

The Special Interest Group for Dental Sleep Medicine met on Sunday, May 15th, 2016 at 7:00 as part of the ATS International Convention in San Francisco, California. 85 dentists, physicians and auxiliary personnel were in attendance.

The purpose of the Dental group can be summarized as follows:

Joining the American Thoracic Society is a bold move for any dentist, really for many physicians as well. It is demanding and intimidating but you will never find a group that tries harder to make others' lives better.

Whether one is a clinically based general practitioner or specialist, a researcher, or professor determined to stay at the forefront of practice and would also like to explore the emerging impact of airway on the science of dentistry, and want to be where new science is presented first, the ATS is that organization.

The motto of the ATS is "Where today's science meets tomorrow's care."

If one wants recognition of intellect, ingenuity, and true concern for the patient, the ATS family of Assemblies is it.

Dentistry is organized under the Sleep, Respiratory and Neurobiology (SRN) Assembly as an Interest Group.

Debates centered on patient care are plentiful throughout each Assembly meeting. If one wishes to participate, they are welcome; the only criteria for comment is that the position stated must be scientifically based. If an opinion is expressed, declare it as such but know that after the statement is made, the group in unison will say "Where is the science?" It is the strength of the group to reject conjecture and invalidated patient care.

Today, Dentistry sits on the edge of a precipice; choose to integrate with Medicine and evidence-based patient care, or practice "cult" dentistry, staying muddled in the past.

The future of healthcare can be impacted greatly by dentistry. Charles Mayo stated in 1915, "The next step in Preventive Medicine must be made by the dentists."

The goal of the Dental Interest Group of the ATS is to collect and make available practical research that can guide the responsible dental practitioner. We are developing a plan to record and analyze data, which will then be presented for review.

The hope is that dentistry can rejoin where it originated, within the field of medicine.

ATS President-Elect Dr. David Gozal made some points during his presentation:

"Sleep Medicine is not viable unless multidisciplinary approaches are the rule"

"No progress can be achieved without the burden of scientific evidence"

"ATS is a natural home for dentists with interest in sleep medicine"

"Endotypes of sleep apnea should be the driver for collaborative science and clinical management"

" Primary care physicians and dentists are the portals for accessing the sleep apnea population: we need to empower them through evidence-based tools"

"Show me theDATA"

ATS President Dr. Atul Malhotra also made some points during his presentation:

"Nasal CPAP is a highly efficacious therapy but not always tolerated, which limits its effectiveness. Oral appliances are a great alternative with emerging data showing excellent outcomes with this approach. Only by doctors, dentists, nurses, surgeons, respiratory therapists, and sleep technicians working together will the needs of our patients be fully addressed."

"The ATS is focused on training the next generation of young people in an effort to identify our replacements. Young dentists who join the ATS will receive considerable value based on learning from leaders in the field and by forming partnerships with colleagues."

"Increasingly data are emerging that sleep apnea has multiple causes, and that efforts to identify the underlying cause of sleep apnea may have important therapeutic implications for individuals. There are likely to be subgroups of individuals who respond well to mandibular advancement whereas others may be destined for failure if the underlying mechanism of disease is not addressed. Rich collaborations between pulmonologists, dentists, surgeons, sleep specialists and others will likely lead to improved outcomes in OSA."

Planning for the Interest Group on Dental Sleep Medicine for the 2017 International Conference in Washington, D.C.:

The following members submitted their interest in helping organize next year's meeting:

Dr. James Kearney	Colorado Springs, CO
Dr. Wayne Parks	Waco, TX
Dr. Richard Dunn	Elmira, NY
Randy Clare	?
Dr. Ken Berley	Rogers, AR
Mrs. Teresa Barnes Tosi	Memphis, TN
Dr. Jonathan Parker	Edina, MN
Dr. Eugene Santucci	San Francisco, CA
Dr. Allison Adams	Madison, NJ
Dr. Theresa Frank	Sunnyvale, CA