

Understanding the Value of Peer Review

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Chair, Peer Review and Quality Assurance Committee



As the new chair of Peer Review, I will routinely write articles for Dentists Quarterly. I hope you take the time to read these articles because I will try to inform, teach, and update you on all matters to protect our profession and protect our dentist members, and that means YOU.

I want to repeat as often as possible that Peer Review is one of our best member benefits whether you agree with the decisions made for or against you. The only negative outcome is you potentially return the money paid by the patient if the decision goes against you. The good news it is a confidential process not reported to any agency, and there is no record of the outcome against you. In addition, any monies returned are limited to what the patient paid to you, minus diagnostic fees – there is no monetary award for pain and suffering or subsequent treatment. The benefits also mean you do not have to wait for 3 to 5 years for a court to give a verdict, with that weighing on your head and causing many sleepless nights. You do not have to hire a lawyer and do not have to show up in court to testify. You do not have to miss work for a trial and contend with constant schedule changes of a court or judge you have no control over. It is truly a committee of your peers that will make a determination if the case isn't settled during mediation.

There are specific cases that I will present to you over time that come from New York County as well as other components in the State that are reviewed at the State Council Meetings.

On a personal note from 42 years of experience in private practice, as well as anecdotal stories from 45 years of my dad's dental career, I believe we must take great care in what we say and how we say things to our patients. We all know words matter, intonation matters, and facial expressions matter. We can tell a new patient that a previous restoration is lousy, poor, useless, must be redone immediately, and all sort of negative statements about our colleagues or we can impart information to patients in a less negative light. It can be more beneficial for example to explain to a patient that...it is time to replace this restoration; or this restoration has outlived its usefulness; or the materials are starting to deteriorate. You control the narrative and can avoid alarming the patient.

That said, we have a responsibility to our colleagues and to our patients to fairly assess the treatment provided. In the unfortunate circumstance that the previous treatment provided is egregiously poor, suggesting a patient go to Peer Review to resolve the issue is a service to both the patient and the dentist, who will avoid all the repercussions that can occur if the patient were to file a complaint with the Office of Professional Discipline or files a lawsuit. Peer Review provides a resolution that protects dentists while at the same time providing an opportunity for patients to have limited recourse.

Don't forget to RSVP for Installation 2023!

The Officers and Board of Directors of The New York County Dental Society
cordially invite you to the
**2023 INSTALLATION
OF OFFICERS**
Incoming Officers
Mina C. Kim, DDS
President
Suchie Chawla, DDS, MD - President-Elect
Vera W.L. Tang, DDS - Vice President
Andrew S. Deutch, DDS - Secretary
Egidio Farone, DMD - Treasurer
Lois Jackson, DDS
Installing Officer
Thursday, January 5, 2023
Installation 5:30 PM
Reception 6:30 PM
The Langham Hotel
400 Fifth Ave
New York City
RSVP by December 19
212-573-5500