



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Member Spotlight: American Dental Association with ADA's Jean P. Narcisi, Director of Dental Informatics

How did your organization get started?

The American Dental Association was founded in August, 1859, in Niagara Falls, New York, by 26 dentists who represented various dental societies in the United States. Today, the ADA has more than 157,000 dentist members, 53 state-territorial societies, and 545 local dental societies. It is the largest and oldest national dental association in the world.

What differentiates your organization from others?

Our organization sets itself apart by serving as the premier source of oral health information, advocating for the public's health and promoting the art and science of dentistry. The ADA's state-of-the-art research facilities develop and test dental products and materials that have advanced the practice of dentistry and made the patient experience more positive. Our Seal of Acceptance has been a valued and respected guide to consumer dental care products for many years. The monthly Journal of the American Dental Association (JADA) is the ADA's flagship publication and the most widely read scientific journal in dentistry.

Who are your customers and what type of projects is your organization currently working on?

The ADA works to advance the dental profession on a national, state and local level by fostering the success of a diverse membership. Its primary stakeholders are dentists, dental educators and dental students. Additionally, the ADA serves the public by being a leader in the advancement of oral health through its new initiative, Action for Dental Health, which is designed to address the dental health crisis in three distinct areas:

- Provide care now to people who are suffering from untreated disease.
- Strengthen and expand the public/private safety net.
- Disease prevention and dental health education.

Tell us about what your organization is doing to make the American Healthcare System more efficient.

The ADA leads in the development and advancement of standards for the improvement of oral health care through:

- promotion of evidence-based dentistry;
- developing and promoting standards that enable technical and semantic interoperability of health information;
- encouraging appropriate information sharing, data aggregation, and knowledge building; and,
- participating in federal policy development in these arenas.

Why did you become a WEDI member and what do you find to be the most beneficial part of your membership?

By participating in WEDI we are able to influence the direction of health IT policy, as WEDI is an official advisor to HHS.

What are some emerging trends you see in the overall industry?

Healthcare, including dentistry, in the U.S. is in a period of transformation. The health care delivery system is changing rapidly with the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. Consumer habits are shifting, with Americans increasingly relying on technology and seeking greater value from their spending. The Affordable Care Act pediatric dental benefit will provide millions of additional children with dental coverage through the small group and individual markets and optional Medicaid expansions. Public programs, with a growing number of participants, will demand increased accountability from healthcare and dental providers in particular.