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Professional Relations

The Incisor

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Opinion Leader Forum Held at Northeast Delta Dental

Northeast Delta Dental hosted a second opinion leader forum on April 10 at its corporate headquarters. This year, the topic was "Integration of Oral and Systemic Health."

After opening remarks by President & CEO Tom Raffio and New Hampshire's First Lady, Susan Lynch, MD, the forum was moderated by Vice President, Professional Relations and Science, Shannon Mills, DDS. Keynote speakers were Joan Otomo-Corgel, DMD, MS, Associate Professor, Department of Periodontics, University of California Los Angeles, and Jonathan Shenkin, DMD, Pediatric Dentist, from Augusta, Maine. Discussion topics included: childhood caries; the evidence supporting the importance of oral health as a component of overall health; periodontal disease and systemic health; the opportunities that exist to improve clinical outcomes through collaborative care of patients by medical and dental providers; and the steps that can be taken to improve communication among medical and dental providers and encourage collaborative care of patients.

Distinguished panelists participating in these discussions were A.J. Homicz, DDS, Dental Director, Families First Community Health Center of Portsmouth, New Hampshire; Michel Couret, DDS, General Dentist, Merrimack, New Hampshire; William Alto, MD, Professor of Community and Family Medicine, Maine-Dartmouth Family Practice from Augusta, Maine; Susanne Trost, MD, Endocrinologist, Gifford Medical Center of Randolph, Vermont; Barbara Crowley, MD, President, Maine General Health Associates in Augusta, Maine; and Alan Freeman, MD, Medical Director, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care of Bedford, New Hampshire.



L-R: Tom Raffio, President & CEO, Susan Lynch, MD



New Dividends for Dentists Offer!

Northeast Delta Dental is pleased to announce a new offer through its value-added Dividends for Dentists program. Locally owned and family operated, Hayes Handpiece of Northern New England is offering a 10% discount on handpiece repair orders and 10% off new product purchases. They provide warranties on repairs and a 48-hour turnaround on high speed repairs. Free pick-up within certain areas, or free mailers to all of their customers is available.

Your local Hayes representative can offer expert assistance with:

- Best procedures for maintenance of your high-speeds, low-speeds, electrics and attachments with one CE credit for continuing staff education
- Repairs by factory-trained technicians with warranties, excellent service, and reasonable prices
- OEM or aftermarket turbines—your choice!
- FREE test-drives of handpieces before purchasing
- Competitive handpiece and instrument pricing

To take advantage of this offer, visit nedelta.com and click on “Dentists.” Go to the Dividends for Dentists page, clicking on “Value-Added Programs and Benefits.” Click on the Hayes logo and use Northeast Delta Dental Member ID 77HNNE. Use this ID also when calling Hayes to place an order at 866-669-1577.

Neither Northeast Delta Dental nor its employees benefit financially from any product or service offered through the Dividends for Dentists program. Northeast Delta Dental does not endorse and assumes no liability or responsibility for the performance of any product or service provided by its Dividends for Dentists vendors.

Common Ground Conference at NH Technical Institute

Northeast Delta Dental is a proud sponsor of the Common Ground conference on practical approaches for collaborative medical/dental care, to be held in Concord, New Hampshire at NH Technical Institute on Friday, June 11, 2010.

Keynote speakers will be Hugh Silk, MD, FAAFP, Clinical Associate Professor in the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health at the University of Massachusetts, and Gretchen Gibson, DDS, MPH –Oral Health in Seniors, Director of Special Care Dental Clinic at the Dallas, Virginia Medical Center.

Our own Vice President, Professional Relations and Science, Shannon Mills, DDS will present “Dental Diagnosis 101: Oral Assessment and Communication” for medical professionals. Chief Dental Officer, Michel Couret, DDS will serve as one of the panelists discussing “Sharing the Landscape: Experts who have found Common Ground.”

To register, contact NH Technical Institute at 603-271-6667. Continuing education credits will be available.

Soft Tissue Grafting

CDT Codes - D4270, D4271, D4273, D4275 and D4276

The American Academy of Periodontology defines soft tissue grafts (free gingival, connective tissue, pedicle, soft tissue allografts or combined connective tissue and double pedicle) as: “Surgical procedures designed to create or augment the attached gingiva, deepen the vestibule or eliminate frenum involvement. Frequently, these procedures can result in soft tissue coverage of the denuded roots. These reconstructive procedures are performed to re-establish health by stopping the progressive gingival recession and/or to create an anatomy conducive to the maintenance of health by providing gingival coverage of caries-susceptible and sensitive root surfaces and to improve esthetics.”

In order for Northeast Delta Dental’s consultants to properly evaluate such soft tissue grafting claims, some changes have been made in the information needed to accompany each claim. Until recently, dentists were asked to submit periodontal probing and appropriate x-rays with such claims. Dentists submitting the claims realize that such information has very little value in evaluating the necessity for these surgical procedures. Most cases have shallow probing depths and x-rays show little to no information regarding labial, buccal or lingual bone loss.

Therefore, Northeast Delta Dental has revised the Clinical Documentation Requirements (see the insert in the Winter 2010 issue of *The Incisor*) for CDT Codes D4270, D4271, D4273, D4275 and D4276 to include the following:

1. Photograph of the involved tooth or teeth (a picture is worth a thousand probings) or
2. Narrative re: amount of gingival recession, remaining attached gingiva, combined attachment loss and treatment objectives.

If the periodontal charting—manual or software programs—accompanying such claims provides all of this information, there is no need for our dental consultants to return the claims for additional information. Thus, delays in processing and payment of these claims can be avoided.

Should you have any further concerns, please do not hesitate to contact our dental consultants in the Professional Relations Department at 800-537-1715.

Long-time Participants Recognized

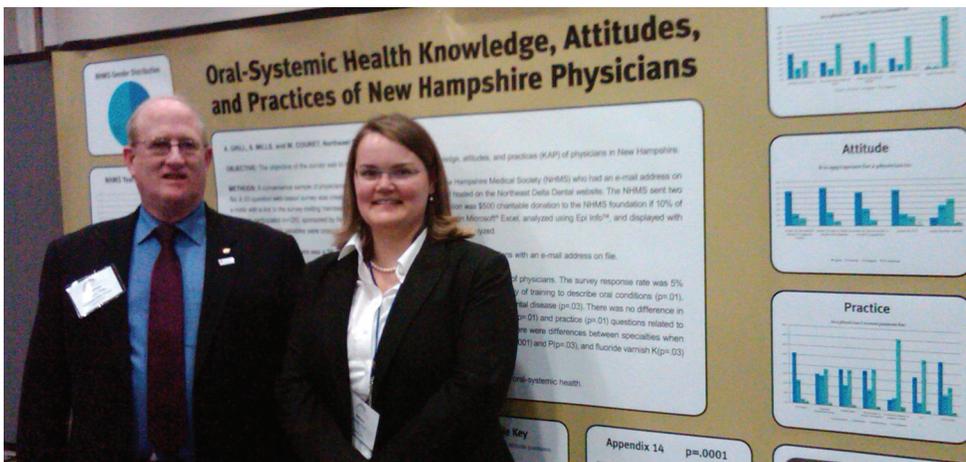
We were pleased to present the 40-year recognition awards this past quarter. We congratulate these hard-working dentists and thank them for their long-time participation with Northeast Delta Dental!



40-year chair presented to **Wilfred Pawlak, DDS**, of Exeter, NH



40-year chair presented to **Peter Low, DDS**, of Bethlehem, NH by President & CEO, Tom Raffio at the Delta Dental Plan of NH Annual meeting in March



Northeast Delta Dental Abstract Presented at AADR Annual Meeting

Dr. Shannon Mills and Northeast Delta Dental's Oral Health Program Manager Ashley Grill presented an abstract entitled "Oral and Systemic Health Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices of New Hampshire Physicians" at the Annual Meeting of the American Association for Dental Research (AADR) in Washington, DC on March 5, 2010. The poster reported the results of a survey of New Hampshire physicians conducted in collaboration with the New Hampshire Medical Society. The study asked physicians about their knowledge of oral disease, their attitudes regarding screening for oral conditions and their current clinical practices. The study showed a statistically significant difference in responses among physicians based on their specialty training. If you would like to receive an electronic copy of the survey results and the AADR abstract, please contact Melisa Porter at 800-537-1715, extension 1383 or by email at mporter@nedelta.com.

Why Does Northeast Delta Dental Cover Dental Implants?

Despite decades of clinical experience and a strong body of scientific evidence supporting the effectiveness of implants to replace missing teeth, some dental insurers still consider implants experimental and do not routinely pay benefits for them. However, our claims data supports the scientific evidence that when properly diagnosed and treatment planned, dental implants are a safe and effective way to replace missing teeth. Each year in the United States nearly a million implants are placed with a success rate around 95%.

The overall cost to restore a single tooth with an implant is comparable to the cost of a three unit bridge. The cost benefit can be even greater when the dentist can avoid preparing adjacent teeth for abutments, since all restorations carry an inherent risk of failure over time. In short, Northeast Delta Dental covers implants in most of our dental benefit plans because implants work, they are cost effective, and they are a popular service with both clinicians and patients.

Why Does Northeast Delta Dental Cover Adjunctive Pre-Diagnostic Tests for Oral Cancer?

Approximately 34,000 new cases of oral cancer are diagnosed each year in the United States. Oral cancer has only about a 50% five year survival rate and takes the lives of roughly 8,000 Americans each year. While dramatic improvements have been seen in early diagnosis and survival for other cancers such as breast, cervical and colon cancer, there has been little improvement in the survival rates for oral cancer. Many experts believe early diagnosis is an important factor in changing these somber statistics.

Within the last several years, new technologies have been introduced to aid in the detection oral cancer. Products or services that use toluidine blue, chemoluminescence and autoluminescence are covered by most of our dental benefit plans under CDT code D0431, adjunctive pre-diagnostic test that aids in detection of mucosal abnormalities including pre-malignant and malignant lesions, not to

Continues on page 4...

Holiday Closures

Memorial Day	Monday, May 31, 2010
Independence Day (observed)	Monday, July 5, 2010

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include cytology or biopsy procedures. Also covered is D7288, brush biopsy – transepithelial sample collection.

While the science supporting the effectiveness of some of these modalities is still being debated, Northeast Delta Dental feels strongly that providing coverage for these services can increase the number and intensity of cancer screenings performed, and is in the best interest of dental patients covered by our plans. Whether dentists choose to use adjunctive screening technologies or not, Northeast Delta Dental encourages all of our participating dentists to make cancer screening a routine part of their oral evaluations.

Welcome to 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

Jason Lenk, DMD
Andra Boak, DMD
Heather Harper, DDS
W. Ross Greenlaw, DMD

New Hampshire

David Blanco, DDS
Joanne Schultz, DDS
Christine Lonigan, DMD
Justine Kelley, DMD
Sujatha Anjaneyulu, DMD
Sung-Pil Yoon, DMD
Rosella Butura, DDS

Vermont

Jedidiah Janisse, DMD
Thomas Johnston, DMD
Elicia Thompson, DDS
Richard Lajoie, DDS

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.

Save The Date!

The 13th Annual Dr. Thurston J. Carpenter Memorial Golf Tournament will be held on Friday September 24, 2010 at the Mount Washington Resort, Bretton Woods, New Hampshire. Funds raised support the Northeast Delta Dental Foundation, the Dr. Thurston J. Carpenter Dental Hygiene Scholarship at the NH Technical Institute and P.A.N.D.A. (Prevent Abuse and Neglect through Dental Awareness). To register for the golf tournament, please call Patti Capone, Corporate Services Coordinator at 602-223-1348. Please contact the Mount Washington Resort reservation office at 800-258-0330 prior to July 24 for special room rates.



Northeast Delta Dental
One Delta Drive
PO Box 2002
Concord, NH 03302-2002

ATTENTION OFFICE STAFF
Important Insurance Information

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