

Winter 2012News for the
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The Incisor

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*Tom Raffio
President & CEO
Northeast Delta Dental*

Healthcare Reform

Northeast Delta Dental continues to closely follow healthcare reform efforts at both the federal and state levels in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (the "ACA") requires each state to create and launch a health benefits exchange (a web-based marketplace for health and dental plans) by January 1, 2014. All plans sold on the exchanges must cover the ACA's ten essential health benefits, one of which is pediatric dental benefits.

While still awaiting the federal government's definition of pediatric dental benefits (What services does it include? Up to what age?), Northeast Delta Dental is working closely with our state legislators and regulators to craft legislation that allows for the greatest flexibility for dental plans—including allowing not only the purchase of children's dental benefits, but also benefits for adults and families on the exchanges. Please visit our corporate website www.nedelta.com for regular updates on our healthcare reform efforts.

Save the Date for Upcoming Annual Meetings

The Delta Dental Plan of New Hampshire (DDPNH) Annual Membership Meeting will be held at 12:00 noon on Friday, March 30, 2012, at the Grappone Conference Center in Concord, New Hampshire. In accordance with the spirit of the DDPNH By-Laws, the meeting will be held during the luncheon break of a clinical seminar sponsored by the New Hampshire Dental Society. Scheduled speaker is Dr. Curtis Jansen, who will lecture about CAD-CAM Dentistry.

An agenda and the minutes of last year's meeting will be mailed to the membership 10 days prior to the March 30, 2012 Annual Membership Meeting. Incumbent board members—Dr. Jeffrey Rodden, Mr. Jeffrey Kipperman, Mr. Nick Soggu, and Ms. Kate Yerkes—have each been re-elected for an additional three-year term as Directors on the DDPNH Board. Due to term limits, Dr. Elizabeth Spindel will be retiring from the board; one new dentist member of the Board of Directors will be introduced at the DDPNH Annual Membership Meeting. Please mark your calendar and plan to join us on March 30 at the Grappone Conference Center.

Delta Dental Plan of Vermont (DDPVT) will hold its Annual Membership Meeting on Friday, April 13, 2012, starting at noon at the Stowe Mountain Lodge in Stowe, Vermont. The meeting will be held in conjunction with a clinical seminar sponsored by the Vermont State Dental Society. The speaker will be Dr. David Little, who will provide a clinical lecture on Implementing Implant Restorations.

The election of members to the Board of Trustees will be conducted by mail ballot. The DDPVT Corporate Governance Committee has unanimously endorsed the following slate of nominees: incumbent board members, Dr. Paul Averill and Dr. Nevin Zablotsky; and new candidates, Dr. Kenneth Palm and Mr. Richard Park; all are seeking three-year terms as Trustees on the DDPVT Board. The new candidates for the board were solicited from the membership and from the DDPVT

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Consultant's Corner

There is some confusion over the definition and usage of procedure code D7250, especially by general practitioners. The American Dental Association's CDT manual defines code D7250 as "**Surgical removal of residual roots (cutting procedure)**, includes cutting of soft tissue and bone, removal of tooth structure and closure."

"Residual roots" do not represent a current extraction of a tooth, but root remnants left from a previous extraction. If such roots exist, then a surgical flap, removal of bone, and removal of the root remnants should be accomplished and noted on the clinical record.

If the crown of the tooth has been fractured or destroyed by caries, and the removal of the exposed root is elevated and/or removed with forceps—even if a periosteal flap is completed—the appropriate ADA code is D7140, extraction, erupted tooth or exposed root (elevation and forceps removal). If, in addition to the flap, bone is removed, or the roots are sectioned in order to remove the roots, then the surgical extraction code is D7210.

The consultants would like to pass along some other helpful hints to avoid delay in processing your claims. These are commonly submitted items that cause the claims to suspend for review.

1. The patient's full given name should be indicated on the claim, not a nickname, such as: Robert not Bob; William not Bill; Pamela not Pam; Nathan not Nate, etc.
2. Please be sure to use the patient's correct date of birth.
3. Both dentists and insurance carriers must use the most current ADA procedure codes when submitting and processing claims.
4. Please indicate a tooth number or quadrant when filing a claim for palliative treatment, procedure code D9110.
5. Submitting a line item with \$0.00 fee will cause the claim to suspend. Our claims processors must then manually remove the line from the claim.

If you have any questions, please call Professional Relations at 800-537-1715, and ask to speak to one of the consultants.

Richard A. Berryman, DDS
Dental Consultant

Save the Date, continued from front page ...

Board of Trustees and underwent a rigorous interview process by the Corporate Governance Committee. On or before March 14, 2012, a ballot will be sent to each member dentist along with voting instructions and biographical data on the nominees. The mailing will also include an agenda for the April 13, 2012 Annual Membership Meeting, proposed resolutions and bylaws amendments, and the minutes of last year's meeting. Election results and the outcome of the recent bylaws amendment vote will be announced at the DDPVT Annual Membership Meeting on April 13, 2012.

When Should Claims be Submitted for Multiple Visit Procedures?

None of Northeast Delta Dental's contracts allow benefits for incomplete treatment, so we ask that claims be submitted after the work is completed. For example, the submission date would be when the crown is cemented or when the pulp chamber is completely filled for root canal therapy. After the procedure is completed the claim can be submitted with the date of service, or the date of incurred liability, indicated as follows:

1. **Restorative crowns and onlays** – the date the tooth is prepared
2. **Fixed partial dentures** – the date that the teeth are prepared to receive the appliance
3. **Removable complete and partial dentures** – the date when the final impressions are taken for the appliance
4. **Endodontics** – the date when the pulp chamber of the tooth is opened
5. **Implant body, including the healing cap** – the date of the surgical placement
6. **Implant prosthetics** – the date when the final impression is taken
7. **Orthodontics** – the date that the initial bands, or a segment of them, are placed

If it is apparent that the procedures submitted on the claim are not yet completed, the claim will be processed as a predetermination that can then be submitted for payment upon completion of the procedure(s).

Grant Awarded to Goodwin Community Health

The Northeast Delta Dental Foundation awarded a grant to Goodwin Community Health of Somersworth, New Hampshire, to buy vital equipment for its new Dental Center. This equipment is crucial to expanding the services of the Dental Center to serve 500 new patients. Sixty percent of Goodwin's medical patients are not insured, and about seventy percent use its dental services. In recent years, the Northeast Delta Dental Foundation supported the Goodwin's Smiles for Strafford County dental program and the "Changing Spaces~Changing Lives" building campaign. We encourage the integration of oral health with other health care disciplines to provide the patient with more comprehensive and beneficial care. Because Goodwin Community Health integrates the services provided by its dental center with other vital services, this was an attractive grant making opportunity.

Health Innovator Award

The following article was written by Julie Agresto, Communications Specialist at Lahey Clinic Medical Center, and is reprinted with permission of *NH Business Review*.

Because of its dedication to raising employees' awareness of the many positive aspects of wellness, Northeast Delta Dental has been recognized by Harvard Pilgrim Health Care of New England and NHBR as the latest recipient of the Health Innovator Award. Northeast Delta Dental is an organization whose primary objective is to expand the availability of oral health by educating purchasers and the public on the value of oral health and providing affordable dental plans to improve access to oral care. The company's interest in good health extends beyond oral health—especially as it relates to its employees.

Q: What makes Northeast Delta Dental a model organization when it comes to offering the best wellness-centered programs to its employees?

As an organization concerned with the health of individuals, we started our journey toward good health many years ago when we moved to our building on Delta Drive and decided our new campus would be smoke free. We're sensitive to the needs of our employees and understand that habits are difficult to break, so we offered our employees support through educational and smoking cessation programs to motivate them to break the habit. That was in 1997, and our interest in employee wellness has continued. A few years later when we expanded into a second building, we designated space for a fitness center and hired a fitness coach who, for the eighth year, is available to our employees for a limited number of hours during the week.

Our efforts over the years have pointed to raising our employees' awareness that they likely will live longer and feel better, have more energy, and be productive both at work and outside of work, if they exercise regularly, avoid smoking, eat healthy, and minimize stress by maintaining life balance.

At Northeast Delta Dental, we have an active Safety and Wellness Team made up of both managers and non-management employees whom we empower to generate ideas, suggest programs, and initiate events. Employees have the best ideas, and taking advantage of their creativity gives us an edge. The Safety and Wellness Team is the hub of our efforts to positively impact the health of our employees. Our approach to employee programs is to place employees at the center, encourage their creativity, and stimulate their energy.

It boils down to good role modeling from the top, continuous employee involvement in program development, constant education about health-related issues to create awareness, and allocating resources focused on health and wellness—do all that, and you begin to create a culture of wellness.



Front L to R: Angela Carter, Magen Curtis, Mike DeMarco, Barbara McLaughlin, Margaret Ramos. **Rear L to R:** Pat Bernier, Jim Green, Chris Alibrandi, Peg Michaud, Carol Carlisle, Melissa Buckner, and Tom Raffio, President and CEO.
Photo by Jodie Andruskevich.

Q: What are some of the wellness programs that you make available to your employees?

We offer a variety of wellness programs, including chair massages, personal training, the Employee Assistance Program, an on-site fitness center, health risk assessments, stress management programs, and an annual health fair. We have also partnered with our health plan provider, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, to offer exciting programs like The Full Yield, a year-long healthy eating and nutrition program.

Above all, we aim to provide a positive and supportive work environment where we strive for clarity around goals and objectives and an atmosphere of trust.

Q: If you had to persuade another organization to develop a similar employee wellness program, only citing one benefit of doing so, what would it be?

That one's easy—healthier, happier employees deliver a “healthier, happier brand” of customer service.

Q: In what ways do you feel these wellness initiatives have positively impacted your workforce and overall work environment?

There are many ways that we have seen a positive impact. Employee absenteeism is low; an almost negligible number; and employee satisfaction is generally high. Many employees have lost a high percentage of body fat and look great—and say they feel great. Some employees have discontinued medications for diabetes and high blood pressure. Most important, employees have gained self-confidence and self-esteem. In a recent survey where more than half of our employees responded, 96 percent of survey participants indicated they feel better as a result of taking advantage of Northeast Delta Dental's focus on health/wellness and program offerings. Most employees responding indicate they feel more productive at work. Employee awareness about healthy lifestyle equates to increased awareness and, hopefully, healthier choices and lifestyle.

New Participating Dentists

We are pleased to announce that the following dentists have joined Northeast Delta Dental's networks in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont:

Maine

William Catterton DDS
 Brian Boynton DMD
 Jonathan Shinay DMD
 Rhobor Uviasah DMD
 Robert Beaudry DDS
 Lee Ann Cote DMD
 William Blatt DMD
 Justin Karrel DMD
 Bernhard Bringewald DMD
 Allison Piper DMD
 Sheila Brijade DDS
 Layne Whiteley DDS
 Michael Cangemi DDS
 John Fitzsimons DMD
 Glen Abbott DDS
 Johannes Seywerd DMD

New Hampshire

Alpa Patel DMD
 Foad Rasekh DDS
 Mariya Shnaydman DMD
 Steven Calawa DDS
 Michael Pauk DMD
 Richard Mitchell DMD
 David Shane DMD
 Keith Kealey DMD
 Timothy Wieg DDS
 Medha Singh DMD
 Meredith Bailey DMD
 Laith Azzouni DMD
 Elizabeth Starr DMD
 Gopi Voonna DDS
 Henry Lemieux DMD

Vermont

Douglas Rosenman DMD
 Patrick Rowe DDS

Long-time Participants Recognized



President & CEO Tom Raffio presented **Peter Thomas, DMD** of Dover, New Hampshire with a chair in honor of Dr. Thomas' 40 years of participation with Northeast Delta Dental.

Office Changes or Updates

Please contact the Provider Services department at 800-537-1715, extension 1100, for any dentist and/or office changes or updates. These include, but are not limited to:

- New and/or change of physical or payment address(es)
- New and/or change of phone number(s)
- A dentist joining or leaving an office
- Closing of an office or practice
- Tax information changes
- New and/or changed NPI information
- Retirement
- Sale or purchase of a practice
- License status updates

Please be sure to notify the Provider Services department of all changes/updates **in advance** to ensure proper claims payment.



On Wednesday February 8, 2012, Melisa Porter presented **Dr. Albert "Bud" Binder** of Concord, New Hampshire with a chair in honor of his 40 years of participation.



Left to right: Jean McPheters, Oral Health Program Manager; Elizabeth Cote, Executive Director, VSIDS; Eleanor Vien, Quality Assurance Manager; and Trudy Otis of Otis & Brooks, PC.

Vermont Oral Health Day

Northeast Delta Dental Foundation and the Vermont State Dental Society (VSIDS) jointly sponsored our annual Vermont Oral Health Day at the State House on January 6, 2012. Our Foundation and VSIDS also sponsored the breakfast buffet for the legislators.

We had the opportunity to speak with legislators and State House employees about the importance of oral health to one's overall health, and to distribute the ever-popular new toothbrushes and floss. Also available was information on how to take an oral health risk assessment online by going to **mydentalscore.com**. The results can be shared with the individual's dentist and create a good opportunity to discuss preventive measures to enhance one's oral health.