prestigious awards!

Dr. Chester Gary received both first and second place for the 2025 William J. Gies Editorial Award for his pieces “True Confessions of an Artificial Intelligence System” and “I’m Mr. Brideside”.

Since 1958, the Gies Editorial Award has been presented annually to the author of the most valuable editorial published in a dental journal or periodical. The award recognizes the contributions of dental editors and journalists who share and demonstrate a commitment to the establishment and encouragement of responsible editorial policy.

Congratulations to Dr. Gary on this wonderful accomplishment...times two!

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# Trustee's Corner - Fall 2025

It's hard to believe but summer is coming to an end, and we are closing in on the end of the first quarter of the twenty-first century. Personally, I have officially retired from the University of Buffalo School of Dental Medicine after being a faculty member for eighteen years. Overlap that with thirty years of private practice and I can honestly say it has been a wonderful ride. I will continue to serve the Second District as your Trustee until the annual meeting next year in Indianapolis. Congratulations to my colleague, Dr. Payam Goudarzi, on his selection as the next Trustee for New York State. As I have mentioned before, it has been an honor and a privilege to serve the profession at the American Dental Association.



You recently received several correspondences from the ADA about our current finances. Suffice to say, adjustments were needed to this year's budget. With the leadership from our Finance Committee, the Board of Trustees approved an approximately \$20 million dollar reduction from the 2025 budget. There were some very difficult decisions made with eliminating and pausing specific ADA programs and laying off several hard-working employees. The Board of Trustees knows this is a difficult time, especially for the people who worked or volunteered with these programs. Included in these reductions were daily travel stipends for Board members as well as the elimination of spouse travel stipends. We also added the Chair and Vice Chair of the Strategic Forecasting Committee as consultants to the Finance Committee. We appreciate your support, understanding and patience during this time. Unfortunately, there is still a deficit as we plan for the 2026 year. The Board began the process of putting the 2026 budget together at the end of August at our meeting in Chicago. We will continue to keep members apprised of our financial situation through leadership communications, the ADA Treasurer's Letter, as well as the ADA Reader Leader and the ADA Power of Three Emerging Issues Webinars.

The Fonteva Account Management System, which began in September of 2024, is undergoing a corrective implementation. It was a difficult beginning, and problems were uncovered in late 2024. Since that time, there have been some noted positive results around the country, with a few states coming along at a slower pace. Unfortunately, the New York State Dental Association is part of the latter cohort. The ADA has established a PMO (Project Management Office) to monitor, oversee and measure this project with the help of an outside agency, Crowe LLP. There is also a Steering Committee to oversee the entire project. Our goals include stabilization of 90% of the data entries for October renewals, make it seamless for members to pay for events and register for continuing education, as well as fewer errors and reduced support needs. The ADA IT team is working with the NYSDA IT and membership teams to improve the AMS as it pertains to the New York State Dental Association. I would like to thank the staff at NYSDA for their hard work and contributions to this project and helping it become successful.

As many of you heard, a decision was made to make the 2025 SmileCon in Washington, DC the last SmileCon celebration. Unfortunately, the event has lost a substantial amount of money the past several years and the Board of Trustees felt the financial results were not going to change. The House of Delegates will still meet in Indianapolis, Indiana, October 10th – 13th, 2026 and plans to have the annual scientific session in the same location are in discussion. The ADA is required under the Bylaws to have a scientific session every year. The House of Delegates will still take place in Denver, Colorado, October 29th – November 1st, 2027.

The ADA Membership Engagement Model program that is taking place in four states (New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico and Washington) and Washington, D.C., following the accelerated transition to the

*(Continued on Page 11)*

AMS/CRM (Fonteva/Salesforce), has shown a small improvement in membership numbers. Although it is early in the three-year pilot and we will have more information with the completion of the implementation of the Fonteva Association Accounts Management System, it is a promising sign that the ADA is heading toward the correct value proposition for membership in our Association. At this point, it was decided to pause the addition of other states to the pilot for one year. Results of the pilot from the first year will be available soon.

I would like to take a moment of personal privilege to congratulate our own Dr. James Wanamaker from the Fifth District for his contributions as the New Dentist Committee member of the ADA Board of Trustees. Dr. Wanamaker has represented NYSDA extremely well and should be commended for his leadership and representation of new dentists at the ADA. Organized dentistry is in good hands for many years into the future with leaders such as Dr. Wanamaker.

Please enjoy the rest of 2025 and I am looking forward to a happy and healthy 2026. As always, you can reach me at [dowdb@ada.org](mailto:dowdb@ada.org) or on my cell phone at 716-510-3217.

Sincerely,

Brendan Dowd, DDS  
ADA Trustee, Second District



*In The  
GROOVE*



Hello everybody,

I hope this message finds everybody well and that you have all enjoyed the summer as we prepare ourselves for the colder months ahead. The Erie County Dental Society said goodbye to summer with a great social event on the Edward M. Cotter Fireboat in mid-September. Some good fortune gave us a beautiful evening as we enjoyed each other's company and took in unique views of the city and the boat's fire hose water show. We hope to build on this and offer the membership additional opportunities to connect with other members of our dental community in the coming months.

We also recently hosted a continuing education event at the society office and are grateful to Drs. Jessica and Paul Canallatos for their engaging presentation. As we look ahead to close out this year and enter into the next, I encourage anybody who has never attended one of these events to consider joining us for one this coming year.

We are working on some new ideas based off of member feedback and will continue to strive to meet your needs. If you need anything, please give the office a call at 716-995-6300.

Respectfully,  
Martin Gorkiewicz, DDS



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# A memory box both tragic and hopeful



*Dr. Raymond G. Miller, of Buffalo, treasures a box that contains both sadness and hope.*

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I recently moved from my home of 31 years. In the transition I came across many of my treasured keepsakes – things I do not often see in my regular routines, but that I reflect on and think about periodically. Things my wife of 40 years thinks I need less of, and sometimes she is right.

However, one of these items took me back 24 years ago, to a day and time most of us recall vividly. We know where we were, what we were doing and the emotional impact we felt. My discovery was a small plastic box, about the size of a shoe box.

It contained candy, work gloves, a t-shirt and a letter. The letter was a simple “note of thanks.” It came from a family in Angelica, N.Y., a small town in Allegany County. I was in New York City at the time, southern Manhattan to be exact. As an intermittent federal employee, activated for mass fatality incidents and a forensic specialist, I was a responder to the tragedy of Sept. 11.

My job was to identify victims of the attack and return them to their families. This act sadly only occurred for approximately 60 percent of the families. Many families hoped against all odds that maybe their loved one was in a hospital, just injured and waiting to be found. Even though they, like those of us working the tragedy, knew the odds were against them.

The news of the death of their mother, father, sister, brother, daughter or son was devastating, but it allowed them to grieve and accept the sad reality facing them. When you do this work you try to be objective, not think about the families, knowing in your heart, however, that it was them you truly served.

In order to get through each day, it was necessary to focus on the task at hand, even though there were constant reminders of the humanity lost. People, simply going about their normal routines, became innocent victims of hate. It was for the above reason that the box was such a simple, but impactful, symbol of hope. Hope that people care about others. Knowing they cannot bring back those lost, they made an effort to show support for those that were working under trying and emotional conditions.

This family from Angelica showed me, a stranger to them, gratitude and appreciation. They did not know me but they had some perception that I was in a place that no person wanted to be. I had a job to do, I was qualified and trained to do it, but it is a job I would rather never do.

They somehow knew, or maybe they did not, that a note of thanks and some candy meant that good will can still triumph over evil. I never ate the candy. I still have the candy. If I ate it, I felt in some way the important symbolism would be lost. I felt the reminder was better left in the box. In the note, they thanked me for helping “get things back in order.” They wanted the care box to “pick me up and put a smile on my face.” What the box did in reality was show me that good caring people exist. Respect and love for your fellow man may one day triumph.

We as a nation, are not there yet, and sadly we may have taken some steps backward since Sept. 11, but I have a small box that tells me otherwise.

Thank you Alan, Sherri, Alex, and Karleigh: Your gift, the box, means the world to me.

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# Foundation Corner



Since 1952, the Society Foundation has been a catalyst for fiscal support and outreach for members, students, and the public. Over the last 73 years, efforts to support an array of services have been fulfilled. Many of the funds raised for these efforts have been through generous contributions from members themselves, our sponsors, and partners as well as endorsed products and services over the years. While our level of endorsed products and services has declined to a few select relationships, the willingness of partners to continue to support CE and other efforts through the services we provide have been sustained.

This past year in February, we held an event at The Sportsman's Tavern with Central Groove and raised a significant amount of money that went into the Foundation Campaign effort. We are pleased to announce the dental band has secured another date in 2026 to continue this development. Mark your calendar for Sunday, March 29, 2026, from 4-7pm for another cycle of music, food & drinks, and fun! We sold over 260 tickets to last year's program. More details and information on tickets will be shared once they are available.



There are developing plans to consider other fundraising efforts like a meat raffle in the fall of 2026. We are collaborating with President Hinchy and the Foundation Board to put elements of the program in motion. Again, interest will drive more fiscal support to our foundation. Consider donating to the Capital Campaign or attending more CE events like the spring and fall All-Day lectures. These things can help the Foundation maintain its viability. If you have any ideas or suggestions for the Board to consider, please share them. The QR Code below can be used to make Zelle based financial Capital Campaign donation to the Society.

If you have any questions or ideas to support the Foundation, Capital Campaign, or volunteer to assist in future activities like the Fall 2026 Dental Society Meat Raffle, please contact the EDDS Executive Director Dr. John Craig at [jcraig@8ddsny.org](mailto:jcraig@8ddsny.org).

Thank you and enjoy the upcoming Holiday Season!

Dr. Nicole Hinchy, President

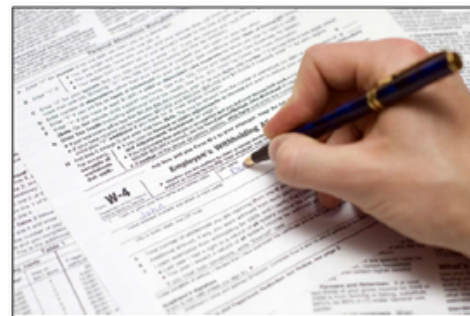
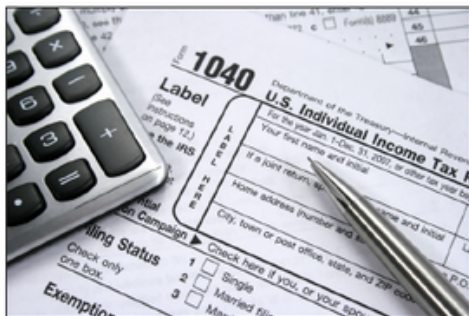


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|                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
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| Dr. Carl F. Gugino   | August 2025    |
| Dr. Norman Schaaf    | September 2025 |
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With over **25 years of experience** in dentistry, Dr. Kelly brings a patient-focused approach and a strong dedication to oral health. Originally from Clarence, NY, she's known for her commitment to oral health and wellness and high-quality care.

With her addition, **we're expanding our availability—especially for emergency patients**—and further support our mission of providing exceptional specialty care to our community.

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# Risk Management Insights

## Managing Negative Online Reviews

A patient posted a negative review about your practice on a review website. What should you do? The first recommendation is to pause and consider your options. You may feel that a response will protect your practice's reputation. However, the patient could allege a HIPAA violation if the response acknowledges a doctor-patient relationship or confirms treatment details. Therefore, it is recommended that you consider the benefits and potential risks of responding.



### Negative Review Response Options

**No response.** A response to every review is not expected. Generally, patients may appreciate the authenticity of a practice's online review ratings when a negative review is included.

**Contact the patient privately.** If you decide to respond and can identify the patient from the review, consider contacting the patient directly using their preferred mode of communication from their file. The goal of this conversation would be to obtain more information to understand the patient's concerns. With a calm and genuinely interested tone, you may be able to address any confusion or correct the situation that motivated the negative review in the first place.

**Use a standard response to mitigate HIPAA violations.** Although the patient may post their protected health information online, this does not imply consent that a doctor can confirm or disclose patient information. A general response, such as the sample below, can help demonstrate an openness by the practice to receiving patient feedback without acknowledgment of a patient-doctor relationship or sharing of any personal information regarding the reviewer. Additionally, by providing contact information for the practice, this general response encourages that any additional contact with the reviewer is taken offline.

Here's an example of a standard response:

"We appreciate your feedback. Our practice strives to provide excellent customer service and quality patient care experience, and we work hard to constantly improve our practice. In order to protect the privacy of patients or potential patients, we do not address specific patient comments made online. Please contact our office directly so we may address your concerns privately."

**Respond only once.** If you do respond and the patient tries to engage in further discussion online, it is recommended that you stop the conversation. Continuing the conversation may escalate the situation.



## Managing Negative Online Reviews continued from Page 1

### General Practice Recommendations

- Implement a policy on how to respond to certain reviews.
- Identify one staff member to monitor online activity concerning your practice on review sites. If the review is dishonest or violates the website's terms and conditions, it may be possible to get the website to remove the review; however, review sites' policies vary.
- Encourage patients to leave positive reviews. These positive reviews will help counteract negative reviews.
- Set realistic expectations for your practice's online presence. Avoid using words like "expert," "pain-free," "guaranteed," etc. since this could set unreasonable expectations and may lead to defense challenges if the patient felt an outcome was guaranteed.
- If a patient alleges treatment issues in a negative online review, consider opening an incident with the Claims Department. Remember, an incident is any event that may lead to a claim. Reporting an incident has no effect on your premium and allows us to guide and support you through the situation.

Ultimately, how you respond is your decision. It is important to remember that anything posted online is in the public domain and may be subject to discovery in litigation.

### External Social Media and Online Review Resources

"Social Media Best Practices" from AAOMS

[https://aaoms.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/AAOMS\\_SocialMedia\\_Best\\_Practices.pdf](https://aaoms.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/AAOMS_SocialMedia_Best_Practices.pdf)

"AAOMS Social Media Guide for Doctor Review Sites" from AAOMS

[https://aaoms.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/AAOMS\\_SocialMedia\\_Guide\\_Dr\\_Review\\_Sites.pdf](https://aaoms.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/AAOMS_SocialMedia_Guide_Dr_Review_Sites.pdf)

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