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Dear Front Office Professional,

In keeping with our mission to improve oral health, Washington Dental Service is creating plans that increase the number of individuals with dental coverage. As with all of our products, the new plans promote prevention and wellness. Washington Dental Service Dental Director, Dr. Ronald Inge says, “We are very interested in creating dental plans that strongly encourage preventive care as key to an employee’s long-term health and well-being.”

We are excited to announce that Washington Dental Service is expanding plan offerings for small business owners. The new plans allow these employers to offer voluntary and core buy-up products that are designed to bring high-value coverage to their employees. Both plans are part of the Washington Dental Service preferred provider (PPO) product line.

- The new PreferredVoluntary plan allows employees to voluntarily participate in a comprehensive employer-sponsored Washington Dental Service plan.
- The PreferredCore-Plus product is a basic preventive plan, with the option for employees to buy up to a richer set of benefits.

This brings the WDS value proposition — access to WDS network providers — to employers who previously may not have considered Washington Dental Service.

Washington Dental Service plans to roll out the new PreferredVoluntary and PreferredCore-Plus plans in early fall. Look for more information later this year.

Sincerely,

Ron, Cindy, Tami, Trish, Clara, Melinda and Karen

Your WDS Professional Services Team

“We are very interested in creating dental plans that strongly encourage preventive care as key to an employee’s long-term health and well-being.”

Dr. Ron Inge

Washington Dental Service
 Dental Director

Dental Office Updates



OIC Issues New Rule on Dependent Age Limit

The Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner has issued a regulatory change to dependent age limits that affects members covered by Washington Dental Service.

Dependent Age Limitation Change

The age limitation for covered dependents, which was “to age 19,” is now “to age 25.” Specifically, any group health care plan that provides coverage for a subscriber’s dependent must offer the option of covering any eligible dependent younger than 25.

“Eligible dependents” are an eligible employee’s lawful spouse and unmarried children from birth to age 25. Unmarried children include biological children, stepchildren, foster children and adopted children.

This change is being applied to small groups covered by Washington Dental Service as they renew throughout 2008. It will become **effective January 1, 2009**, for all groups that are filed with the Office of the Insurance Commissioner.

Washington Dental Service Introducing Alternate ID Numbers

Washington Dental Service, like many other health benefit carriers, uses Social Security numbers to identify covered members in our system.

To ensure the privacy of our members’ information and to address concerns about identify theft, Washington Dental Service now has the ability to assign randomly selected identification numbers to employees of groups that request this. Once a group is transitioned, each employee of that group will be assigned a unique alternate number that will also be printed on his or her identification card.

This change is being introduced in increments — to a rolling list of groups upon their request. The first groups to adopt the new alternate identification numbers are Washington Mutual, Evergreen Healthcare, Alaska Airlines, Horizon Air, Itron Inc. and Washington Dental Service. Employees of these groups — and any covered dependents — will be transitioned to the new ID system during the third quarter of this year.

We will notify member dentists’ offices of new groups that adopt the alternate identification numbers in the quarterly issues of this newsletter.

Washington Dental Service will notify affected subscribers of this change by a letter, which will include their newly assigned alternate identification numbers. The letter will encourage subscribers to share their new identification numbers with their dentists’ offices. Please be sure to request this information from patients covered by the groups listed above if they forget to volunteer it.

Even if you do not obtain the new alternate identification numbers from your patients, your payment voucher will show the new identifiers, not your patients’ Social Security numbers. We encourage you to make a note of the new numbers, as Washington

Dental Service will accept claims with your patients’ Social Security numbers for a limited time only.

Please note that if you work with a practice management software vendor, you will need to make the necessary changes in your computer system to reflect the patients’ alternate ID numbers, versus their SSNs.

With this change, dental offices will still be able to access patients’ benefit information using our external eligibility devices with either the Social Security numbers or alternate identifier — again for a limited time only. Therefore, given this time limitation, we encourage you to use the alternate identification numbers when contacting Washington Dental Service customer service or when using our interactive voice



ABCD Continues Its Success *30 counties now offer program*

“I love seeing the small children and think it’s important they have a dental home at a young age to increase their chances of having good oral health for a lifetime,” said a dentist participating in the Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD) program in a recent statewide survey.

The ABCD program helps Medicaid-eligible children under age 6 find dentists and get preventive dental care. The program is now offered through local public health departments in 30 of Washington’s 39 counties.

ABCD is making significant progress in delivering care to Washington’s youngest children. Since 1997, the number of children from birth through age 5 who are Medicaid dental users has more than doubled. It now totals more than 98,000 children.

“My staff is proud of our participation in ABCD — they thank me and say they feel good about what we do for these families,” said another ABCD dentist surveyed.

ABCD emphasizes the importance of seeing children as soon as their first teeth emerge. More than 950 Washington dentists, along with members of their staff, have been trained in pediatric dental techniques and preventive services, including fluoride varnish applications. Through the program, parents also learn about good oral health practices and dental office etiquette.

The program is a collaborative effort of Washington Dental Service Foundation, the Washington state Department of Social and Health Services, the state’s Department of Health, local dental societies and health jurisdictions, the University of Washington and the Washington State Dental Association.

ABCD is improving the oral health of Washington’s infants and toddlers. The program helps place kids at a very young age on the right track toward better oral and overall health. To learn more about including ABCD in your practice, call (509) 307-8929.



Dr. Eve Rutherford, a dentist from Snohomish, demonstrates an oral screening at an ABCD training, using the lap-to-lap technique.

“My staff is proud of our participation in ABCD — they thank me and say they feel good about what we do for these families,”

DELTA DENTAL
Washington Dental Service Foundation
Community Advocates for Oral Health

Dental Office Updates

Frequently Asked Questions

Q How long will Washington Dental Service keep our x-rays?

A After all x-rays are scanned, we retain them for 10 working-days. If your office would like the x-rays returned, please be sure to provide a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Q Can a customer service representative give me my filed fees?

A No. Our customer service representatives can only verify a filed fee if they are researching a fee for a procedure your office has submitted or to verify whether the correct fee was applied by our computer information system. If you are a Washington Dental Service participating dentist and would like a complete listing of your filed fees, you can contact our professional services team at (800) 238-3439 or (206) 528-7394.

Q If a claim was denied because we did not submit an x-ray, can we just submit the x-ray?

A If Washington Dental Service has denied a claim for additional information, such as x-rays, you will need to resubmit the claim along with the requested information.



Claims Processing Tips

Submitting Claims on Time

Timely filing of a claim is typically 180 days from the date of treatment, unless the employer group's contract language states otherwise. However, Washington Dental Service participating dentists have agreed to file claims within six months of the treatment date regardless of the group's contract.

Payment Determined By Seat Date

Washington Dental Service pays for crowns only at the time of completion. Be sure to include the seat date, not the prep date, on the claim form. If you bill with the prep date and include a seat date that is in the future, the claim will be processed as a pre-determination.

Claims without Social Security Numbers or Alternate ID Numbers

Washington Dental Service cannot guarantee that your claims will be processed accurately or on time without these identifier numbers. Please submit a Social Security number or alternate ID number on every claim form.

Providers' Fees

Your office should always submit your normal in-house fees for treatments, regardless of the types of plan your patients are on. Washington Dental Service will process the claims with the correct fees according to the plans the patients are on.

WDS Now Issuing Corrected Explanations of Benefits

Washington Dental Service is now sending corrected explanations of benefits to subscribers whose dental claims have been adjusted following the initial adjudication.

As you know, Washington Dental Service sends explanations of benefits (EOBs) to subscribers to indicate how their dental treatment claims were processed. Sometimes it is necessary for WDS to adjust a claim once it has been paid, due to corrected or new information. Such a change can mean that the subscriber has a credit balance or owes the dental office additional money to cover the treatment cost. Because subscribers were not previously notified directly of this change, it fell to the dental offices to explain the corrections to their patients.

Washington Dental Service's new policy of issuing corrected EOB statements to subscribers not only helps the dental office explain subsequent balances owed, but also provides more accurate information to the offices' patients. This new policy applies to all claims processed as of April 19, 2008.

The format of the corrected EOB matches that of the regular EOB, except that it is titled Corrected Explanation of Benefits.

Survey Draws Record Response

To help Washington Dental Service evaluate how well we are meeting the needs of dental office front office staff and determine how we can serve you better, we recently conducted a satisfaction survey. The survey form was mailed to the offices of 2,500 WDS member dentists. The response to the survey was overwhelming, with a return rate of approximately 43 percent!

To thank dental office personnel for taking the time to provide us with feedback, we included a raffle ticket for a chance to win a \$100 REI gift card in the mailing. Three winning entries were selected at random. The following individuals received gift cards:

- **Gina Knox**
First Choice, Vancouver, WA
- **Kim Baumann**
Dr. Robert Osborn's office, Graham, WA
- **Andrea Gutierrez**
Dr. Roy N. Kaldestad's office, Tacoma, WA



We appreciate all of you who participated in the survey. Thank you for telling us how we are doing.



KC Kids Dental Program Update

Hundreds of children in King County have received dental services this year through the King County Kids dental program, thanks to a \$1 million dollar donation from Washington Dental Service. Children younger than age 20, who live in King County, have no dental coverage and whose families meet the income guidelines can qualify for the pilot program. The goal is to improve the delivery and coverage of oral health services to under-served children.

The KC Kids program utilizes Washington Dental Service's Delta Dental PPO provider network in King County. It covers all standard dental procedures for enrolled children — at no cost to their families. KC Kids has more than 500 children enrolled, and Washington Dental Service's goal is to enroll and get services to as many uninsured children in King County as possible. Therefore, if you know of children in King County in need of dental coverage, please go to the KC Kids Web site at kckidsdental.org for further information. The KC Kids program is in effect for the year 2008 only, so time is limited.

Thank you to all of the Washington Dental Service member dentists' offices that support this program. Many families have heard about and enrolled in the program because they heard about it from their dentists.

Dental Office Updates

Direct Deposit — Electronic Payment

A Benefit for Washington Dental Service Member Dentists

Washington Dental Service has a direct deposit option available as a benefit for our member dentists. With this service, claims payment checks are automatically deposited directly into your office's bank account. It's easy. And it's convenient. Payment runs occur on Thursday evenings, and the explanation of benefits is faxed to you overnight. The funds will be available to you and the EOB statement will be waiting for you on Friday mornings.

Here are the benefits for your office:

Claims payment money is deposited directly into your bank account — available for you to access almost immediately.



Fewer hassles — no more waiting in bank lines.

Streamlined office administration

"Green" alternative reduces the carbon footprint of mail pick-up and delivery by the postal service.



All you need is a fax machine.

If you have any questions about our direct deposit plan, please call our Provider Services team at (800) 238-3439.



New Study of Gum Disease-Diabetes Link Launched by WDS and Group Health

Washington Dental Service has teamed up with Group Health on a new study that is exploring the relationship between diabetes and periodontal disease. The study is part of an ongoing partnership to strengthen the links between medical and dental care.

In the one-year study, which is funded by Group Health and a grant from Washington Dental Service, researchers are examining the records from people age 40 to 74 who belong to both Group Health and WDS. The study will investigate the link between gum disease, diabetes and blood sugar levels. It is being conducted by researchers at Group Health's Center for Health Studies and Washington Dental Service.

The study is also looking at the difference in how a diabetic's care is managed, as well as at the cost difference between those who receive routine medical and dental care and those who don't.

Dr. Ron Inge, vice president and dental director for Washington Dental Service, said the study should show the link is significant. He anticipates the results will launch a pilot program that will track patients' diabetic and dental conditions with interventions.

Another aim of the study is to raise awareness among medical doctors and dentists who care for diabetic patients. According to the American Academy of Periodontology, people with diabetes are more likely to have periodontal disease than those without diabetes, probably because diabetics are more susceptible to contracting infections. In fact, periodontal disease is often considered the sixth complication of diabetes.

CDT 2009 - 2010 Codes Coming

The American Dental Association publishes changes to the Current Dental Technology (CDT) codes every two years. The 2009-2010 version will be effective January 1, 2009, and Washington Dental Service wants to give you advance notice of what we have just learned regarding the upcoming changes.

Four new codes are being added. Two of them address the collection and analysis of saliva samples, one regards partial pulpotomy for apexogenesis, and the fourth defines a topical medicament carrier. Sixteen codes will have their nomenclatures and/or descriptions changed to some extent. The changes all appear to be minor and will not affect any existing processing policies for allowing benefits. In comparison, the current edition of the CDT code set, covering 2007/2008, had 24 new codes and 42 changes to nomenclature and/or descriptions.

The actual code numbers had not been assigned at the time this newsletter went to press, but we expect they are now available for review on the American Dental Association Web site. Washington Dental Service will provide processing policy information related to the new codes later in the fall and we will be modifying our claims processing system to reflect the new codes appropriately by January 1, 2009.

The new CDT 2009-2010 code book is available for purchase from the ADA at www.ADA.org.

National Provider Identifiers Now Required On All Electronic Claims

As you know, all claims that are submitted electronically to any payer must now, by law, include a National Provider Identifier (NPI). This requirement, which was mandated by HIPAA, became effective May 23, 2008. In an effort to prevent delays in your payments and unnecessary claims adjustments, Washington Dental Service will continue to accept electronic claims that have missing or non-matching NPIs for the remainder of 2008.

However, it is critically important to note that, by the end of 2008, Washington Dental Service will reject electronic claims that do not have an NPI and those that have NPIs that do not match the number that was previously given to us by your office.

Please review your claims to be sure that you are submitting them with the appropriate NPI number(s) in order to prevent any disruption to claims settlement and payment. If you are unsure whether Washington Dental Service has the correct NPI number(s) on file for you, please call (800) 944-6189.

If you have questions about NPIs, please visit the NPPES Web site. The Web address is <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov/NPPES/NPIRegistryHome.do>.

The toll-free phone number is (800) 465-3203.

2008 WDS Trustee Elections

The following trustees assumed new terms effective May 15, 2008.

Trustee	Geographic Area
Dr. Jerry Baruffi	Seattle – King County
Dr. Doug Beck	Snohomish County
Dr. David Branch	Seattle – King County
Dr. Dyke Burson	Kitsap County
Dr. Ed Dolan	Seattle – King County
Dr. Linda Edgar (new trustee)	Seattle – King County
Dr. Larry Forsythe (new trustee)	Mt. Baker District
Dr. George Moore	Snohomish County
Dr. Randy Nartea (new trustee)	Pierce County
Dr. Doug O'Connor	Lower Columbia District
Dr. Jim Reid	Seattle – King County
Dr. Robert Shaw (new trustee)	Spokane District

We welcome these individuals to their new terms as Washington Dental Service trustees and look forward to their important contributions.

New Groups

Effective March 2008 through August 2008

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

Effective March 2008				
Group Number	Group Name	Dental Product	Group Location	Employee #
09360	Sellen Construction Company	Delta Dental PPO*	Seattle	160
09362	Copiers Northwest, Inc.	Delta Dental PPO*	Seattle	141

Effective April 2008				
Group Number	Group Name	Dental Product	Group Location	Employee #
00581	Visiting Nurse Services, NW	Delta Dental PPO	Seattle	131
09361	Isilon Systems, Inc.	Delta Dental PPO*	Seattle	270
09363	Weinstein & Riley, P.S.	Delta Dental PPO*	Seattle	123

Effective May 2008				
Group Number	Group Name	Dental Product	Group Location	Employee #
00587	Applied Technical Services	Delta Dental PPO	Everett	190
00588	Intelius Inc.	Delta Dental PPO	Kirkland	148
09364	Era Living, LLC	Delta Dental PPO*	Seattle	361
09366	Zango, Inc.	Delta Dental PPO*	Bellevue	113

Effective June 2008				
Group Number	Group Name	Dental Product	Group Location	Employee #
09365	The Cobalt Group	Delta Dental PPO*	Seattle	730

Effective July 2008				
Group Number	Group Name	Dental Product	Group Location	Employee #
00339	Madrona Medical Group acquired by PeaceHealth	Delta Dental PPO	Bellingham	500
00590	Hollister-Stier Laboratories	Delta Dental PPO	Spokane	335
00591	Morning Sun, Inc.	Delta Dental PPO	Tacoma	140
00592	Home Care of Washington	Delta Dental PPO	Spokane	476
09321	Craft Brewers Alliance, Inc. previously named Redhook Ale Brewery	Delta Dental PPO*	Woodinville	441

Effective August 2008				
Group Number	Group Name	Dental Product	Group Location	Employee #
09368	Liberty Dialysis	Delta Dental PPO*	Mercer Island	400

**Indicates a national account*

Brush Up Workshops

Institute for Oral Health to
Host 3rd Annual Conference



The Institute for Oral Health (IOH) invites all Washington Dental Service member dentists to its 3rd annual national conference in Chicago, Ill., on September 9 -10, 2008. This year's theme, Oral Health in Aging America, will feature dynamic presentations from nationally recognized experts on health and aging, and geriatric dentistry.

Keynote speakers will be Michael Roizen, MD, founder of RealAge, Inc., chair of the RealAge scientific advisory board and a frequent guest on the Oprah show; and Erik Olsen, DDS, president of AARP, former president and CEO of Delta Dental of California and a nationally recognized advocate on health care reform.

Please pass this information on to your doctors. The conference offers CE credits for dentists. For more information, visit the IOH Web site at www.iohwa.org.

Brush Up Workshop Updates

In an effort to accommodate requests from our member dentists' staff, we have made the following changes to two workshop locations: The September 12 workshop will be presented in Mt. Vernon, instead of Bellingham as originally planned. The October 22 workshop will be presented in Federal Way, instead of at Washington Dental Service in Seattle. If you were planning on attending seminars at either of the former locations, we apologize for any inconvenience this change may cause and hope you can still attend a workshop near you.

Our workshops are limited in size to allow a more relaxed, informal atmosphere and encourage you to meet and talk with members of other dental offices. The smaller group size also enables our staff more time to answer your questions. The new revised format, workbook and activities have been warmly received. Here are some comments from our attendees:

"It has been 10 years since I attended a WDS workshop — A huge improvement. Thanks."

"Wonderful information on claim submission and hints to speed the process."

"I have been coming to workshops for 12 years. This was by far the best class yet."

We have only four scheduled workshops remaining for 2008. They fill up fast, so sign up as soon as you can. We look forward to seeing you there.



Brush Up Workshop Schedule

September 12 — Mt. Vernon

September 24 — Bremerton

October 8 — Spokane

October 22 — Federal Way

For more information:

Lindy Oden
(206) 526-7690
Loden@deltadentalwa.com

Sign up online:

www.deltadentalwa.com/brushup

SmileMobile Schedule

Seeking SmileMobile Volunteers

The SmileMobile is a modern dental office on wheels that travels the state year-round, providing care to children of low-income families who have no other option for dental care. Last year, the SmileMobile visited 32 communities and provided care to more than 2,100 children with volunteer support from nearly 70 dentists. The SmileMobile is operated by Washington Dental Service Foundation and funded by Washington Dental Service in partnership with Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center.

The SmileMobile is looking for volunteer dentists and staff members at the following sites:



SmileMobile Schedule for 2008

Month	Day	Location
September	8 - 12	Asotin
	15 - 19	Newport
	22 - 26	Okanogan
	29 - Oct. 10	Brewster
October	13 - 17	Cashmere
	20 - 24	Lummi
	27 - 31	Bellingham
November	3 - 7	Arlington
	10 - 26	Monroe
December	1 - 17	Lynnwood

Volunteer Dentist And Their Staff Members Are Needed At All Sites

Please contact Monika Foro or Karri Amundson at **(800) 572-7835, ext. 6303, or (206) 517-6303**

Continuing education credit is available to dentists volunteering on the SmileMobile.

Schedule is subject to change.

Looking Back — Northwest Dental Conferences

The Washington Dental Service professional relations team was pleased to represent our company at the May 2008 Inland Northwest Dental Conference in Spokane and at the July 2008 Pacific Northwest Dental Conference in Seattle. We were happy to see so many fellow "Teeth Geeks" and talk with you about our provider networks, products and services designed to promote better overall health through oral health.



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