

Digest

SUMMER 2009

Business Improvement

At Doral, we pride ourselves on continually improving and evolving the way we serve providers to make doing business with us easier. In the coming months, we will be launching several innovations and advancements in technology that will allow us to improve our service to you and all of our dental program stakeholders.

The innovations are the result of advancements in technology and insights gained from feedback we have received from you. We will keep you informed as we move forward with these changes.



Whenever you see an email or postal mailer bearing this symbol, you'll know that we're introducing an important change designed to benefit you.

Doral is your partner today, tomorrow and in the future. Stay tuned for these exciting announcements!

Exciting New Option to Increase Speed of Payment

Doral has recently implemented Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) and electronic remittance statements (835 File) as a new payment process for our providers. This exciting new feature will result in increased payment turnaround times as funds are directly deposited into your banking account. Enrolling in EFT is simple! You only need to complete an enrollment form and send us a voided check. Once we have received the necessary documents, EFT will be implemented for your office within six weeks. The enrollment form is located in the Office Reference Manual at www.doralusa.com.

In conjunction with the EFT program, you will also be required to access your remittance statements online as you will no longer receive paper remittance statements. Electronic remittance statements can be located on Doral's Provider Web Portal (PWP). It is fast and easy to obtain your remittance statements.

We are pleased to offer this new benefit to our providers and hope you take advantage of this new program. Should you have any questions, please contact your Provider Services Department or local provider relations representative.



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Member Satisfaction Survey

The surveys were conducted telephonically during 2008 and were completed using member eligibility data provided by the plans. During 2008, Doral revised the Member Survey and as a result no comparison to 2007 is available.

The overall results for the surveys were as follows:

Overall, how satisfied are you with your dentist?.....	95% Very and Somewhat Satisfied
Overall, how satisfied are you with the dental care that (you/your child) has received in the past 12 months?.....	95% Very and Somewhat Satisfied
Overall, how satisfied are you with your dental plan?	95% Very and Somewhat Satisfied
In your opinion, did the dentist or dental staff do everything they could to help (you/your child) feel as comfortable as possible during the visit?.....	96% Yes
Did the dentist or dental staff explain what they were doing while treating (you/your child)?	75% Always
Did the dentist or dental staff give you advice on how to avoid dental problems?.....	90% Yes
In general, how would you rate the overall condition of (your/your child's) teeth and gums today?.....	85% Good or Very Good
Have you seen an improvement in (your/your child's) oral health over the past year?.....	74% Yes
Do you have a dentist that you usually go to for check-ups, cleanings or tooth pain?.....	93% Yes

Doral will work with the individual plans, particularly where deficits were noted to improve member satisfaction.

Provider Satisfaction Survey

The annual provider satisfaction survey was completed during 2008 and was conducted via written survey.

Satisfaction with Doral Dental USA	85% satisfied
How likely are you to continue begin a provider for Doral Dental USA in the coming year?.....	94% will continue
Overall, how would you say Doral Dental USA compares to other dental plans?	87% the same or better
Usefulness and clarity of Office Reference Manual	78% good or better
Accuracy of payments.....	73% good or better
Ability to obtain accurate information from customer service call center representative	69% good or better
Payments received within the agreed upon time frame	69% good or better
Consistency in applying authorization criteria.....	68% good or better
Ability to obtain timely information from customer service call center representative.....	66% good or better
Turnaround time of authorization process.....	63% good or better
Ease of using the Provider Web Portal	60% good or better
Speed of answer when calling Doral's customer service call center	52% good or better
Ease of using the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) phone system	53% good or better

3	most important attributes:
58%	Payments received within the agreed upon timeframe
58%	Accuracy of payments
38%	Turnaround time for authorization process

The Importance of 6 Month Recalls

Repetitive and dependable dental care, especially for young children, is critical to establishing good life-long oral hygiene habits. Establishing a dental home for patients ensures care is delivered in a comprehensive and consistent way. Preventative treatment such as prophylaxes, fluoride treatment and oral hygiene instruction promotes pain-free dental health. Six month recall appointments are important because early signs of disease can be detected and treated.

As a dental provider, please encourage your patients to come back to your office for their six month recall. If you do not have your own system for recalling patients, here are some suggestions:

- Mail appointment reminders.
- Make reminder phone calls 48-72 hours in advance of an appointment.

Ways to Speed Up Paper Claims

Doral, along with other carriers, processes paper claims with the use of computer software that scans and enters them through Optical Character Recognition (OCR).

However, poor quality claims—claims with illegible writing, smudges, missing information, and/or very old claim form formats—are impossible to process in such a manner. Unfortunately, poor quality claims must be put aside and then manually keyed, but even then the data entry staff often has difficulty reading them.

In order for dental offices to speed up the processing and improve the accuracy of their paper claims, they should:

- Adjust the office hours to best accommodate your patient population.
- Hang posters around the waiting room that list the benefits of going to the dentist every 6 months.
- Remind your patients at the beginning of the appointment that they will need to schedule their 6 month recall before they leave that day.

Imagine the impact on the dental life of your patients by implementing just a few simple reminders about the importance of regular dental check ups. Children and adults who visit the dentist on a regular basis will be able to have healthy teeth and gums!

- Use an approved claim form posted on Doral's website via www.doralusa.com (2006 ADA Claim Form preferred)
- Mail claims instead of faxing them
- Submit original claims rather than photocopies
- Ensure your printer provides clear, dark copies
- Print or type all numbers legibly
- Line information up properly within the form
- Do not write dollar signs (“\$” can be confused with “5”)
- Do not use unnecessary decimal points
- Do not use ink stamps or write notes on the body of the claim form

Treating the Hearing-Impaired Patient

It is important that hearing-impaired patients are properly informed about their disease, treatment and prognosis. They have the same rights to full information as other patients. The following article includes ideas for improving communication with the hearing-impaired, including those who use hearing aids, sign language and/or lip-reading to communicate, as well as a note regarding interpreters and the law.

Regardless of their mode(s) of communication, the main barriers to communication for the hearing-impaired are: (1) The attitude adopted by others which may affect the doctor-patient relationship, (2) The hearing-impaired may be wrongly assumed to have a learning disability, and (3) Time pressure may lead to not making sufficient effort to learn what modes of communication best relate to a certain patient.

Patients with hearing aids:

Eliminate any background noise.

Avoid sudden noises that may alarm the patient, especially noises coming from behind the patient.

Notify the patient when treatment (especially involving rotary instruments) will begin, as he or she may prefer to turn off his or her hearing aid.

If any communication is necessary during treatment, signify such so the hearing aid can be turned on.

Patients who use lip reading:

Maintain eye contact.

Call attention with a light touch or signal before beginning to speak. Never speak if the patient is not looking at you.

Be sure there is enough light on your face for the patient to adequately see you.

Be sure that your face mask is off whenever you are speaking to the patient.

Position the patient at the same level as you, ideally sitting up in the chair.

Speak calmly, slowly, pleasantly and clearly without exaggerating or shouting.

If necessary, use gestures or words/drawings with pencil and paper.

Have written sheets available explaining planned dental procedures (an additional benefit since the patient can take them home and review).

Sincerely ask whether the patient understands what has been said and whether there are any questions.

Patients who use sign language and have an interpreter:

Talk directly to the patient, not to the interpreter.

Treating the Hearing-Impaired Patient continued

Speak slowly and clearly, using body language and facial expressions (which form part of sign language).

Interpreters:

An interpreter can greatly increase the patient's ability to fully and accurately understand and the doctor's ability to explain treatment to be rendered, including obtaining informed consent.

The Americans with Disabilities Act states that dentists have a legal duty to provide effective communication, using auxiliary aids and services (including interpreters), as necessary, to ensure that communication with hearing-impaired people is as effective as communication with others (unless doing so would cause an undue burden). The law does not require that an interpreter be retained for all such patients or for all of their visits. An individualized approach needs to be taken to assess a particular patient's communication needs and the complexity of the communication in question.

The dentist is not required to use an interpreter of the patient's choice. In fact, the law is interpreted as advising against using family members as interpreters for reasons including potential conflicts and confidentiality. If an interpreter is deemed necessary, the dentist must retain and reimburse the interpreter for his or her services. The cost of the interpreter is not to be charged to the patient requiring assistance. The law mandates that the cost be borne by the dentist, effectively shared by all patients in the practice.

If a dentist contends that the cost of the interpreter constitutes an "undue burden", the burden must be demonstrated relative to the practice's overall financial ability to pay (and the dentist must still furnish an alternative auxiliary aid or services that would not result in an undue burden). The Americans with Disabilities Act provides for a tax credit of 50 percent of the cost of interpreter services from \$250 to \$10,250 expended in a given year.

For more information, please contact the ADA website at <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm> .

References:

1. Sfikas, P. Serving the hearing-impaired. JADA May 2001, Vol. 132: 681-3.
2. Sfikas, P. Treating Hearing-impaired people. JADA Jan 2000, Vol. 131: 108-110.
3. Alsmark SSB, Garcia JN, Martinez MRM, Lopez NEG. How to improve communication with deaf children in the dental clinic. Med Oral Patol Oral Cir Bucal Dec 1:12(8):E576-81.



Would You Like To Save Money on Dental Supplies?

Doral Dental Savings Group is a value-added program designed for Doral Dental providers! The Savings Group will save you both time and money when ordering your dental supplies through Dental Health Products, Inc.

There is no membership fee and since you are already a contracted provider, you are able to start saving money on the supplies you already use in your practice! In fact, you are eligible for a discount on your very first order! Your supplies are shipped same day from a central Midwest location with delivery scheduled within 2-3

Evidence-Based Dentistry - What is it?

The American Dental Association (ADA) defines Evidence-Based Dentistry (EBD) as:

"...an approach to oral health care that requires the judicious integration of systematic assessments of clinically relevant scientific evidence, relating to the patient's oral and medical condition and history, with the dentist's clinical expertise and the patient's treatment needs and preferences." Three aspects – scientific evidence, clinical expertise, and patient needs and preferences – are the necessary components in any clinical decision as none alone are sufficient to ensure optimal oral health outcomes. Further, it is the ADA's position that EBD is not "cookbook" dentistry, a rigid methodological evaluation of scientific evidence that dictates what practitioners should or should not do, or a cost containment tool promulgated by third-party payers.

We support the ADA's definitions of what EBD is and what EBD is not. Our mission is to improve the oral health of the residents in the regions we serve. EBD is one of many approaches that collectively move us toward that goal.

As a service to you and your staff, we hope to share information regarding current issues in EBD and helpful resources in future

business days to most of the United States via UPS or FedEx.

To place an introductory order or request a no-obligation quote on the products frequently used in your office, please contact your Account Manager at 1.866.210.4635 or order online at www.doraldentalgroup.com.

Doral Dental Savings Group thanks you for working to improve the oral health of your community. We look forward to servicing your dental supply needs.

issues of the *Digest*. As always, we welcome your questions and feedback.

For additional resources on EBD:

American Dental Association

<http://www.ada.org/prof/resources/topics/evidencebased.asp>

Center for Evidence-Based Dentistry

<http://www.ihs.ox.ac.uk/cebd/>

Center for Evidence-Based Medicine

<http://www.cebm.utoronto.ca/>

Need Assistance?

Help Is Just a Click or Call Away!

As a reminder, you can receive 24 hour service 7 days a week by using www.doralusa.com to check member eligibility, history, submit claims, authorizations and many other features. Should you need other assistance, or wish to use our interactive voice response system, please contact us at the toll free number in your Office Reference Manual. As always, thank you for working in partnership with us by providing services to the members we serve.

Medical Necessity

Medicaid only pays for services it considers to be medically necessary for diagnosing and treating a dental condition. What a dental professional considers medically necessary from a clinical perspective may not match what Medicaid considers medically necessary from a reimbursement perspective. It is important that the dentist is aware of the difference. The fact that a dentist prescribes treatment does not make it a compensable benefit under Medicaid.

To prove medical necessity for any dental service, whether required for prior authorization or for retrospective/prepayment review, the following documentation should be available and present in the patient record:

1. Diagnostic dental x-rays should be labeled right or left and the date x-rays were taken (including duplicates).
2. Patient complaints, symptoms, clinical observations, assessments and x-ray findings should be documented in the patient's record.

Documentation of Referrals to Specialists: An effective Risk Management Tool

The purposes of risk management are to avoid or reduce loss of resources and to minimize the effects of loss through planning, organization and administration. Management of risk liability seeks to minimize loss through the implementation of preventive measures. A major preventive measure used to avoid loss is adequate record keeping. To that end, the following briefly reviews a system of documentation to use when referring a patient to another dentist for consultation/follow-up:

- When referring, **document the referral** (including the date and name of the dentist referred to and the reason for the referral) in the progress notes or in an area of the chart designated for referrals.
- **Continue to track and document the status of the referral** in the patient's chart, noting whether the patient has acted on

3. The dental professional signature or initials should accompany all patient treatment note entries.

4. All referrals should include the name of the referred provider, date, reason for the referral and the referring dentist's name.

5. All treatment provided must be written legibly in the patient record. If it is not legible, it may not be compensable by Doral. Bill for services actually provided. In addition, space maintainers, crowns, dentures and bridges should be billed on the day they are delivered versus the date the impression was taken. If billed services do not have adequate support documentation, Doral will recover payment from a future remittance.

Complete documentation in the patient record should be part of good risk management program to ensure appropriate treatment and continuation of care. General Rule: Document. Document. Document.

the referral (sees the dentist) or has refused to do so.

- If the patient has acted on the referral, **document/file all communications from the referred dentist in consecutive order** in a designated section of the chart.
- If the patient has not acted on the referral, **document your continued emphasis** on the importance of seeing the recommended dentist and the patient's response to such.

Referrals to specialists are a normal part of the process to manage patient treatment. Following the risk management principle of adequate record keeping helps to avoid loss while improving quality of care. Patients needing to be treated by a specialist may call the customer service number on their ID card for assistance.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Doral Customer Service

800.341.8478

- Press 1 for Automated Eligibility (via IVR System)
- Press 2 for Benefits, Eligibility, and History
- Press 3 for Claims and Payment Questions
- Press 7 for Provider Web Questions

Doral Authorizations

800.294.9650

Via Email

Electronic Technical Support • eclaims@doralusa.com

Claims Payment Questions • denclaims@doralusa.com

Eligibility or Benefit Question • denelig.benefits@doralusa.com

Authorizations • ddusa_um@doralusa.com

Provider Access to Web Portal & Other Features

www.doralusa.com/Providers.aspx

www.doralusa.com