



## In this Issue

- 2 ■ **Customer Service Metrics Reached New Highs in 2008**
  - **Claims Processing Update: Full Mouth X-rays**
  - **More WDS Groups Adopt Alternate Identification Numbers**
- 3 ■ **Fewer Claim Attachments Mean Faster Claim Processing**
- 4 ■ **Baby Teeth Campaign — Get Them Checked by Age 1**
- 5 ■ **Institute for Oral Health Mission**
  - **Save the Date — 2009 Dental Conventions**
- 6 ■ **New Groups**
- 7 ■ **On the Road Again — With the SmileMobile**

“Our Age of Anxiety is, in great part, the result of trying to do today’s job with yesterday’s tools and yesterday’s concepts.”

**Marshall McLuhan**  
Influential Media Commentator

## Washington Dental Service Launches New, User-friendly eSolutions for Dentists

### *Automated Tools, Improved Navigation*

After more than a year of strategic planning, comprehensive research and extensive usability testing, Washington Dental Service will soon launch a suite of electronic tools that will make your interactions with WDS fast and easy. These tools will provide “touch of a button,” quick access to patients’ benefits information without you ever having to pick up a phone.

Our new corporate Web site, which will launch in the second quarter of this year, will give you a customized online experience to make it easier for you to do business with us. We’ve made the tools you need simpler to find and have automated tasks wherever possible. Here are some of the features you can expect on the new Web site:

- Search eligibility and benefits information for up to 12 patients at once
- View online payment vouchers for the last 18 months
- File fees online — that means no more floppy disks!
- View online predeterminations for the last 12 months
- Check claims status

If you have already registered on the current Washington Dental Service site, your original login/password will continue to allow you access.

Your patients will appreciate the ability to view their explanations of benefits online. WDS understands that these mailed explanations of payments can be confusing, so we have created a summary view that shows patients the key things they’ve said they most want to know — how much they owe and how much was covered by their dental plan — without the clutter of extraneous “insurance” jargon.

Patients can also go online to check their own benefits, which will save time for your front office staff.

At Washington Dental Service, we realize that not all offices are alike. Your technology solutions shouldn’t be either. Later in the year, WDS will integrate with your practice management software systems to allow you to receive eligibility and benefits for your WDS-covered patients directly through your own practice management software.

No matter what technology you use, Washington Dental Service will have the tools to help your office run more efficiently in 2009. Watch your mail for more exciting developments! ■

# Dental Office Updates

## Customer Service Metrics Reached New Highs in 2008

Washington Dental Service's customer service representatives excelled when it came to providing the best service and value in the dental benefits industry for our member dentists and customers in 2008. The numbers tell it all:

**Total number of claims received**  
4,049,715

**Claims turnaround time**  
96.7 percent within 15 calendar days

**Total calls received**  
1,232,407

**Percentage of telephone calls answered within 30 seconds**  
Call center total — 88.2 percent  
Provider office calls — 86.8 percent

**Telephone speed of answer**  
16 seconds

## Reminder: Patient Copayments Required

This is a reminder that Washington Dental Service member dentists are required to collect co-payments from all patients. Offering "no copayment" options for your patients is in violation of the WDS Member Dentist Agreement and with state of Washington regulations.

## Claims Processing Update: Full Mouth X-rays

Effective April 1, 2009

As outlined in our groups' contracts, Washington Dental Service is prohibited from pulling individual bitewing or periapical X-rays from the full mouth series to pay or deny treatment. As a result, Washington Dental Service will pay only the dentist's filed fee for a complete series of X-rays when a full mouth radiograph (D0210) is submitted. WDS will also pay only the filed fee for a complete series when a dentist submits a series of X-rays, that, taken together, result in a fee higher than the provider's full mouth X-ray fee.

Should treatment be denied, the charge becomes the patient's responsibility and you can collect up to your filed fee for the complete series.

This does not reflect a policy change for processing full mouth series claims, but rather it represents Washington Dental Service's commitment to ensuring that processing policies conform to the language outlined in our groups' contracts.

"While these steps may result in some adjustments to how full mouth X-ray claims have been processed," said Dr. Ronald Inge, Washington Dental Service dental director, "they are necessary to create a uniform policy that complies with each group's contract. Be assured that we are dedicated to supporting member dentists and their patients throughout the transition."

For more details, patients should consult their dental benefits booklets. ■

## More WDS Groups Adopt Alternate Identification Numbers

Effective Jan. 1, 2009, employees of the four Washington Dental Service groups listed here have all been assigned randomly selected identification numbers in place of their Social Security numbers. Please use the new numbers when submitting future claims for your patients employed by these groups.

For a list of the 37 groups that moved to the new alternate ID numbers in 2008, please refer to the winter 2008 issue of Word of Mouth.

Washington Dental Service will notify you of new groups that adopt the alternate ID numbers in future issues of this newsletter. ■

Group #	Group Name
00603, 00604 00605, 00606	KPS Health Plans — Small Groups
00619	Christensen O'Connor Johnson Kindness, PLLC
09371	Vertafore, Inc.
09372	Frontier Bank

## Fewer Claim Attachments Mean Faster Claim Processing

Did you know that claims submitted electronically are processed an average of three days faster than paper claims submitted through the mail? Washington Dental Service currently receives 68 percent of our claims electronically. Even so, many offices that submit claims electronically still submit paper claims when attachments are required.

In an effort to help reduce the number of paper claims your office submits, Washington Dental Service has shortened the list of procedure codes requiring attachments. This list should be used as a guide in the claims submission process and does not preclude WDS from requesting additional documentation when necessary.

Procedure Code	Attachment Requirement	Procedure Code	Attachment Requirement	Procedure Code	Attachment Requirement
D0472	Pathology report	D4210	Perio Chart <sup>1</sup>	D7288	Pathology report
D0473	Pathology report	D4240	Perio Chart <sup>1</sup>	D7290	X-ray *
D0474	Pathology report	D4241	Perio Chart <sup>1</sup>	D7411	Pathology report
D0475	Pathology report	D4245	Perio Chart <sup>1</sup>	D7412	Pathology report
D0476	Pathology report	D4249	X-ray *	D7413	Pathology report
D0477	Pathology report	D4260	Perio Chart <sup>1</sup>	D7414	Pathology report
D0478	Pathology report	D4261	Perio Chart <sup>1</sup>	D7415	Pathology report
D0479	Pathology report	D4266	Perio Chart <sup>1</sup>	D7440	Pathology report
D0480	Pathology report	D4267	Perio Chart <sup>1</sup>	D7441	Pathology report
D0481	Pathology report	D4274	Perio Chart <sup>1</sup>	D7450	Pathology report
D0482	Pathology report	D4381	Perio Chart <sup>2</sup>	D7451	Pathology report
D0483	Pathology report	D4999	Narrative	D7460	Pathology report
D0486	Pathology report	D5899	Narrative	D7461	Pathology report
D0502	Pathology report	D5999	Narrative	D7465	Pathology report
D0999	Narrative	D6199	Narrative	D7999	Narrative
D2799	Narrative	D6980	Narrative	D8999	Narrative
D2962	X-ray *	D6999	Narrative	D9930	Narrative
D2980	Narrative	D7241	X-ray *	D9940	Case Type <sup>3</sup>
D2999	Narrative	D7285	Pathology report	D9951	Tooth numbers adjusted
D3999	Narrative	D7286	Pathology report	D9999	Narrative

\* If an X-ray is unavailable, Washington Dental Service will accept a detailed clinical narrative.

<sup>1</sup> Periodontal chart must be no more than 12 months old on the date of service.

<sup>2</sup> Periodontal chart must be no more than 36 months old on the date of service.

<sup>3</sup> If the group covers occlusal guards for periodontal treatment only

For claims still requiring attachments, Washington Dental Service accepts electronic attachments through FastAttach, offered by National Electronic Attachments (NEA). This means you can submit scanned X-rays, intra-oral photographs, periodontal charts and more when providing supporting clinical documentation for electronic claims. Using electronic attachments can not only accelerate claim processing, but will also eliminate the need and cost to duplicate and mail X-rays and other necessary attachments.

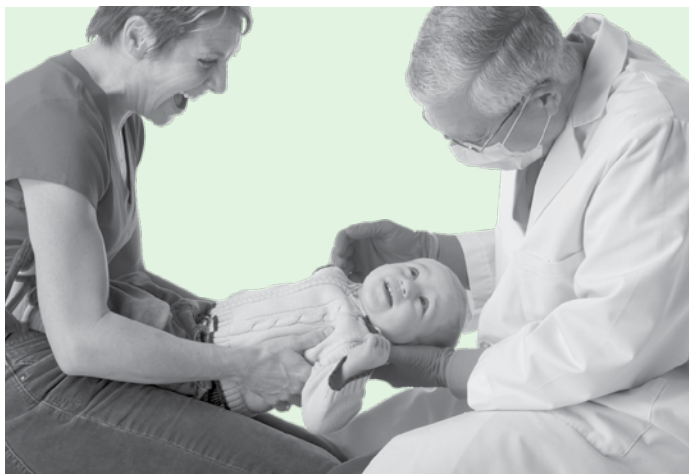
### Here's what you will need to utilize FastAttach:

- Pentium processor computer or equivalent
- Windows 98, Windows NT 4.0 or higher
- Monitor with video card capable of 24-bit color
- Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.0 or higher
- An Internet service provider
- A way to digitize your attachments (a scanner or digital x-ray system)

For more information about NEA FastAttach, please go to [www.nea-fast.com](http://www.nea-fast.com) or call (800) 782-5150. ■

# Dental Office Updates

## Baby Teeth Campaign — Get Them Checked by Age 1



Dental disease among very young children is becoming more prevalent in Washington state and across the nation. In 2005, 45 percent of low-income preschoolers in Washington were found to have dental decay, compared to 38 percent in 1994. Dental decay is preventable, but it is important to start early.

Washington Dental Service Foundation, along with Seattle Children's Hospital and Sacred Heart Children's Hospital, are drawing attention to the importance of baby teeth. In the fall of 2008, the three organizations launched a state-wide public awareness campaign urging parents to have their babies' teeth checked by a dentist or a physician by their first birthdays.

The Baby Teeth Campaign included radio ads and generated media coverage in the Seattle Times, the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, The Spokesman Review, the Tacoma News Tribune, the Olympian and other publications. The Yakima NBC-affiliate ran a special feature story on the importance of baby teeth. This was reinforced by the Foundation's television ads, which put a priority on prevention for very young children.

"When it comes to health, we need to stop separating the mouth from the body. Baby teeth are essential for an infant who will soon be developing language skills and chewing food," said Dr. Irene Hunter, a dentist in Olympia and former chair of Washington Dental Service Foundation.

Experts recommend that as soon as a baby's first tooth comes in, usually between 6 and 12 months of age, parents should have their baby's mouth checked.

Please spread the word among your patients with very young children that they can get tips on caring for baby teeth by visiting **[www.KidsOralHealth.org](http://www.KidsOralHealth.org)** on the Web. Dental offices can request parent education brochures by contacting Washington Dental Service Foundation at **[Foundation@deltadentalwa.com](mailto:Foundation@deltadentalwa.com)** or by calling **(206) 729-5570**. The brochures are free of charge and are available in English, Spanish, Cambodian, Russian and Vietnamese. ■



## Institute for Oral Health Mission

The mission of the Institute for Oral Health is to advance oral health care by identifying effective and efficient treatment practices and guidelines for the dental industry. It promotes these best practices by serving as a central resource for shared practical knowledge and collaboration to benefit the dental profession and the public.

As part of the IOH's efforts to influence policy in oral health care, members of the Institute did or will participate in several conferences throughout 2009:

- The Institute hosted a booth at the World Congress Health and Human Capital meeting in Washington, D.C., Feb. 2-5. Later in February, IOH members attended the Institute of Medicine workshop, titled Sufficiency of the U.S. Oral Health Workforce in the Coming Decade.
- As a corporate sponsor for the American Dental Education Association, the Institute hosted a booth at the ADEA's annual session in Phoenix in March. Following the meeting, the IOH held a focus group to explore the use of metrics in oral health, how quality is determined, where we are now in dentistry and where we need to go.
- The IOH will host its own fourth annual national conference in San Jose, CA, Oct. 15 and 16. This year's theme is defining quality in oral health care. In preparation, the IOH completed a focus group to help define quality in oral health. For information on the conference, visit the IOH Web site [www.IOHwa.org](http://www.IOHwa.org). ■

## 2009 Dental Conventions

We hope you are making plans to attend at least one of the two annual dental conventions in Washington this spring or summer. Don't miss this opportunity to network with others in the dental community, find out about new products and advancements in dentistry and learn more about what Washington Dental Service has to offer in 2009.

**The Inland Northwest Dental Conference** will be held **April 23 and 24** in Spokane at the convention center downtown.

**The Pacific Northwest Dental Convention** will be **July 23 and 24** at the Washington State Convention and Trade Center in Seattle.

Our professional relations representatives will be at both events. Please plan to stop by our booth and introduce yourself. You will have a chance to enter our prize drawing for an REI gift card. And while you're at it, feel free to pick up a "teeth geek" button, back by popular demand. If you missed out on a button last year, we will have a fresh supply for our fellow "geeks" who share our passion for oral health.



We look forward to seeing you.

# New Groups

## Effective January through April 2009

This list includes only employer groups with 100 or more employees.

Effective January 2009				
Group Number	Group Name	Dental Product	Group Location	Employee #
00593	Advantage IQ	Delta Dental PPO	Spokane	493
00595	Energy Northwest adding new plan to its existing dental option, #00768 Delta Dental PPO	DeltaCare	Richland	107
00598	Washington Alder, Cascade Hardwood, Port Angeles Hardwood	Delta Dental PPO	Chehalis, Mt. Vernon, Port Angeles	420
00603, 00604, 00605, 00606	KPS Health Plans –Small Groups	Delta Dental PPO	Western WA	126
00607	Inland Imaging Business Associates adding new plan to its existing plans, #00376 & 00377	DeltaCare	Spokane	106
00611	City of Kent	Delta Dental PPO	Kent	878
00617	IDD Aerospace	Delta Dental PPO	Redmond	155
00619	Christensen O'Connor Johnson Kindness, PLLC	Delta Dental PPO	Seattle	102
09371	Vertafore, Inc.	Delta Dental PPO*	Bothell	1,034
09372	Frontier Bank	Delta Dental PPO*	Everett	
09373	R. W. Beck, Inc.	Delta Dental PPO*	Seattle	449

Effective February 2009				
Group Number	Group Name	Dental Product	Group Location	Employee #
00620	Beneficial In-Home Care	Delta Dental PPO	Spokane, Wenatchee, Moses Lake	198

Effective March 2009				
Group Number	Group Name	Dental Product	Group Location	Employee #
00593	Colmac Coil	Delta Dental PPO	Colville	138

Effective March 2009				
Group Number	Group Name	Dental Product	Group Location	Employee #
09375	Wellington Investment Corporation	Delta Dental PPO*	Vancouver	600

Effective April 2009				
Group Number	Group Name	Dental Product	Group Location	Employee #
09374	Zumiez, Inc.	Delta Dental PPO*	Everett	845

\*Indicates a national account

# SmileMobile Schedule

## On the Road Again — With the SmileMobile

The SmileMobile, a modern dental office on wheels, brings oral health services year-round to low-income children with limited access to dentists. The 38-foot, brightly colored mobile clinic is supported by volunteer dental professionals in each community it visits. Since it first hit the road in July 1995, the mobile clinic has treated more than 25,000 children throughout Washington. The SmileMobile, on average, visits 32 communities a year. In 2008, with the help of 71 volunteer dentists and their staff members, the SmileMobile screened 1,994 children, provided treatment to 1,141 and referred 306 children to dental “homes.”

The SmileMobile is a partnership between Washington Dental Service, Washington Dental Service Foundation and Seattle Children’s Hospital.

Volunteer dentists and their staff members are needed at all sites. For more information about the SmileMobile or if you would like to volunteer, contact Monika Foro or Jeanie Romero at **(206) 517-6303** or toll-free at **(800) 572-7835, ex.6303**. ■



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**Washington Dental Service  
 Foundation**  
*Community Advocates for Oral Health*

SmileMobile Schedule for 2009		
Month	Day	Location
April	13 - May 1	Clarkston
May	4 - 8	Pasco
	11 - 15	White Salmon
	19 - 29	Goldendale
June	2 - 5	Kent
	8 - 19	Orting
	22 - 26	Algona—Pacific
July	6 - 10	New Site
	13 - 17	New Site
	20 - 31	Sequim
August	3 - 7	Port Angeles
	10 - 21	Forks
	24 - 28	New Site
September	7 - 18	Clarkston
	21 - 25	Newport
	28 - Oct. 2	Tonasket
October	5 - 16	Brewster
	19 - 30	Whatcom County
November	2 - 6	Arlington
	9 - 25	Monroe
December	1 - 15	Lynnwood

*Schedule is subject to change*



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Printed on recycled paper 

P.O. Box 75688 | Seattle, WA 98175-0688

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