

ILLINOIS DENTAL NEWS

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE
ILLINOIS STATE DENTAL SOCIETY



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The "NEED TO KNOW"

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Do your patients know what it took for you to become a dentist? Do lawmakers really understand the lengthy journey you've taken to become a doctor of oral health? What about the years of education, competition for dental school admission, extensive clinical training, board exams, licensure, continuing education mandates, specialty training and the comprehensive care that only a dentist can provide—just to name a few! To educate our "public" on the journey to becoming a dentist, ISDS recently introduced an informative handout titled, "Step by Step: Becoming a Doctor of Oral Health," which will be distributed to state legislators this spring. With the undeniable link between oral health and overall health, dentists are a vital part of any patient's health care team.

You may also wish to make this educational piece available to your patients. Simply download and print a copy at <http://www.isds.org/memberBenefits/PublicRelations/stepbystep.asp>, or contact the ISDS Communications department to order (limited quantities; pricing available upon request).



Drop us a line!

Ideas and comments from members are always welcome.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

DR. DARRYLL L. BEARD, DMD

What a Great Meeting!

I just returned home from the Chicago Midwinter Meeting—and what a meeting it was. We are truly fortunate to have such a great meeting in our state. For those of you who regularly attend, you know what I am talking about. If you have not attended or it has been some time since attending, put it on your calendar for next year. You will not regret it. Congratulations to Drs. Ian Elliott, Terri Tiersky and Michael Durbin for another outstanding meeting.

While at the meeting, your ISDS Officers and Executive Director had the opportunity to talk with several groups from within our state that affect nearly every aspect of dentistry. We met with representatives of several specialty groups, namely the Illinois Society of Orthodontists, Illinois Society of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons, Illinois Society of Pediatric Dentists and the Illinois Society of Periodontists.

The discussions ranged from the philanthropic programs of the ISO to increased access for safety net children who neither have dental insurance nor qualify for Medicaid to requirements for recertification of anesthesia permits A and B. We discussed issues of continuity of care with respect to the mobile van dentistry and programs that are school based. A variety of topics were covered.

The Deans of our soon-to-be three dental schools in Illinois met with us. The rising cost of dental education and decrease in state funding is forcing schools to become more self-sufficient and creative in an attempt to relieve the burden placed on dental students through tuition. State assistance has dropped to 14% of the cost of the student's education. Faculty recruitment and retention continues to be a challenge for dental schools across the country.

A meeting with the Illinois Dental Lab Association gave insight to what the current issues are affecting their profession. A decreasing number of dental technician programs are making it more and more difficult for labs to find trained technicians. Increased utilization of foreign labs has caused a concern for patient safety. Very few foreign labs import U.S.

dental materials to fabricate their oral prostheses or follow FDA guidelines. Our ISDS Governmental Affairs Committee and DENT-IL-PAC also met during Midwinter. Dr. Chauncey Cross and Dave Marsh gave updates on ISDS-initiated legislation. This was legislation mandated by our ISDS House of Delegates at our Annual Session last September. This legislation included BLS as a requirement for licensure, up to 4 hours C.E. for volunteering at approved venues, Fairness in Contracting (fee caps), Public Water Fluoridation and dental loan repayment. We were also informed of the status of other legislation, including amalgam separators and collaborative practice agreements proposed by others.

Some of the most enlightening conversations were with dental students attending the meeting. Much of the discussion was about them, their classmates and their plans after dental school. The average student loan debt is approaching \$200,000. These young dentists have no home, no practice and, in many situations, a questionable car—and are burdened with significant debt. The thought of buying a practice is not even on the radar for many of the new dentists. The promise of income and experience by corporate entities is looked upon very favorably by this group of millennials. While there is still an interest in post-graduate programs, the number of students considering the purchase of a solo practice or starting from scratch is alarmingly low.

So what is the “take home” message from the events of this meeting? The interlacing of events, concerns and actions of all that I mentioned affects every dentist, employee, lab, supplier and the public we serve. Who would think that your membership in ISDS could influence whether or not you will be able to sell your practice when you are ready to retire? Your membership could influence the health and safety of the public, not to mention your children or grand children through water fluoridation. Your membership in ISDS and DENT-IL-PAC are more important to you, your future and the future of dentistry than you can ever imagine. Let us continue to work together as “One Team, One Dream.”

I hope to see all of you at Capital Conference! ■

“Some of the most enlightening conversations were with dental students attending the meeting. Much of the discussion was about them, their classmates and their plans after dental school.”

Mark Your Calendars!

The Illinois State Dental Society hosts the next annual session September 8-11, 2011 at the Hyatt Regency St. Louis at the Arch.



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PAC Nominates Dr. Evans for Secretary/Treasurer

In accordance with the DENT-IL-PAC Bylaws, the PAC hereby announces the nomination of Dr. Keith Evans for the position of Secretary/Treasurer. The PAC directors will cast their votes at DENT-IL-PAC's annual directors' meeting, held in conjunction with ISDS Annual Session in St. Louis this September.

New Zealand Report Gives Failing Grades to Children's Oral Health

A recent report released by the New Zealand Ministry of Health shows that the dental health of the country's children is among the worst in the developed world. The New Zealand government has spent more than \$40 million on the country's "dental problem" since 2007 including the investment of resources in its Dental Therapist program. The statistics have shown little improvement, with 44% of five-year-olds having at least one decayed, missing or filled tooth. By comparison, the figure for England's five-year-olds was 39%, Australia 43% and the U.S. less than 30%.

In spite of free community oral health services currently available to children up to age 18, the oral health of young New Zealanders is suffering. According to the report, most primary schools have dental clinics, and many regions of the country operate mobile clinics. In extreme cases, toddlers have huge holes in several teeth, and most of the baby teeth have to be extracted—leaving the child helpless to eat, bite, chew or speak correctly. Interestingly, the Pew Report/Kellogg Foundation repeatedly cites the "dental therapist" model as one of the success stories of mid-levels providing oral health care.

UIC Reunion Returns to Lombard

The University of Illinois College of Dentistry Reunion will return to the Carlisle Banquet Facility in Lombard (reception 6:30 pm, dinner 7:30 pm) on April 29. All UIC College of Dentistry, Loyola, and Northwestern dental school alumni are invited. Tickets are \$115. There will be special recognition for graduation years ending in a "1" or a "6" and for those

who graduated more than 50 years ago. Special awards will be presented to UIC alumni and ISDS members Dr. George Kotteman (Distinguished Dental Alumnus), Dr. Susan Becker Doroshov (Towner Organized Dentistry Award), Dr. Donald Doyle (Alumni Loyalty Award), Dr. Charles DiFranco (Dr. Irwin Robinson President's Leadership Award) and Dr. Thomas Emmering (Raffaele Suriano Award). Contact Ana Lisa Ogbac, Office of Advancement, at 312/996-0485 or aogbac1@uic.edu.

Quinn Names ISDS Member to Health Information Exchange Board

Governor Pat Quinn has appointed Illinois State Dental Society Member dentist, Dr. Nicholas Panomitros, to the governing board of the Illinois Health Information Exchange Authority. The board will oversee the operation of a secure framework for sharing electronic health information. Creation of the framework is funded through \$19 million in federal stimulus monies. The objective of the Health Information Exchange is to expand the use of health information technology to improve the delivery of healthcare in Illinois through the use of electronic medical records and e-prescribing to assist medical providers in understanding a patient's full medical history.

Dr. Miller Named Cushing Award Recipient



The Chicago Dental Society's Communications Committee presented the 2011 Cushing Award to Dr. David Miller during opening session of the Midwinter Meeting on February 24. The George Cushing Award recognizes those who raise public awareness about the importance of oral health.

Throughout his more than 20 years of practicing dentistry, Dr. Miller has integrated

community activities and dental health. In an effort to fulfill that desire of giving back to the community, he established a Chicago dental office in Dolton to treat underserved children. He has participated in on-site dental screening programs in the metropolitan Chicago area to benefit children. He represented the 29th District in the Illinois General Assembly from 2001-2010. During that time, he proved to be an advocate for both dental health and organized dentistry as the chief sponsor or co-sponsor of many pieces of public health legislation. He advocated for a smoke-free Illinois, grants for local clinics, and dental student loan repayment programs, as well as mandatory dental exams for elementary school students.

UIC Program for Homeless Receives National Award

The UIC College of Dentistry has received the Bud Tarrson Dental School Student Community Leadership Award for its work treating homeless patients at a student-operated oral health center in Chicago. More than 75 UIC dental students volunteer their time and talents every other Saturday at Goldie's Place, 5705 N. Lincoln Ave. The clinic has grown from a one-chair operation 14 years ago to a four-operator dental suite, with additional space for a laboratory and sterilization room. More than 110 social service agencies in the Chicago area refer patients to Goldie's Place. Sponsored by the ADA Foundation, the Tarrson Award annually highlights dental student outreach to vulnerable communities.

Disciplinary Actions

The Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation, Division of Professional Regulation, announced the following actions against Illinois dentists in January 2011:

Hicham Riba, Chicago — dental specialty license petition for restoration of dental specialty license from suspension denied.

Thomas Drozdz, Chicago — dental controlled substance license indefinitely suspended for a minimum of two years due to excessive prescribing/poor recordkeeping. ■

COMMITTEE WORK

Several ISDS Standing Committees met during the Chicago Midwinter Meeting. Here's a summary of current issues and programs they're working on:

Governmental Affairs Committee (2/25/11)

Committee members reviewed the package of the ISDS's legislative proposals for the 2011 legislative session and were referred to the ISDS website for regular updates. The Committee reviewed and updated the progress that ISDS is making in Cook County, including a new media proposal for a marketing campaign that would include radio and digital media advertisement for the ISDS/CDS/Cook County "Bridge to Healthy Smiles" campaign initiative. They also discussed the possibility of soliciting funds from Chicago area foundations that give out millions of dollars in grant monies a year to health care causes.

Access to Care Committee (2/26/11)

The Department of Healthcare and Family Services has contracted with two managed care

organizations to launch an Integrated Care pilot program serving 40,000 aged, blind and disabled adults that reside in the counties of Lake, Kane, DuPage, Will, Kankakee and suburban Cook. The Committee is recommending to the ISDS Board that it be allowed to distribute a survey to public health clinics via e-mail and mail to acquire data that may be used for future legislation and to open up the lines of communication between the clinics and ISDS. The Committee is also recommending that ISDS host a dental public health group meeting in 2011 or 2012.

Committee on the New Dentist (2/26/11)

The 25th ADA New Dentist Conference will be held in Chicago on June 16-18. ISDS will be participating in both Illinois dental schools vendor fairs, March 10 (UIC) and April 12 (SIU). Staff is working with the ADA on the National Signing Day promotion, an opportunity for all dental students who are graduating in 2011 to become part of a winning team, ADA/ISDS. ISDS will be providing lunch at the SIU/SDM D-2 and D-3 Success Seminars on March 22 and 29. The Committee is working on ways to engage the new dentists in organized dentistry activities, including holding local social functions for new dentists throughout the state. ■

Know the Practice Act: General Supervision

How well do you know the Illinois Dental Practice Act & Rules? While the Practice Act specifies the exact language that regulates the practice of dentistry, in reality most dentists have never read the entire act or could use a refresher course on its contents. In this and future issues of the Illinois Dental News, we'll periodically highlight key sections of the Act—so join us on the journey! Complete information on the Practice act is available at www.isds.org/Related/AdvocacyAndCoalition.asp.

General supervision is an option available to Illinois dentists in several practice settings: the dental office, institutional (e.g., long-term care facility, prison, mental health/developmental disability facility), and school-based programs. General supervision may

... "Practice Act" continued on page 14



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Dentistry's 'Top Prospects' Participate in 'Signing Days'

On February 2, top student athletes from around the state and across the country signed letters of intent to attend specific colleges and universities. It is a day filled with anticipation and excitement. The Illinois State Dental Society, in conjunction with the American Dental Association, is taking a page from the college teams and instituting its own "signing day," this one between graduating dental students and organized dentistry.

Signing activities are taking place through the end of April, and the goal is to encourage new dental school graduates to sign up for membership in organized dentistry. "In Illinois, ISDS is exhibiting at both Illinois dental schools. On March 10 we were at UIC, and on April 12 we will be at SIU. Our theme is *National Signing Day*, and we are supplying



completed membership applications for the seniors to sign. When they sign their application, they can keep their 'signing pen,' and will receive an 'I Signed' sticker. Additionally, their name will be entered into a drawing for two baseball tickets to either a Chicago White Sox game or a St. Louis Cardinals game. The National Signing Day Season is an opportunity for all dental students who are graduating in 2011 to become part of a

winning team," explained ISDS Director of Education and Membership Kathy Ridley.

Most dental students are ADA student members through the American Student Dental Association (ASDA). The National Signing Day Season has enabled the ADA, the state and local dental associations, dental schools and ASDA chapters to team up to help graduating seniors make a smooth transition into active membership.

Through the ADA Reduced Dues Program, students received remarkably reduced rates for the first four years following completion of their studies. "By encouraging seniors to sign up for active membership while still in school, it becomes part of their excitement for graduation, and it makes it much easier for the student to make their commitment to the profession," added Ms. Ridley. ■

An advertisement for AFTCO, Transition Consultants. The background is a close-up of two hands shaking in a firm grip. On the left, the AFTCO logo is displayed, consisting of a stylized 'A' inside a circle above the text "AFTCO" and "TRANSITION CONSULTANTS". To the right of the logo, text reads: "AFTCO is the oldest and largest dental practice transition consulting firm in the United States. AFTCO assists dentists with associateships, purchasing and selling of practices, and retirement plans. We are much more than a practice broker, we are there to serve you through all stages of your career." Below this, a call to action says: "Call 1-800-232-3826 for a free practice appraisal, a \$2,500 value!". Further down, it states: "Richie V. Lerias, D.D.S. has acquired the practice of Eliot Becker, D.D.S. Wood Dale, Illinois". At the bottom, it says: "AFTCO is pleased to have represented both parties in this transaction." The bottom of the ad features the slogan "Helping dentists buy & sell practices for over 40 years." and the website "WWW.AFTCO.NET".

How Do Your Salaries Compare?

It is said that money isn't everything, but in these uncertain economic times, there's certainly no shortage of discussion on the topic of dollars and cents. When it comes to hiring staff, regardless of the current economic tide, it's helpful to know where practice wages stack up in the marketplace.

The recently released *Dental Assistant National Board DANB Certificiant Salary Survey* released by the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB) is another tool in determining how practice wages compare to state and national averages.

Nationwide, the median salary per hour is \$18.50 for certified dental assistants (full-time and part-time) and \$16.49 for non-certified assistants. In Illinois, average wages are \$16.25, with Wisconsin (\$17.06), Indiana (\$17.00), Iowa (\$17.00), and Missouri (\$16.75) all reporting higher wages.

Salaries are up more than 3% for certified dental assistants over those reported in 2008, when the survey results showed the median

salary per hour of \$18.00. However, that percentage increase is significantly lower than two years before, when survey results showed the median salary for certified dental assistants increased to \$18.00 from \$16.50 per hour, an 8% jump.

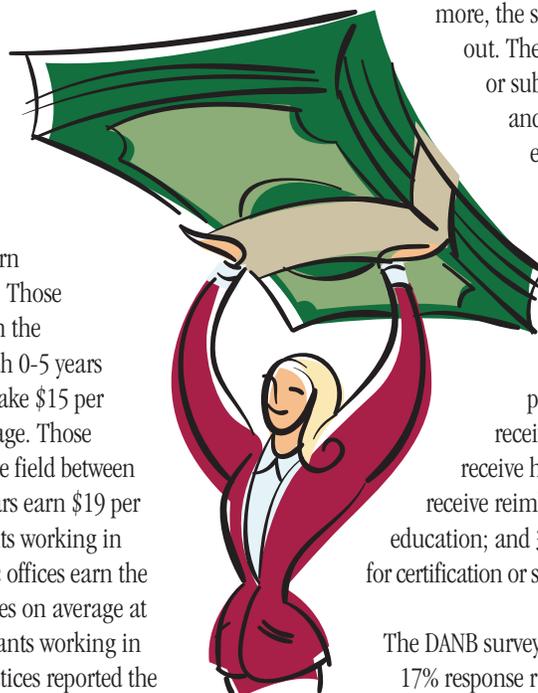
As would be expected, certified dental assistants with more experience earn higher wages. Those starting out in the profession with 0-5 years experience make \$15 per hour on average. Those working in the field between 16 and 20 years earn \$19 per hour. Assistants working in prosthodontic offices earn the highest salaries on average at \$21.02. Assistants working in pediatric practices reported the

lowest salaries on average at \$16.77 per hour. General dentistry assistants came in at \$18.18 on average.

Although the assumption may be that large cities and metropolitan practices must pay more, the survey results don't bear that out. The median salary for small city or suburb and large cities is \$18.47 and \$18.50 respectively, a modest difference between the two. Those locations described as metropolitan pay \$19.00 on average.

With regard to benefits, 61% report having a pension/401(k) plan; 56% receive free dental care; 54% receive health insurance; 52% receive reimbursement for continuing education; and 30% report reimbursement for certification or state registration and renewal.

The DANB survey results are based on a 17% response rate.



"Dentists are dealing with many unknowns..."

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Bernard Glossy Joins Delta Dental Illinois



Bernard Glossy

Illinois Dental News recently had the opportunity to talk to Bernard Glossy, newly appointed President and CEO of Delta Dental of Illinois. Prior to his current assignment, Mr. Glossy served as President and CEO of Delta Dental of Arizona for eight years. During his tenure, Mr. Glossy nearly tripled the company's premium revenues in that state – from \$60 million to approximately \$160 million.

Delta Dental of Illinois has been named the new administrator for the State of Illinois employees' plan, and will take over this summer. However, at press time, the company was finalizing specifics with the State. Consequently, Mr. Glossy could not discuss specifics of the plan. Nonetheless, he asserts that the July 1 transfer to Delta Dental of Illinois will be seamless. Moreover, he believes that Delta Dental of Illinois will be providing the state an affordable dental plan option.

"This is a very tenuous time for the State—given its financial condition. Our mission is to improve the oral health of the residents of the state of Illinois. As an Illinois-based company, we feel that this is a direct way that we can contribute to the betterment of oral health in the state. We won the RFP (Request for Proposal) because we offered the State an extremely competitive price. Moving to a network-based plan will also help the State and its employees save. We believe we are helping Illinois, not only from an oral health standpoint but also fiscally."

Upon arriving in Illinois a few months ago, Mr. Glossy says he was pleasantly surprised with the state's handling of assignment of benefits. "I came from a state that didn't permit any assignment of benefits. Delta Dental of Illinois has always automatically paid its contracted dentists (Delta Dental PPO and Delta Dental Premier networks) directly." At the direction of the Illinois Department of Insurance, Delta Dental of Illinois must honor an assignment of benefits made by enrollees in groups that are fully insured to a non-network (non-Delta Dental PPO/Premier) dentist. Delta Dental of Illinois does not allow assignment for self-

insured groups; the State of Illinois' employee dental plan is a self-funded plan. "Automatic direct payment of benefits has long been an advantage enjoyed by dentists who participate in Delta Dental networks and an incentive for them to participate. This policy has enabled us to recruit and retain the largest dental network in the industry," he added.

Mr. Glossy emphasizes that Delta Dental of Illinois' roots benefit member dentists. "It's definitely to Illinois dentists' advantage that we are based in Illinois. Where else can a dentist pick up the phone and call the president of an insurance company? They can call me. I am here in the state. It's important that we carry that (accessibility) through at all levels of our business and our community services."

With regard to the creation of an insurance exchange as a result of national health care reform, Mr. Glossy acknowledges there are many unknowns when it comes to determining how dental benefits will fit into an insurance exchange program. "That is the \$64,000 question." In early March, the Illinois Department of Insurance began circulating draft language that would be added to SB 1729 to establish the exchange. "They have some language in there with regard to dental benefits, but it's not clear where pediatric oral health care fits in or where compensation for dentists fits in or where a free-standing entity like Delta Dental will fit into the exchange."

Ensuring that Delta Dental of Illinois be part of the exchange is something Mr. Glossy considers to be critical as the program takes shape. "It is absolutely necessary that a free-standing insurance company, such as Delta Dental of Illinois, be on the exchange. It would be a serious disservice to Illinois residents to not have that benefit. As of December of this year, we will insure almost two million residents of Illinois. Some portion of that population will be affected by the exchange, either directly or indirectly, and it's not just the size, but also the quality of our company. We are non-profit, and we are experts in dental insurance," emphasizes Mr. Glossy.

On the topic of access to care, he notes that government often attempts to expand accessibility by broadening the roles of

other professionals in order to make up for deficiencies in distribution of manpower and compensation. "There may be certain solutions worth considering, but you can't lose the perspective that it's the dentist who has the years of training and must be directly involved in the supervision of (care). Nor can you separate expanded roles, compensation, and maldistribution, as they all impact each other."

Mr. Glossy emphasizes that he and Delta Dental of Illinois look forward to building a strong and positive relationship with the dental community in Illinois. "We are really committed to working with the dentists in this state as we go forward. I think dentists will see a change in at least the perception of what Delta Dental of Illinois is and how it relates to dentists in this state." In coming months, Delta Dental of Illinois will offer CPR certification and recertification classes for dental practices and plans to introduce an individual dental insurance product that will enable individuals that do not have access to dental coverage to purchase their own insurance plan.

Delta Dental's PPO and Premier networks are the largest in the nation—151,200 Delta Dental PPO dentist locations and 231,300 Delta Dental Premier dentist locations nationwide. In Illinois, there are 5,042 Delta Dental PPO dentist locations and 8,690 Delta Dental Premier dentist locations. The networks continue to grow in Illinois and nationwide. Last year, Delta Dental PPO grew by 16.3% in Illinois (7.3% nationally) and Delta Dental Premier grew by 6.8% in Illinois (4.5% nationally). Turnover averages under 2% for Delta Dental PPO and under 1% for Delta Dental Premier. ■



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- Pascal Magne, PhD, Dr.Med.Dent. ("Biomimetic Restorative Dentistry")
- Howard S. Glazer, DDS, FAGD ("What's Hot and What's Getting Hotter")
- Harold L. Crossley, DDS, PhD ("What's the Real Deal About Street and Prescription Drug Abuse" and "The 30 Most Physician-Prescribed Medications")
- Karl R. Koerner, DDS, MS ("Surgical Extractions Using New High-tech Devices")
- Louis Malcmacher, DDS, MAGD ("Total Facial Esthetics for Every Dental Practice")
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“ROHA’s” Increase Dental Medicaid Access

By Dr. Jason Grinter, Regional Oral Health Advocate, Chicago

DentaQuest of Illinois, LLC, is the dental benefits’ administrator for the Illinois Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) Dental Program. The HFS Dental Program serves the Medicaid population in Illinois—approximately 1.6 million children under the age of 21 and 1 million adults qualify for dental benefits under the program. In 2007, DentaQuest launched its Regional Oral Health Advocate (ROHA) program, formerly known as the Dental Champion Program, to improve DentaQuest’s efforts in enrolling non-participating dentists, increase capacity within existing participating locations, and to help identify and implement best practice strategies to improve access to care.

DentaQuest has identified and contracted dentists in seven “Oral Health Regions” in Illinois who agreed to represent his or her region as the Regional Oral Health Advocate (ROHA). The ROHA’s are a resource to the dentists in their area, answering questions from providers who are considering enrollment in

the HFS Dental program and sharing best practice ideas to improve operations within their own practice. They also act as liaisons for community advocacy groups looking to enhance existing programs and initiatives geared toward improving oral health. Ultimately, the main goal of the Illinois ROHA program is to increase access to dental care for patients who are often left with few options.

The current ROHA’s are as follows:

Chicago: Jason Grinter, DDS, MPH
West Chicago: Mike Durbin, DDS, MS
Rockford: Holly Bartman, DDS
Peoria: Clifford Brown, DDS
Champaign: James Wahl, DDS
Edwardsville: Prospect Identified
Marion: Dwayne Summers, DMD

The ROHA’s are clinicians in the field who have devoted their professional lives to closing the gaps in access to care issues and have made themselves available as a resource and facilitator to speak to providers’ questions and concerns.

Many times, a dentist may want to accept a few HFS Dental Program patients, but is discouraged from doing so for fear that their practice will become inundated. This is a myth. Dentists may work with DentaQuest to customize their referral profiles by targeting the number and types of HFS Dental Program patients they’d like to treat in their practices. By specifying criteria unique to their practice requirements, providers can accept a reasonable number of local patients and provide a dental home to those in need.

As the “Lead” ROHA, Dr. Jason Grinter has spoken to a number of dentists about participating in the HFS Dental Program. He says, “One of our biggest questions and concerns from dentists is that they do not want to be on any public ‘lists.’ Dentists can enroll in the program and state they only want to accept referred patients and not new patients. The DentaQuest Customer Service staff does not give your name out to patients looking for care unless you agree to accept new patients.”

Dr. Grinter often receives questions from providers who only want to see pediatric or geriatric patients. “Can they do that? Yes, they can!” says Dr. Grinter. For example, providers can state that they only want to see patients ages 4-20 and on certain days, even certain times. “We want patients to feel welcome in your office, so you set the criteria and maybe there will be some families in your area that could benefit from your availability,” says Dr. Grinter.

HFS Dental Program patients in Illinois desperately need dental specialty care. The dental schools and training centers in Illinois are some of the only referral sources available for dental specialty care for this population.

The Regional Oral Health Advocates are available to attend professional events and speak about the HFS Dental Program. They are also happy to speak one-on-one with dentists who might be interested in participating, but want to speak with a dentist who is experienced in the program. If you are interested in speaking with a ROHA from your region, please contact Dr. Grinter at jgrinter@gmail.com. ■

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Integrated Healthcare Program to Serve Medicaid Adults

In an attempt to save Illinois an estimated \$200 million over the next five years, Governor Pat Quinn initiated a new model of care for Medicaid clients. Illinois' first Integrated Care Program will serve 40,000 adults and adults with disabilities that reside in the counties of Lake, Kane, DuPage, Will, Kankakee and suburban Cook County.

The Integrated Healthcare Program will bring together physicians, specialists, hospitals, nursing homes, dentists and other providers coordinating the care around the needs of the patient. By focusing on providing better care to the patient in a coordinated system, the State of Illinois believes that savings may occur because the patient does not leave the care and oversight of the primary care physician, and there is a concentration on prevention. Thus, the program should reduce unnecessary hospitalizations, emergency room visits and nursing home placements.

The Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) selected two Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) to enter into a five-year risk-based contract to provide the full range of Medicaid covered services for this population: Aetna and IlliniCare Health Plan. Members will be identified via an ID card provided by the HMO in which they are enrolled.

While each HMO offers its own network and set of benefits, both Aetna and IlliniCare Health Plan have sub-contracted with DentaQuest, the current dental administrator for the HFS

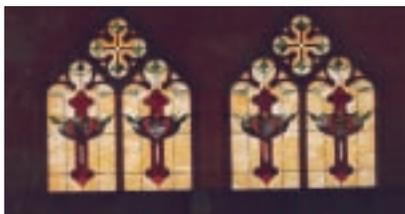
Medicaid program, to administer the dental component of their individual plans. However, because Integrated Care and the current Medicaid program are separate and distinct, a dentist who may currently participate in the HFS Medicaid program will need to submit a new Provider Agreement and Application to participate in the networks of each of the HMOs supporting the Integrated Care Program. The dentist must also be an enrolled HFS dental provider, but can tailor his/her profile with DentaQuest to only accept patients who are a part of the Integrated Healthcare Program.

The Integrated Care Program requires that Aetna and IlliniCare Health Plan provide the same level of benefits as the current HFS Medicaid Program; however each HMO has the ability to expand those benefits.

In order to promote provider participation in this program, Aetna and IlliniCare Health Plan are providing coverage for additional services not currently covered under the current HFS Medicaid Program. Both companies have also agreed to continue the relationship that DentaQuest has built with the dental community by only releasing provider names enrolled that wish to have his/her name distributed.



If you would like to participate with the Aetna or IlliniCare Health Plan network as a dental provider, please contact DentaQuest's provider contracting department directly at 800/685-9871. ■



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"Practice Act" continued from page 7...

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Noll Dental Clinic Offers Hope to Children in Need

On the south edge of Springfield, tucked away on the second floor of the Hope Institute's Noll Medical Pavilion, is the Noll Dental Clinic. Its purpose is to provide much-needed dental care for children and adults with developmental disabilities and mental illness. Funded almost exclusively through grants, the clinic provides comprehensive general dentistry services, including dental hygiene, X-rays, sealants, fillings, and crowns for a growing population of special needs children.

With many parents unable to find a dental practice equipped to handle the specific needs of these children or willing to accept Medicaid, the clinic attracts patients from across the state and receives inquiries from across the country. Dr. Casie Burk Jones, a 2007 graduate of Southern Illinois University School of Dental Medicine, began working at the clinic full-time in April 2010. In the past six months, her patient load has more than doubled from around 400 to nearly 900. "You always hear that there is a big need for access to care, but you don't realize until you step into a clinic like ours how huge that need is, and how many people just can't get care. It's overwhelming."

Featured in the 12/26/10 *Parade* magazine, the clinic is known for its Dental Desensitization practices. The process is based upon the Tell-Show-Do method and uses a series of appointments designed to familiarize patients with dental surroundings, instruments, and procedures. One child may need as many as eight visits to the clinic before they are comfortable allowing Dr. Burk Jones to merely count their teeth.

Some patients can't bring themselves to venture past the reception area; others are afraid to even get out of the car. "When that happens, either Dr. Casie or I will go out to the waiting room or to the car to try to work with them," explains the clinic's dental hygienist Kim Trapani. "We don't push anything that the patient doesn't want to do. We explain to the parent that the child is not quite ready for treatment. Then we send the parent home with a desensitization kit." The kit includes a handout with colorful pictures that illustrate the various steps in a

dental visit. The kit also includes a mask, mirror, gloves, suction tips, X-ray bite tabs, bib clips, and a tooth brush. Parents are encouraged to use the kit at home and work with the child in opening their mouth, using the dental mirror, touching and holding the various instruments, and talking through the different steps in a dental exam.

Although effectively caring for special needs children and adults can seem to be an arduous task, it is a labor of love for Dr. Burk Jones and her team. The success stories are many. "We have parents who come in and say, 'I don't know what you've done, but my son or daughter was actually excited to come to the dentist today,'" notes Dr. Burk Jones. "We have cases where the demeanor of non-verbal children will change significantly after treatment. In these cases, the children were likely in pain and were acting out because they were suffering. When the dental treatment is done, they are much happier," she adds.

Many of the families accessing the services of the clinic bring children diagnosed with autism. The multiple issues that these children and their families must deal with pose a host of challenges, and the very specific special needs of each child must be considered individually. "There are several things that can trigger a reaction in a child with autism. That's one of the main areas we want to understand. We talk to the parents about what the signs are that a child is going to have a violent reaction and what tends to prompt a reaction. Every child is different. Some are more comfortable if they can listen to music. Others need to touch all the instruments. We have some who will do fine if we allow them to type on the computer for a few minutes after their appointment. It just all depends on the child and what we can do to help them get excited about coming to their dental appointment," explains Dr. Burk Jones.



While this bright shiny new clinic with its five treatment rooms, state-of-the-art digital radiography system, and paperless charting has much to offer, it also faces key challenges: namely, funding and volunteers. Ms. Trapani notes that the challenge is finding grants that will allow the clinic to use the funds to pay staff. "We were able to repurpose some of the funds that we received from a \$50,000 grant to hire a receptionist. Before that, either Dr. Casie or her assistant or I would have to try to manage the phones, the schedule, and the patients." What's more, although a child may need multiple visits to the office requiring staff time, the clinic can only bill for procedures performed—not the desensitization process—which can be extensive.

The clinic accepts both private insurance and Medicaid. Those without insurance or other financial assistance are allowed to pay according to a sliding fee schedule so as to make care accessible to as many in need as possible. In the future, the clinic plans to offer free continuing education programs for dentists that would like to learn more about treating children with autism. In addition, Dr. Burk Jones is hopeful that the continuing education opportunity will open the door for more dental professionals from the central Illinois area to volunteer at the clinic. "We are hoping to get local dentists, hygienists, and assistants to come into the clinic and volunteer any day of the week, even once a month for just a few hours because there are a lot of kids that need to be seen." ■

Practice Act Bill Advances in General Assembly

ISDS-proposed legislation that would make key changes to the Illinois Dental Practice Act is on second reading by the Illinois General Assembly at press time. "The fact that the bill advanced out of committee with very little debate is a testament to the significant efforts that our lobbying team and members have made to reach out to their individual lawmakers and educate them on issues that impact the practice of dentistry," noted Dave Marsh, ISDS Director of Government Relations. The following are proposed changes to the Act, which are contained in SB1602, sponsored by Sen. Michael Frerichs, (D-Champaign):

Amalgam Restorations: Dental assistants would be allowed to place, carve, and finish amalgam restorations, provided they receive additional formal education and certification by the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR). This change has the potential to benefit dental clinics in particular, which tend to have limited numbers of dentists. The assistant would perform the finishing steps, which are reversible, under the supervision of the dentist who would check the occlusion and confirm that the tooth has been finished correctly. The expanded function would be optional and available to all practicing dentists in the state.

Mobile Dental Van: This recommended change to the Practice Act is designed to ensure that those operating mobile dental vans and portable dental units for screening, preventive, and restorative services implement patient safeguards and record keeping for follow-up care. Currently, dental vans and mobile dental units are not regulated. Presently, if the patient has follow-up needs or post-treatment problems, oftentimes the mobile dental van is long gone and the patients have no means of contacting those who provided care.

Continuing Education: Another change would allow dentists to receive four hours of continuing education credit per license renewal period in exchange for volunteer hours spent delivering dental care at a public health clinic, local or state health department, or charitable dental event held by an approved dental

organization, such as the Illinois Mission of Mercy held last summer in Bloomington.

Expanded Dental Examinations: This Practice Act change would expand the list of accepted testing agencies to include other approved state or regional boards if approved by the State Board of Dentistry. This could potentially enable more out-of-state dentists to obtain a license to practice in Illinois.

Basic Life Support: In addition, proposed changes in the Act would require dentists to provide documentation to IDFPR at the time of their license renewal indicating that they have completed the American Heart Association's Basic Life Support (BLS) training. Dentists that are unable to perform BLS because of a medical condition would be exempt from the requirement.

Also at the State Capitol, lawmakers have assigned SB1545, sponsored by Sen. William Haine (D-Alton), to the Senate Insurance Committee. The bill would amend the Illinois insurance code by requiring dental insurance providers to clearly indicate which procedures have a capped fee imposed and the amount of that fee. The bill will require that insurers list all CDT codes and the specific dollar amounts of the capped fees in their fee schedules. CDT codes not listed would not be subject to fee caps. ISDS Executive Director Greg Johnson recently provided testimony on the bill. "Ultimately, the patients get caught in the middle when the dentist and the patient believe that the insurance company covers the procedure at one level, only to discover after the fact that the procedure has suddenly been capped. There can be a significant difference between what the dentist thought they were being paid and what the insurance company actually pays." The measure also would provide that no recoupment or offset may be requested or withheld from future payment more than one year after the original payment is made.

Another ISDS-proposed measure, SB1379, sponsored by Sen. Dave Syverson (R-Rockford), is on third reading in the Illinois Senate at press time. The bill would amend the Illinois Public Water Supply Regulation Act to reflect

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommendations that fluoride levels in community water systems be at 0.7 ppm (parts per million). Fluoride is considered effective in reducing the incidence of tooth decay.

Watch *Illinois Dental News* throughout the spring for regular updates on legislative activities that could affect your practice, or visit the new ISDS website and watch the General Assembly live at www.isds.org.

* The full content of each bill is available on the ISDS website under *Advocacy/Current Legislation*.

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