Minutes of the Michigan Dental Association
Special Committee on Access to Care
October 12, 2012 – 9:00 a.m.
Michigan Nurses Association Building

Attended:
Charles Burling, DDS, co-chair
Zelton Johnson, DDS, co-chair
Christopher Gorecki, DDS, member
Martin Makowski, DDS, member
Wilhelm Piskorowski, DDS, member
Maria Manzor, DDS, consultant
Chris Farrell, RDH, BSDH, MPA, special consultant
Richard Small, special consultant
Rhonda Hennessy, DDS, CGIA liaison
Drew Eason, CAE, executive director
Thomas Kochheiser, CAE, director of public affairs
Bill Sullivan, JD, director of legislative and insurance affairs
Andrea Sundermann, director of continuing education
April Stopczynski, public affairs and legislative/insurance affairs

Absent:
Sherill Behnke, DDS, member
Jerel Owens, DMD, member
Jehan Wakeem, DDS, MS, member
Karlene Ketola, special consultant

Call to Order:
The meeting was called to order at 9:06 a.m. by Dr. Burling.

Update on United Voice Recommendations:
The committee discussed the United Voice report update. MDA staff is currently working on a formal update to the report that can be given to legislators and other organizations.

Recommendation 7 – Fluoridation:
The committee is aware that community water fluoridation is a top priority for the ADA, as well as here in Michigan. Anti-fluoridationists continue to press the issue on the local level across the nation and have been successful in defluoridating several large communities. The Michigan Water Fluoridation Advisory Committee continues to work with the MDA, Michigan Oral Health Coalition, Michigan Department of Community Health, and Delta Dental to support fluoridation. Delta Dental continues to offer its infrastructure improvement grants through MDCH to communities that may need to replace costly equipment. Additional information supporting community water fluoridation has been made available through Pew Center for the States and other sources, including the “I Like My Teeth” website.
The committee would like to identify champions (both dentists and consumers) at the local levels to serve as experts to testify to local city councils that may be considering fluoridation or defluoridation. These champions would also work to educate local water operators on the necessity, benefits and cost-effectiveness of community water fluoridation. The committee discussed how to provide information to local water operators through association meetings (Michigan Waterworks Association) or newsletters. The committee also discussed simple handouts that could be provided. Pew Center for the States has a myth vs. fact handout and MDCH also has two one-page handouts.

While the committee is aware of Pew’s rapid responder network that is monitoring online activity, the committee believes better communication is needed to get information to local MDA members so they can act when this topic comes up in their community. The committee also would like to pursue campaigning after a community defluoridates. The committee discussed data from Wisconsin on the 5-year caries rate after fluoride was removed from the public water system. The committee also discussed whether or not insurers would be able to provide useful data on the increase/decrease in caries rate and the increase/decrease in systemic conditions in relation to fluoridating/defluoridating in certain known communities.

**Recommendation 15 – Pregnant Women:**
The committee was emailed a new national consensus statement on oral health care during pregnancy from the National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center. MDCH is also working on a new State Infant Mortality Plan which will be distributed to this committee when it is finished. MDCH will be looking to convene a work group to figure out how to do a pilot coordinating perinatal, oral health care and incorporating in OB/GYN practices.

**Recommendation 17 – Social Media:**
The committee is aware that the MDA has hired an intern who launched MDA’s Twitter last February. Messages are targeted at Michigan legislators, the news media, and organizations connected to health or oral health. The goal of the tweets is to spread awareness of dental issues and, to a certain degree, entertain. The program continues to grow and has about 350 followers – most are in our targeted audience.

**Missions of Mercy:**
Andrea Sundermann, MDA’s director of continuing education, provided the committee with an overview of the Missions of Mercy event taking place in June 2013 at Saginaw Valley State University. Approximately 1,000 volunteers are needed (about 450 oral health professionals). A total of 100 chairs will be set up on site beginning on June 6. Treatment days will be held on June 7 and 8. Tear down will be June 9. A planning committee of 40 volunteers has been developed and those volunteers are being trained to lead the various departments. The cost for the event is approximately $150,000-$170,000, including in-kind donations of equipment, supplies and food for volunteers.
The volunteer planning committee is working on fundraising and appears to be on-target to meet the funding needs. Several grants are currently pending approval.

School-Based Dentistry Symposium:
The committee was informed that the school-based dental care symposium will be held on Friday, April 19, 2013 from 8 – 11 a.m. at the MDA Annual Session in Novi. Dr. Palm is working with the MDA’s CE department to plan the event. The United Dairy Industry of Michigan will sponsor breakfast for attendees, as well as an exhibit booth in the exhibit hall. They are expecting to bring in retired Detroit Lions player Herman Moore. The symposium will include several speakers including Dr. Margharita Fontana, Linda Meter of the School Nurses’ Association, and Dr. Ryan Lebster. Topics will include: cariology and dental sealants research findings, mobile dentistry, and school-based care guidelines. Goals of the symposium include: validating school-based care settings, educating members on the positives of school-based settings, and providing information on how to determine whether the school-based program is providing an appropriate level of care and follow-up. The symposium will be marketed toward school nurses, dentists and hygienists. The MDA will award CE credits to dentists and hygienists for attending. The committee discussed the possibility of awarding CE credits to medical professionals who attend and was informed that it is very costly to get approval. It was suggested that MDA investigate partnering with a medical school that could approve CE credits through their certificate. Dr. Palm is also currently working on a white paper on school-based treatment.

Oral Healthcare and the Elderly:
The committee was provided with an email from the Coalition on Oral Health for the Aging (COHA) and a request for several recommendations they would like the committee to consider. The ADA has recently distributed information on elder care and reimbursement for care provided in nursing homes. A stakeholders meeting sponsored by Delta Dental and under the direction of Public Sector Consultants, Inc. is in the planning stages. The committee discussed that one of the barriers for many providers in providing care in nursing homes is the required background check. It was suggested that perhaps an exemption could be made for licensed professionals. The committee discussed the possibility of developing a fact sheet for members who might be interested to address concerns like liability, how to get paid, and myths.

Charitable Care Survey:
The committee is aware that often there is the perception that dentists aren’t doing anything about the access problem because of the low acceptance of Medicaid. The MDA authorized the hiring of an outside entity to survey the membership on the amount of donated care provided both in their offices and in other settings. The survey had a great response and preliminary numbers show that on average, individual dentists are providing $62,000 of donated care per year. The average amount provided in their private practice offices was over $28,000 per year. This does not include participation in programs such as Michigan Donated Dental Services. The final report will be distributed to the committee and this data will be used in future meetings with legislators and promoted to the media.
Veterans Project:
The committee was informed that the MDA has partnered with the MDA Foundation, Michigan Veterans Trust Fund and Michigan Department of Military and Veterans Affairs to develop an awareness program to help veterans ensure they are receiving all benefits they are eligible for and to increase awareness of the availability of the Michigan Veterans Trust Fund Emergency Grant Program. All member dental offices are being mailed a supply of flyers to pass out to veteran patients with two basic numbers to call to seek information about benefit eligibility. The MDA has information on both the public and professional areas of the website to provide additional information on where veterans can seek more information on dental and other benefits. A press conference will be held on Thursday, November 8 at 9:00 a.m. in the Capitol Rotunda to announce the official launch of the program.

The committee also was informed that Dr. Piskorowski’s outreach program is involved with a member dentist in Gaylord providing education and dental care to homeless veterans.

MDA’s Legislative Advocacy Website:
The committee was asked to be aware of legislative advocacy emails from the MDA asking members to contact legislators. The MDA’s legislative advocacy website provides information for members on legislation that can affect their dental practices. It also provides an easy way for members to contact their legislators. When the MDA is trying to move legislative initiatives and demonstrate how important an issue is to dentist and the oral health care of Michigan citizens, a legislative advocacy email is sent to all MDA members asking them to click a link to send an email to the legislator. When the link is clicked, members are taken to a log in screen where they enter their ADA number. Once they log in, a screen appears with a specific, pre-written message that can be personalized or sent as-is. Members enter their name and address (only once – after the first visit, the website remembers this information) and the message is automatically sent to the appropriate legislators.

Using this simple process, the MDA has sent multiple messages to members asking them to urge legislators to support the full expansion of Healthy Kids Dental. Participation was extremely low. Many members went so far as to log in to the website but chose not to send the simple, pre-written message.

As this committee moves to initiate change, legislative action will be needed. It is important for members of this committee to participate in legislative advocacy and encourage their colleagues to participate as well if legislative initiatives are to move forward.

Legislative Update:
The committee was provided with a legislative update from Bill Sullivan, MDA’s director of legislative and insurance affairs. The mobile dentistry bill is complete and was introduced by Rep. Peter MacGregor. The 2.3% federal medical device tax is set to go into affect on January 1, 2013. It is still unclear what items that will include but it is
assumed that all dental supplies and materials will be included. The person producing the device collects the tax. Dan Schulte is working on an article to address this issue for the December MDA Journal.

Collaboration with Michigan State Medical Society:
The committee was informed that the MDA has been approached by the Michigan State Medical Society (MSMS) on several issues and how they can work collaboratively with the MDA. They discussed several topics including, why many dentists don’t accept Medicaid, continuing education, Points of Light, Healthy Kids Dental, mandated oral health program, mobile dentistry, integrated care, physicians placing fluoride varnish, etc. The MDA will be supplying them with an article on oral health literacy for their publication.

The committee brainstormed issues that MSMS could support:

- Integrated medical/dental home with federally qualified health centers – how to contract with private practice dentists
- The importance of early childhood exams (Points of Light) – provide fact sheets on Points of Light and Healthy Kids Dental to physicians
- Advocating for a mandatory oral health program
- Awareness and implementation of the updates to the MQIC guidelines – there appears to be little application of the new guidelines in practice
- The ability of physicians to place fluoride varnish – free CE/CME available for physicians who take the MDCH online training
- Mobile dentistry regulations
- Community water fluoridation
- Veterans’ benefits program – publish information in MSMS newsletters
- Reimbursement for hospitals for outpatient/operating room services or for dental services provided in ambulatory surgical centers

Dental Screenings for School-Aged Children:
The committee discussed other state laws on required dental screenings for children entering school. Issues that have risen in other states include difficulty with reimbursement due to the lack of a code for dental screenings, and increased issues with mobile dental programs that provide only a minimum amount of service and are not linked to a clinic that can provide follow-up care, or mobile dental programs providing services to insured children who have a dental home.

Next Steps:
The committee believes the update and further promotion on what has been done since the release of the original United Voice report to the general membership, legislators and the public is highly important.

The committee discussed the current level of attention and ability to continue to address the increasing number of access initiatives with the current level of staffing. The committee would like to see more being published to the public and members on what the
MDA and members are doing around the state. Education of the public on the importance of oral health remains a top need, as is increased reimbursement. The committee does believe it must continue to prioritize and consider what items other non-MDA groups can take the lead on. The committee also discussed the possibility of inviting more general dentists to attend future meetings to increase awareness of all that is happening with access to care.

**Next Meeting Date:**
The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, January 25, 2013 at 9:00 a.m. at the MDA office in Okemos.

**Adjournment:**
The meeting was adjourned by Dr. Burling at 11:23 a.m.