

Trustee Report

Socioeconomic Predation, the Reverse Robin Hood effect

Socioeconomic Predation may be defined as the the act of injuring, exploiting, or plundering others for personal gain based on the socioeconomic profile of the “prey”. It is this “Reverse Robin Hood” (Quigley, 2016) effect where the better-off gain at the expense of the less well-off. According to the Bankrate’s financial vices survey “compared to their higher-earning counterparts, more low-income households play the lottery at least once a week”. Florida is one of several states that use a portion of their lottery revenues to fund merit-based college scholarships through the Florida Bright Futures (FBF) Scholarship. Borg and Borg (Borg, Fall 2007) examined the relationship between county income levels, education levels and race distributions and the net amount of Florida Bright Futures Scholarship dollars received. They found that counties with higher percentages of well-educated and high-income households receive a disproportionately large share of the net benefits from the FBF scholarship. This begs the question: Is the Reverse Robin Hood effect present in the delivery of orthodontic care?

I would suggest that mail order aligners may be a form of socioeconomic predation. Data from the AAO 2021 Orthodontic Landscape Study (OL Study) indicates that when looking at appliance, the lowest income individuals (under \$50K per year) were significantly more inclined to choose mail order aligners than other types (36% vs. 26% braces, 30% aligners w/visit). In addition, according to the OL Study orthodontists engendered the highest level of satisfaction, **significantly** outdistancing dentists and mail order aligners. One may conclude from this data that low-income earners are most likely to pursue orthodontic treatment that will result in the lowest level of “customer satisfaction”. In addition, the AAO has serious concerns about certain aspects of the mail order orthodontic treatment model and the potential risks to patient health and well-being; those concerns and the scientific evidence to support them are set out in great detail in resources that can be found at orthofacts.org. It appears to me that Reverse Robin Hood effect is alive and well in the mail order aligner business model where the “better-off” corporation is benefiting at the expense of the “less well-off” low-income consumer.

Interoperability of Practice Management Software

At the most recent meeting of the AAO Board of Trustees (BOT) there were presentations and discussion about the benefit of the interoperability of practice management software. This can benefit our members in many ways including the first step in having consistent data format for the purpose of creating a Big Data Repository. Additionally, it will streamline and improve the efficiency of the electronic communication between offices for patient transfers.

AAO Strategic Plan

The update of our AAO strategic plan is moving along well with the goal of implementation for AAO FY 2022/23. The subcommittee is completing the final refinement of plan that will presented to the AAO 2022 House of Delegates for final approval.

At-Large Trustee

At the AAO, we believe that diversity is our strength. Bring your strength to help the AAO by applying for the **2022 AAO At Large Trustee** position! The AAO Board of Trustees is looking for 1 to 2 new members who will bring diverse viewpoints and strengthen our team!

Applications are open. To find out more, please visit:

<https://www2.aaoinfo.org/calling-all-members-at-large-trustee-application-now-open/>

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to reach out to me.

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