

July 20, 2023

The Honorable Mandy K. Cohen, MD, MPH
Director, Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
1600 Clifton Road
Atlanta, GA 30329

Dear Dr. Cohen,

On behalf of the American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research (AADOOCR), I am writing today to extend our congratulations to you on your appointment to the position of Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

We are pleased that the Administration has selected you, an experienced leader in broadening patient access to care, addressing the social determinants of health, and working to reduce health disparities – objectives that AADOOCR strongly supports. Our members look forward to working together with you and your team on tackling public health challenges and improving oral and overall health outcomes.

One of our top legislative priorities is ensuring robust federal funding for the CDC. We believe the agency plays a vital role in reducing the prevalence of oral diseases and conditions and reducing health inequities by promoting oral health through public health programs and proven interventions. As examples, the community water fluoridation program and school dental sealant program are core CDC initiatives that have successfully reduced the incidence of oral disease and rate of cavities among children and adults in underserved communities.

We have long advocated for additional CDC resources so that the agency can expand beyond the 21 state and territorial oral health programs it currently supports. These programs are necessary so that states can collect data on oral diseases and conditions and provide access to proven population-based and clinical interventions that promote oral health, particularly among hard-to-reach populations.

We also advocate for CDC's continued ability to develop infection prevention and control guidelines for dental health care personnel and educational resources to increase adherence to these guidelines. CDC's work to advance medical-dental integration and promote overall health is also important because of its potential to accelerate oral health equity and care coordination that will improve chronic disease management and overall health throughout patients' lives.

Finally, we urge the continuation of the CDC's Dental Public Health Residency (DPHR), a program that provides residents the opportunity to publish research and gain invaluable experience working in the field alongside subject matter experts. DPHR has helped produce

specialists in dental public health, an area that demands more attention given the systemic barriers that keep marginalized, older and rural communities from achieving optimal oral health.

The CDC has been a key partner to the dental research and science community, and we look forward to working with you to address the myriad of dental public health challenges, including tooth decay and loss, periodontal (gum) diseases, oral health disparities, and other chronic diseases associated with poor oral health.

Again, we congratulate you on your appointment and we hope to meet with you to discuss how AADOCR and the CDC can work together in the coming years. Should you have any questions or if we can be of any assistance, please contact Yehuda Sugarman, Director of Government Affairs, at ysugarman@iadr.org or at 703.299.8098.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Fox".

Christopher H. Fox, DMD, DMSc
Chief Executive Officer

About AADOCR

The American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research (AADOCR) is a nonprofit organization with a mission to drive dental, oral, and craniofacial research to advance health and well-being. AADOCR represents the individual scientists, clinician-scientists, dental professionals, and students based in academic, government, non-profit, and private-sector institutions who share our mission. AADOCR is the largest division of the International Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research. Learn more at www.aadocr.org.