President’s Message

By Dr. Nick Caplanis, President

This is an extremely exciting time to be a specialist in periodontics. Our understanding of periodontal disease and its adverse impact on systemic health is promoting increased awareness and improved oral health with patients. Our ability to regenerate lost bone and soft tissue has never been better. Implant dentistry has expanded our capacity to help our patients achieve a functional and healthier dentition. And technology is allowing for same day CAD-CAM milling, in office three dimensional imaging and virtual surgical procedures, even at real time, improving efficiency, surgical preparation and patient safety.

However, this is also an extremely challenging time to be a practicing periodontist. The growth of corporate dentistry is undermining the traditional models of oral health care delivery. The line between generalist and specialist is continuing to blur. The cost of dental education and subsequent high debt of the young periodontist is helping fuel a traveling model for health care delivery, often associated with compromised doctor autonomy, lower quality care, and aggressive diagnosis and over treatment. Third party payers are increasingly compromising the doctor – patient relationship, where treatment decisions are often dictated by bureaucrats and reimbursement rates are based on corporate profits instead of patient needs. And over-bearing government regulations and fees is increasing practice overhead costs subsequently reducing access to care as well as quality of care.

This is why membership to the California Society of Periodontists (CSP) has never been more important. CSP advocates for all California periodontists allowing us to practice the full scope of our specialty as we were trained. CSP monitors legislative and dental board actions on our behalf which can impact patient care and practice, and lets us know when important issues arise. Our newly designed collaborative annual meeting provides an environment where we learn together with our referring colleagues to strengthen our professional relationships and promote the team approach model which is essential for high quality and state of the art patient care. Our hygiene collaborative, usually held twice a year promotes the periodontist as the leader of the periodontal team to our hygienist colleagues and fosters a collegial relationship between us. And our new consumer oriented website defines the periodontist as the expert in oral health and provides a resource for patients to help find CSP member periodontists.

Yes, this is a very exciting time to be a periodontist but we need a stronger voice to continue delivering the quality of care that our patients deserve. We need to continue our membership with CSP. We need to become involved with our local component dental societies. We need to actively participate on committees in the CDA as well as in the CDA House of Delegates. And we all need to promote CSP membership to non-member periodontists to strengthen our collective voice. In short, we need to become individual leaders of organized dentistry in California and advocate for periodontics as we do for our practices in our local community. Together, we will...
Recent surveys of our membership indicate that advocacy is one of the highest values of membership, and thus one of our most important roles in serving you, our membership. I found this result somewhat surprising because often our advocacy efforts occur behind the scenes and can easily go un-noticed. The purpose of this update to inform you, our membership, what we’ve been working on lately to best serve you, as well as our non-member colleagues here in California.

One of our biggest focuses right now is increasing public awareness of periodontal disease, and reinforcing the periodontist as the expert. To accomplish this, your board of directors is seeking the support of the dental board as well as the CDA in establishing an official periodontal disease awareness month. Many corporations already have national campaigns promoting a periodontal awareness month, including Colgate and Millennium, and in 2012 Illinois Governor Pat Quinn officially declared February to be “Gum Disease Awareness Month”. We have agreed that officially declaring a periodontal disease awareness month here in California would help educate Californians about the oral-systemic connection while also promoting the importance of periodontists as experts in on the topic. We believe that this would be a tremendous benefit for our members; particularly in a time where many patients with periodontal disease may be unaware that periodontists even exist, and mistakenly entrust their periodontal health solely to a general dentist. Right now your advocacy committee is discussing ways to gain the support of the dental board, the CDA and the governor to pursue this goal.

While this task is a lofty one, it’s not our only focus. We ensure that a representative from our leadership is present at every meeting of the dental board so that we can stay abreast of any potential threats to our members’ survival and prosperity, and take action when needed. Rest assured we are working hard for you, our members, to help our specialty flourish.

Tina Beck, DDS, MS
Chair, Advocacy Committee

manage the challenges.

It is an honor and privilege to serve as your President of the California Society of Periodontists. CSP has a talented and enthusiastic group of volunteers that are diligently working to promote and protect the specialty of periodontics in the great state of California. I look forward to a very productive year.

If there’s anything CSP can do to further help you or your patients, or if you would like to know how you can get more involved with organized dentistry, please feel free to personally contact me at nickcaplanis@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Nick Caplanis DMD MS
Our Annual Meeting was held in the beautiful seaside venue of Santa Barbara at the Fess Parker Resort. The meeting was well attended and there has been very good feedback to date. A dual track was designed by Nick Caplanis and the Annual Meeting Committee which gave more choices for courses. There were many of our restorative colleagues present as well. The future success of our meetings centers around cultivating participation of our referring doctors so that they can see what we are capable of and the level of excellent care that can be achieved when we work together. CSP expresses gratitude and appreciation to all of the 2016 annual meeting sponsors, exhibitors, speakers and attendees. Our grand prize winner of the Ipad Mini was Dr. Brand Ahn. We celebrated Laura Purcell’s 10th Anniversary at the luncheon by presenting her with an award. She is the glue that holds us together and does so many things behind the scenes. We are deeply grateful for her work…. Visit our website to catch up on all the news including this year’s award recipients. Next year our meeting will be held at the Grand Californian Hotel at Disneyland. What a wonderful venue to bring your family, your referrals and their families.

Arta Farahmand and the Annual Meeting Committee have been working hard this last year to bring world renown speakers to our meeting. You won’t want to miss it!
DELTA DENTAL CHANGE IN REIMBURSEMENT

As you are most likely are aware, in January Delta Dental changed reimbursement policies for connective tissue grafts. They are disallowing more than two teeth per quadrant and are downgrading fees for the second tooth. CSP leadership is in contact with AAP and CDA who is researching this issue to determine next steps to hopefully resolve this issue. Please refer to the letter from President Nick Caplanis that was emailed two weeks ago for more details about this matter. You can also view the letter on our website.