

# Bronx County Dental News



A PUBLICATION OF THE BRONX COUNTY DENTAL SOCIETY

## Revisiting Fluoride?

**FLUORIDE HAS BEEN IN THE** news lately, and it is about to become a front-page story. The likely voice on health issues in the administration of Donald Trump, Robert Kennedy Jr. has vowed to push for the removal of fluoride from community water supplies. You can be assured that this is going to become a controversial political issue. It is imperative that we become informed of the facts involved so dentists can lead the discussion with our patients and in our communities. I want to give a little background on some recent reports and studies.

Since 1945, the use of fluoride has been a successful public health initiative for reducing dental cavities and improving the general health of children and adults. Over the past 80

years, many accusations of harmful effects of fluoride have been scientifically debunked. But skeptics have seized upon a recent National Toxicological Program [report](#) that found that fluoride levels exceeding 1.5 milligrams per liters of drinking water are associated with slightly lower IQs in children. The level recommended by the US Public Health Service is set at 0.7 milligrams per liter, less than half the amount in the report. This led to U.S. District Court Judge Edward Chen to rule in September 2024 that although his finding does not “conclude with certainty” that fluoridated water is harmful to public health, there is evidence that fluoride in drinking water poses a potential risk of cognitive decline. “Given the seriousness of reduced IQ points, and the ample support in

the record that the United States population is at risk, the severity of the hazard at issue weighs in favor of finding the risk at issue is unreasonable.” Judge Chen ordered the EPA to take steps to lower the risk, but didn’t say what those measures should be.

A new [report](#) from the Cochrane Collaboration, an independent group that analyzes international scientific research has indicated that the benefit from community water fluoridation is only slight. They recommend that water fluoridation be carefully reconsidered due to the broad availability of fluoride in the population through diet, toothpaste, rinses and other caries preventive strategies.

A [study](#) published in JAMA Pediatrics found that exposure

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to fluoridated water during pregnancy was associated with increased neurobehavioral problems. The study found that there may be a need to limit exposure to fluoride from all sources during the prenatal period when the developing child's brain is known to be especially vulnerable to environmental insults.

On November 9, Robert Kennedy Jr. made the declaration that on January 20, 2025, the Trump White House will advise all U.S. water systems to remove fluoride from public water. He claimed, "Fluoride is an industrial waste associated with arthritis, bone fractures, bone cancer, IQ loss, neurodevelopmental disorders and thyroid disease."

Decades of research have found

that adding fluoride to drinking water is a safe way to improve children's oral health. Since 2015, the recommended U.S level has been 0.7 mg/l. Public health organizations including the American Dental Association, American Academy of Pediatrics and the U.S Center for Disease Control and Prevention support the practice. The ADA reports that community fluoridation prevents at least 25% of tooth decay in children and results.

Get ready for this to become a huge controversy. Social media platforms have a way of amplifying spurious claims. Do your own research so you can better discuss this with your patients. Any review of the current recommendations must evaluate the current scientific evidence, and new studies will be

necessary. According to the CDC, health experts and scientists for the U.S and other countries have so far not found convincing scientific evidence linking community water fluoridation with any adverse health effect or systemic disease. ADA President Linda J. Edgar DDS said "the scientific weight of sound evidence around the benefit of community water fluoridation is clear and compelling." The ADA urged its members to beware of online theories and pseudo-science.

Our patients are going to look for us for advice and guidance. We must be well informed. Visit [ADA.org/fluoride](https://ADA.org/fluoride) for a wealth of scientific information. Get ready for the controversy that is sure to come. ■

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# Membership Renewal

**AS WE APPROACH THE END OF 2024, IT'S TIME TO** renew your membership to the organized dentistry tripartite: the ADA, NYSDA and the BCDS. For our young colleagues who have recently finished residency programs, now is the time to become members of organized dentistry.

Membership connects you to your dental community. With over 163,000 members nationally, organized dentistry provides its members with many benefits and countless ways to get involved.

## Member-exclusive resources include:

**Trusted Source of Information:** NYSDA is your trusted source of information for monthly news, practice resources, breaking news and more. [nysdental.org](https://nysdental.org)

**Advocacy:** NYSDA works to represent you in the halls of government. NYSDA works to influence public policies affecting the practice of dentistry in New York and the oral health of the American public. [nysdental.org/advocacy](https://nysdental.org/advocacy)

**Connect and Network:** Follow NYSDA across social media and check out the NYSDA Events. Also join our BCDS events including our Dinner Lectures and Job Fair.

**Membership Concierge:** Your one-on-one experience awaits. The NYSDA Membership Concierge is available to answer your questions and assist with all your membership needs.

**Legal Protection Plan:** The Legal Protection Plan is designed to protect the legal and financial interests of dentists facing public and private administrative proceedings. [nysdental.org/legal](https://nysdental.org/legal)

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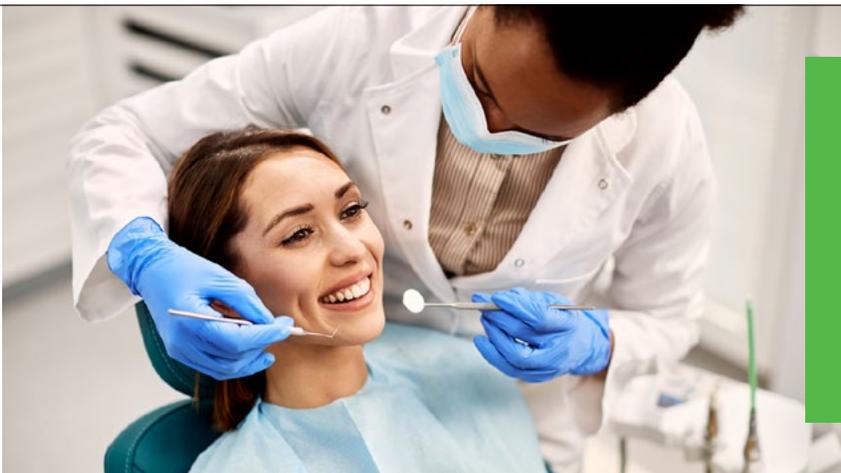
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# Seven Things for New Dentists to Know About Practicing Dentistry in New York

**AS WE APPROACH THE END OF 2024, IT'S TIME TO** Congratulations! Years of hard work and dedication have paid off! You've completed dental school and residency training but what's next? If you plan on practicing in New York State, there are many things to consider before you start providing dental care. Below, MLMIC shares information on seven important topics to be mindful of before you start to practice.

## Finding Coverage That Works for You

Before you start to practice, it is imperative to obtain dental professional liability insurance that suits your unique practice. There are many insurance carriers that offer coverage for dentists, but it is important to obtain coverage through a financially stable carrier with a wealth of experience in New York. Also, not all coverage is created equal. Here are a couple of things to consider:

- **Claims Made vs. Occurrence Coverage:** There are two forms of coverage: claims made and occurrence. The occurrence form of coverage protects a dentist for alleged acts of malpractice that occur while the policy is in force, no matter when a claim is brought against the dentist by, or on behalf of, a patient. The claims made form of coverage protects a dentist for alleged acts of malpractice which both occur and are reported to the dentist's insurance company during the time the policy is in continual force or within 60 days following the policy's cancellation or non renewal. It is important to have a good understanding of these two forms of coverage because if you cancel or non-renew a claims made policy, you will need to purchase a Tail to protect yourself from claims of dental malpractice made after the cancellation of your policy.
- **Tail Coverage:** Dentists who cancel or non-renew their claims made policy are automatically afforded a 60-day reporting extension. However, as mentioned above, to be protected for claims reported anytime from day 61 on, it is strongly

advised to purchase Extended Reporting Endorsement Coverage, also known as a Tail.

- **Added Benefits:** When looking for coverage, you should also look for a carrier that offers value added benefits such as (1) risk management services; (2) a 24/7 hotline for risk management advice (3) coverage that includes legal defense costs and (4) an automatic tail upon permanent and total retirement from the practice of dentistry.

Additional information regarding coverage through MLMIC Insurance Company can be found [here](#).

## Litigious Climate in New York

New York is one of the most litigious states in the country. According to statistics from the [National Practitioner's Data Bank](#), between 2010 and 2023 there were 2,507 payments made on behalf of dentists in New York. Dental malpractice claims arise from a number of procedures such as dental implants and root canals. Common allegations seen in these claims include improper performance of treatment or procedure, improper management of treatment and diagnostic errors. Injuries in these types of cases can range from the need for an additional procedure, nerve damage, tooth damage and in extreme cases, death.

If you are involved in a dental malpractice case, it is important to have an insurance carrier with knowledge and experience in handling dental claims in New York.

## Use of Botox in New York

The use of Botox in the practice of dentistry can be risky in New York. If you plan to use Botox injections as part of your treatment plan, you must ensure and document that the treatment is related to the restoration and/or maintenance of dental health. The use of Botox outside the definition of dentistry can put a dentist at risk for dental malpractice claims. It should be noted that certain uses of

Botox which do not fall within the definition of the practice of dentistry may not be covered by your professional liability insurance policy, placing your personal assets at risk. It is recommended to review your insurance policy or speak with your insurance carrier before offering Botox treatment as part of your practice.

Additional information regarding the use of Botox in the practice of dentistry, including an interesting case study, can be found [here](#).

## Risk Management Tips for New Dentists

One of the most important aspects of patient care is communication, especially when referring a patient to a specialist.

Lack of communication between dentists can result in a delay in diagnosis or treatment, the failure to act upon abnormal test results or findings, the duplication of a prescription, a failure to prescribe appropriate medications or a failure to order

diagnostic testing. When referring a patient to a specialist for dental care MLMIC recommends the following:

- Referring dentists should develop a method for determining whether a consultation has been completed and if a written report has been received.
- As a matter of standard office policy, all consultation reports must be reviewed by a dentist, initialed and dated prior to being filed in the patient's dental record.
- If a written report from the consultant is not received in a timely manner, you should contact the consultant to determine whether a written report has been generated.

In addition to communicating with specialists, as a practicing dentist, you will want to have a policy in place to address patients who miss or cancel appointments. The failure of a dentist to follow up or contact a patient who missed or cancelled an appointment may result in a serious delay in diagnosis or treatment and a subsequent risk of

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liability to the dentist.

To protect yourself from liability, MLMIC recommends a pro-active system to follow up with patients about missed or cancelled appointments that allow a dentist to promptly assess and respond to clinical situations, thereby maintaining continuity of patient care. Here are some recommendations:

- Develop policies and procedures in your practice for following up with patients who have missed or cancelled appointments.
- Dentists should be made aware of any patients who have missed or cancelled appointments. The staff should inform the dentist(s) of these patients at the end of the day and have each patient's record ready for review.
- The dentist should assess the clinical importance of the appointment, the severity of the patient's condition and the risk(s) associated with the missed or cancelled appointment.
- A reminder telephone call should be placed to the patient. The date and time of the telephone call and the content of the message or conversation should be documented in the patient's record.

To review all of MLMIC's recommendations on the above liability risks, look [here](#).

## Office of Professional Discipline

In New York State, the Office of Professional Discipline ("OPD") in the Department of Education governs the licensure of dentists and is responsible for investigating complaints regarding dentists.

This agency is empowered to review a complaint regardless of the source. Dentists often receive telephone calls or letters from the agency asking for a patient's records and/or also an interview. On rare occasions, someone from the OPD agency may come to visit the office unexpectedly because of the nature of the complaint.

The disciplinary process may well result in serious implications which can impact the livelihood and license of the dentist. It may also impact the dentist's reputation. The penalties that OPD can impose vary from censure and reprimand all the way to surrender of the license and/or appropriate referrals if a drug problem is identified. This agency

also has the power to impose fines which may be up to \$10,000 per violation. Any final disciplinary action that OPD takes against a dentist, results in a report to the National Practitioner Data Bank. This disciplinary action may also be listed on the OPD website, which is open to the public.

Dentists should seek the advice of counsel when contacted by the OPD. A dental professional liability policy with MLMIC includes a defense-only endorsement to cover legal fees up to \$25,000 to assist in protecting a provider's license to practice dentistry.

If you are involved in an OPD investigation, MLMIC is always here to support our insureds during this difficult process.

## Employment Contracts

Many dental practices and especially dental support organizations, require new dentists to execute an employment contract. It is important to read every section of your contract and know that in many circumstances portions of an employment contract can be negotiable. For assistance in reviewing and negotiating an employment contract your best bet is to retain an attorney who is experienced in writing and negotiating employment contracts. If you are a member of the New York State Dental Association (NYSDA), you may be able to take advantage of their Legal Protection Plan. For information on NYSDA's legal protection plan or to view their Employment Contracts Webinar, look [here](#).

## Benefits of Joining the American Dental Association, the New York State Dental Association and Your Local Dental Society

Membership with the American Dental Association, (ADA) New York State Dental Association (NYSDA) and your local dental society is beneficial to both new and experienced dentists. These societies advocate for dentists on the national, state and local level. It is a wonderful way to have your voice heard to improve the field of dentistry through legislation.

There is also a sense of awe when you are part of a larger organization. Dental society members can stay connected with the dental community throughout the country building professional relationships and even friendships that last a lifetime.

Members may also have the ability to obtain free continuing educational programs and discounts on certain products and services. The societies provide resources to dentists who are looking for employment or are thinking about buying or selling a practice.

To learn about all the benefits NYSDA has to offer, you can view their Membership Benefits Guide [here](#).

## Updated Mandated Reporter Training Requirements

### CHAPTER 56 OF THE LAWS OF 2021 AMENDED

Social Services Law 413 to require additional training to include protocols to reduce implicit bias in decision-making processes, strategies for identifying adverse childhood experiences, and guidelines to assist in recognizing signs of abuse or maltreatment while interacting virtually within the New York State Mandated Identification and Reporting of Child Abuse and Maltreatment/Neglect coursework. This law requires that mandated reporters, including those who have previously undergone the current training, complete the updated training curriculum by April 1, 2025.

Training related to child abuse is required for the following professions:

- Dental Hygienists
- Dentists

As a licensee registered to practice in one of the above professions, you must complete this training by April 1, 2025.

This required course can be taken at no charge with this [link](#) to the NYS Office of Child and Family Services. ■

If you are interested in joining NYSDA, look [here](#).

Additional information regarding MLMIC Insurance Company can be found [here](#).

Sources: <https://www.npdb.hrsa.gov/analysistool/> & <https://www.mlmic.com/dentists/blog/botox-in-dentistry-case-study/>

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# NYSED Issues Alert on Shielding for Dental Radiography

**THE NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT** (NYSED) has issued the dental practice alert below reminding all dental professionals that they must use radiation shielding for patients as required by law, notwithstanding studies that may recommend otherwise.

## Professional Practice for Dentists New York State Education Law Continues to Require Protective Shielding for Dental Radiography

Reviews of recent studies and reports have led researchers to conclude that radiation doses

from dentomaxillofacial imaging pose negligible risk. These studies and reports have led some organizations to recommend the discontinuation of patient shielding during dental X-rays. Dentists may be reading these studies and reports with interest, as well as with concern regarding how the discontinuation of patient shielding might impact their practices. However, please note that Education Law §6611(7) still mandates the continued use of protective shielding for dental radiographs: <https://www.op.nysed.gov/title8/education-law/article-133>. ■

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- A Public Resource Center for the general public. The Find A Dentist feature enables patients to search for ADA member dentists by zip code and specialty.

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- FURNITURE
- MATTRESSES
- CARPET
- HOT TUBS
- BATHTUBS
- TIRES

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50 YEARS



### At Dental Lifeline Network, your time and skills matter.

That's why we've made volunteering easy for compassionate dental professionals like you.

From screening those in need to managing coordination seamlessly, we've got it all covered.

When you volunteer with DLN, you change lives, find your purpose, and redefine success.

### Volunteering is easy.

**Apply**

A potential patient applies for the program through an application

**Screen**

A DLN/DDS coordinator reviews and screens the applicant

**Match**

Coordinator matches qualified patient with a volunteer dentist

**Treat**

Volunteer dentist sees patient in their own office

This is Why I Dental.

### Volunteer with Dental Lifeline Network's Donated Dental Services Program (DDS). When you volunteer, you:



**CREATE BRIGHTER FUTURES**

DLN gives you the opportunity to become a beacon of hope. You're not just restoring smiles; you're creating brighter futures.



**DISCOVER YOUR PURPOSE**

DLN provides a supportive community where your success story intertwines with the uplifting stories of those you help.



**DEDICATE YOUR SKILLS**

DLN offers turnkey solutions, from scheduling patients at your convenience to managing coordination seamlessly, we've got it covered.

[WhyIDental.org](http://WhyIDental.org)

## Why I Dental...

At Dental Lifeline Network we understand that your time is valuable, yet we also recognize the profound impact your skills can have on your community. That's why we've made it incredibly easy for compassionate dental professionals like you to give back to those in desperate need of oral care.

From clearing up painful dental infections and helping others eat again, volunteering with DLN's Donated Dental Services (DDS) program will make a lifechanging difference.



For many adults, right here in our own community, dental care is not an option. Dental Lifeline Network is looking for dentists who can change this.

I volunteer because it gives me that warm fuzzy feeling like I had in dental school.

Thomas J. Sniscak, DMD, FAGD



Dental Lifeline Network is a national nonprofit and strategic partner of the American Dental Association. More than 12,700 volunteer dentists and 3,200 laboratories participate in DLN's Donated Dental Services program nationwide.

**OUR VISION**

All vulnerable adults have access to lifechanging dental care.

**OUR MISSION**

We change the lives of America's most vulnerable adults through our coordinated system of care.



[WhyIDental.org](http://WhyIDental.org)



# Holiday Party 2024

The Bronx County Dental Society Holiday Party  
is back and better than ever!

Thurs, Dec 12, 2024

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7pm-11pm

Maestro's Caterers

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1703 Bronxdale Ave,  
Bronx, NY 10462

\$75 per person | Free for the first 20 Bronx County  
Hospital Dental Residents to register

Open Bar | Dinner Buffet | Live DJ

Bring your staff and celebrate the holiday season with the BCDS.

Show off your moves on the dance floor!

Special Holiday Raffles with valuable prizes.

Make your reservations with Joy Patane at 718-733-2031  
or [bronxdental@optonline.net](mailto:bronxdental@optonline.net)

Kosher meals available upon advance request\*



Party is co-sponsored by MLMIC, Bank of  
America, DDS Match, and Kuraray Dental.

\*Kosher meal requests must be  
received by December 6.

# Job Fair 2025

Presented by the Bronx County Dental Society

## When

Thursday, March 20, 2025 | 6:30pm-9:30pm

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## Where

Maestro's Caterers  
1703 Bronxdale Ave, Bronx, NY 10462

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## Who's Invited

All dental residents working at our Bronx Hospitals  
All Bronx County Dental Society Members, especially those looking  
for an associate or thinking of transitioning towards retirement

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## What's On the Menu

Light snacks, appetizers, beer, wine and soft drinks

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## Who Will Be There

Companies offering jobs and companies facilitating  
dental business transactions



# Join Us!

Please RSVP to Joy at 718-733-2031 or [bronxdental@optonline.net](mailto:bronxdental@optonline.net)

# Dr. Lauren Levi, DMD, MS

## A Lecture That Won't Make You Zzz: Dental Sleep Medicine 101

Tuesday April 8, 2025 | 6:00pm

Maestro's Caterers 1703 Bronxdale Avenue, Bronx, New York 10462

Buffet Dinner at 6pm (Kosher meals available upon advance request\*)

Lecture at 7pm

\$35 for BCDS members | \$75 for non-members | Free for residents of Bronx Hospital programs

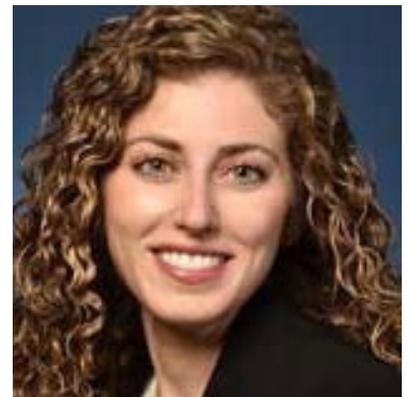
This lecture will introduce the clinician to dental sleep medicine as well as treatment modalities for obstructive sleep apnea. At the end of the lecture, the clinician will not only have reviewed the pathophysiology of obstructive sleep apnea but also common methods to treat obstructive sleep apnea.

At the end of this lecture, the student will

- Become more familiar with reading a PSG
- Become more familiar with the signs and symptoms of obstructive sleep apnea and the dentist's role in the treatment of OSA
- Become more familiar with fabricating an oral appliance for obstructive sleep apnea

### Dr. Lauren Levi, DMD, MS

Lauren Levi is a fellowship-trained dental oncologist and board-certified orofacial pain specialist who lectures nationally, is actively engaged in literature publications, and serves as the director of the orofacial pain, oral medicine headache, and sleep department at Touro College of Dental Medicine and an adjunct assistant professor in the division of orofacial pain at Jefferson University Hospital.



**TO REGISTER FOR THIS DINNER LECTURE, EMAIL JOY PATANE AT [BRONXDENTAL@OPTONLINE.NET](mailto:BRONXDENTAL@OPTONLINE.NET)**

3CE Credits.

*\*Kosher meal requests must be received one week prior to the course.*

# A Winning Combination = A Winning Combination!

## BEACH – CLASSROOM – FISHING – CLASSROOM – SPA –

Classroom – Golf, whatever your choice, Smiles in the Sun 2025 at The Resort at Longboat Key Club is the right meeting for you, your family and your staff. This is a 5 star property and SITS 2025 has a 5 star program with 20 CERPP/PACE approved credits that features three well renown speakers: Dr. Jennifer Bell, Dr. Chad Duplantis, Ms. Debra Englehardt-Nash, and Dr. Howard S. Glazer. Great education and you can have your feet in the sand by 2:30!

All these presentations, hands-on programs, and meals during social functions are included in your registration fee. Our wonderful social functions feature a welcoming reception, a putting tournament/ buffet dinner, sunset beach bash bar-b-que, and “Sundaes on Saturday”. We also have an optional fishing tournament and luncheon on Wednesday. LBK can be reached via Sarasota, Tampa, or Regional Southwest Airports. There are special reduced rates and amenities for our registrants.

Whatever your pleasure, Smiles in the Sun 2025 has the answer: learn in the morning and play all afternoon in a wonderful location and enjoy the best the west coast of Florida has to offer.

We offer discounted rates for multiple staff, recent grads, and active military. For more information and to register, visit our website: [www.smilesinthesun.net](http://www.smilesinthesun.net) or call: 201-264-9580.

## “See You At The Beach!”

First time attendees can mention this ad for \$200 off the doctor registration.

We would like to thank our sponsors.



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