May 1, 2019

To whom it may concern,

The American Student Dental Association (ASDA) is in support of the Social Mission Metrics Initiative, a nationwide self-assessment project now underway.

ASDA is a national, student-run organization that provides students with services, information, education, representation, and advocacy. Advocacy includes encouraging an educational culture within our dental schools that promotes oral health equity and access to high quality dental care for all patients. ASDA supports evidence-based measures that are efficacious and sustainable in reducing barriers to care in underserved communities. Additionally, ASDA encourages the participation of interested dental students in efforts to impact the oral health of the public.

The social mission of dental school is to advance health equity and address the health disparities of the society in which it exists. A dental school accomplishes this through its mission, programs, and the performance of its graduates, faculty, and leadership. To ensure that dental schools, like all health professions schools, maintain a strong social mission, we need self-reflection and examination of current programs, policies, and values related to these goals.

The Social Mission Metrics Self-Assessment is a free tool that can be used by dental school leaders to take a more detailed look at social mission in their institutions. Completion of the Self-Assessment survey will bring much needed attention to the values that inspired many dental students to enter the field to begin with. It will provide school leaders with detailed and confidential feedback on areas of strength and areas for improvement. The project is conducted by the George Washington University Health Workforce Institute, with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. You can learn more at socialmissionmetrics.gwhwi.org.

The George Washington University Health Workforce Institute believes the Social Mission Metrics Self-Assessment has great potential to engage in dentists-in-training, educators, and health policy innovators in important discussions and problem-solving around issues of mutual concern. The American Student Dental Association supports the Social Mission Metrics Initiative and hope you will participate in their very important work.

Sincercly,

Craig McKenzie, President

American Student Dental Association

Pennsylvania ‘21