

SPECIAL EDITION



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REMINDER: CHECK YOUR PATIENT'S ID CARD FOR ALTERNATE IDs

Due to the privacy and security of members with dental benefits, many groups are requesting alternate ID numbers for their employees. Any changes will be identified on the member's ID card.

Remember to always check your patient's ID card to confirm the alternate ID and other relevant information.

A BRAND NEW LOOK

You may have noticed the new, revitalized look of this newsletter. As we incorporate Delta Dental Plans Association's (DDPA) new national brand guidelines through the year, you'll start seeing some graphic design updates to our letterhead, Web site and more.

DDPA has revitalized the brand to develop a stronger national identity with all the Delta Dental state plans. These updates will not affect our products, benefits and services.

As part of this enhancement, our visual identity is revitalized with a new logo, new colors and other graphic changes. This includes updating our organization name and network names to reinforce the Delta Dental brand:



Current Name	Updated Name
Delta Dental Plan of Minnesota	Delta Dental of Minnesota
DeltaPremier and DeltaPremier USA	Delta Dental Premier
DeltaPreferred Option and DeltaPreferred Option USA	Delta Dental PPO

As we begin incorporating these updates, we'll use the old names alongside the updated names to ensure a smooth transition. We'll also keep dental offices posted as updates are phased in. Please feel free to contact our professional services representative if you have any questions or concerns.

DELTA DENTAL SPONSORS SYMPOSIUM AND PRESENTS STUDY FINDINGS

Leading Research Experts at Symposium

Delta Dental of Minnesota sponsored "The Latest in Understanding the Dental-Medical Connection" business symposium at the 35th Annual American Association of Dental Research Conference, held on March 9, in Orlando, Florida.

The symposium brought together leading research experts from across the United States to present the current status of research on the relationship between oral disease and major medical conditions, such as cardiovascular disease, stroke, respiratory illness, diabetes and pregnancy.

"Delta Dental of Minnesota is pleased to be at the forefront of cutting-edge research, and how it affects our mission to provide members with top quality dental benefit plans," said **Dr. Sheila Riggs**, Delta Dental of Minnesota president and CEO.

Delta Dental Presents Study Findings

In fact, Delta Dental of Minnesota recently completed a study regarding the trends and costs comparisons associated with treating a severely damaged or lost tooth and presented its findings at the symposium.

The study revealed the average initial cost of implants with crowns and associated procedures was the most expensive (\$3,255), followed by three-unit bridges and associated procedures (\$2,410), and root canals with crowns and associated procedures (\$1,591). The study also uncovered a significant increase in the utilization of implants with crowns, a significant decrease in the utilization of three-unit bridges, and no significant change in the utilization of root canals with crowns.

"It is our understanding that this research is the first to explore these important issues," said **Dr. Richard Hastreiter**, co-author of the study. "Because dental implants are a hot topic in dentistry today, these results generated significant interest from dentists and industry analysts when we recently presented our findings at the conference. This kind of information simply hasn't been previously available."

Dr. Richard Hastreiter, dental director and vice president of oral health analytics at Delta Dental and **Dr. Peilei Jiang**, director of oral health analytics at Delta Dental, completed the study by utilizing data from dental claims submitted by Minnesota dentists for services provided to commercially insured patients from 1997 through 2004.

NATIONAL PROVIDER IDENTIFIER - PREPARE NOW FOR 2007 REQUIREMENTS

It's time to apply for your NPI – the National Provider Identifier required by federal HIPAA regulations. HIPAA requires that all health care providers apply for a unique identifying number, which must be used on all claims (paper and electronic) in Minnesota starting May 23, 2007.

The NPI is a random ten-digit number that never expires. It contains no inherent information about the provider, such as state of residence or license number.

NPIs are administered by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), which has contracted with the National Plan and Provider Enumeration System (NPPES). You must complete an application through the NPPES to obtain your NPI.

The NPI will replace other identification numbers currently used in claim transactions, such as the Medicaid, Blue Cross and Blue Shield, UPIN, CHAMPUS and certain other "legacy" numbers.

The NPI will not replace the Social Security number, DEA number, Taxpayer ID number, taxonomy number, or state license number, since these are used for purposes other than general identification. Your Taxpayer ID number (or Social Security Number) will still be required for 1099 purposes.

Applying for your NPI is simple and free. You apply once, and your NPI is permanently assigned for your lifetime. Two types of NPIs are available:

1. Type 1 – Individual NPI

Individual providers must apply for an NPI. Sole practitioners who are incorporated should only apply for a Type 1 NPI.

2. Type 2 – Organizational NPI

An organization (such as a clinic) may apply for its own NPI.

You may apply for your NPI either:

- **Online:** Complete a web application at <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov> and submit it electronically.
- **On Paper:** Print an Adobe Acrobat (PDF) version of the form at http://www.cms.hhs.gov/cms_forms/downloads/cms10114.pdf and mail it to the address provided. You may also call NPPES to have an application sent to you at **1-800-465-3203**.

After you receive your NPI, you must furnish any updates to the NPPES. If any of the data you submitted on your application changes, notify the NPPES within 30 days of the change.

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STAR OF THE NORTH MEETING

This year's Star of the North Meeting will be held at the St. Paul RiverCentre April 29 through May 1. Delta Dental of Minnesota will again have representatives available throughout the three-day event at the Delta Dental booth. Please feel free to stop by with any questions or just meet and put a face with the people you have worked with over the years.

Have you received your National Provider Identifier (NPI)? A special gift awaits you if you provide a copy of your NPI to a representative at the Delta Dental Booth.

We look forward to seeing you.

NATIONAL PROVIDER IDENTIFIER - PREPARE NOW FOR 2007 REQUIREMENTS (CONTINUED)

You may receive notices about the NPI from other health and dental plans, but your unique NPI will be used universally with all plans. Remember to notify each health or dental plan of your NPI, but you only need to notify one Delta Dental of your NPI, and it will be shared with all other Delta Dental plans across the country.

In preparation for future claim use in 2007, Delta Dental will be collecting your NPI in advance. Your NPI can be submitted on credentialing or re-credentialing forms, by letter or fax. You can also bring your NPI in person to our booth at the Star of the North meeting. We are collecting NPI so we will be ready to accept them on claims in the future.

However, please don't submit your NPI on claims until notified by Delta Dental. Although other claim payors and clearinghouses may request that you start using your NPI, we ask that you



postpone using your NPI on claims until we notify you.

For more information, visit our Web page containing Frequently Asked Questions about the NPI, which contains links to other online resources, including a short tutorial. You can find it at http://www.deltadentalmn.org/content/den_npi_faq.asp.

START PREPARING NOW:

- Apply for your NPI soon
- Investigate whether your practice management software is NPI-ready
- If you submit electronic claims, ask your clearinghouse about NPI preparations

MORE INFORMATION TO COME: Watch for more updates about the NPI in future issues of Special Edition. There is no need to use the NPI on DDMN claims until we ask you to do so.

PRACTICE RELOCATING? IT'S CRITICAL TO LET US KNOW

As a participating dentist, it is important for you to inform Delta Dental of changes to your practice locations. This information is vital for accurate claims processing and payment. Please notify Delta Dental whenever there is a change in:

- **Location** - A dentist adds, changes or ends a location
- **Name** - Clinic name or dentist's name change
- **Tax Identification Number** - Complete and submit a W9 form along with a letter confirming the date of the change and confirmation that the fees currently on file will be used. If new fees are to be added, it will be necessary to complete a Confidential Fee Schedule.

Submit Changes in Writing to:

**Delta Dental of Minnesota
Provider File
P.O. 9304
Minneapolis, MN 55440-9304**

**Changes can also be faxed to
1-866-286-8840
Attention: Provider File**

DELTA DENTAL OF MINNESOTA ANNUAL WORKSHOP ON OCTOBER 6

As in years past, this year Delta Dental of Minnesota will host a workshop for dental office administrators, dentists and dental personnel. The workshop will be held October 6. "Are You On The Cutting Edge?" is the overarching theme for this year's workshop. Look for more information in the workshop brochure and invitation, which will be mailed to all participating dentists and dental practices in the second quarter of this year. Make sure you respond early to the invitation, as space will be limited.

PROVIDER TAX NOTICE

In 1994, the Minnesota legislature enacted a two percent tax to help fund MinnesotaCare. The law requires dentists and doctors to pay a two percent tax on their gross receipts, but they are allowed to "pass-through" the tax and collect it from insurance companies and third-party payors. Delta Dental includes the two percent tax in its allowed reimbursement. Consequently, the consumer pays the tax through their insurance plan, employer funding and patient paid responsibilities.

To clear up confusion, Delta Dental will now include a statement about the provider tax on forms to providers and patients.

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR MANUAL

Watch for updated information that will be coming related to the Office Administrator Manual.

By September 1, 2006, Delta Dental of Minnesota will reflect this information on paper Minnesota remittance forms to providers and corresponding explanation of benefit forms to patients. Delta Dental's new notice will say: "Any amount allowed or paid on the claims below includes the 2% Minnesota Health Care Tax when the dental care was delivered in Minnesota."

DELTA DENTAL OF MINNESOTA PARTNERS WITH HEAD START FOR THIRD SUCCESSIVE YEAR ON GRASSROOTS, STATEWIDE ORAL HEALTH EDUCATION CAMPAIGN FOR KIDS

To help educate Minnesota's children on tooth decay and proper oral health habits, Delta Dental of Minnesota is partnering for the third consecutive year with Minnesota's Head Start Oral Health Risk Assessment program, a grass-roots effort to raise awareness on the importance of oral health and oral disease prevention. Delta Dental has donated more than \$250,000 to the Head Start program over the past three years, since 2004.

The Oral Health Risks Assessment program, which is in its third year, provides training for existing Head Start Home Health Visitors to identify oral disease at an early stage, and educate families on the importance of maintaining oral health and preventing oral disease. In its first two years, the program reached more than 30,000 families.

"Early intervention in children is absolutely critical to helping them maintain good oral health," said Ann Johnson, director of community affairs for Delta Dental. "The key with any educational effort is to make an impact. This grass-roots effort allows us to get into the homes of thousands of Minnesota families and do one-on-one oral health awareness with parents. We are pleased the program has been such a tremendous success."

"The training is an optimal strategy for addressing oral health issues. Children are now being seen by home visitors who are trained to identify oral health issues before they develop into something more significant," said Gayle Kelly, executive director of the Minnesota Head Start Association. "Families are learning the true value of oral health prevention and are much more aware of oral health issues. We are also seeing children in Head Start visiting the dentist at a much earlier age, which allows dentists to recognize decay and other oral health issues before they develop into something more extreme. We can directly attribute the earlier dental visits to the substantive oral health training and outreach."

"We are truly grateful for the financial support that Delta Dental has provided," said Kelly. "Their generous support is helping us spread the message to Head Start families and the greater Head Start community about the importance of good oral health."

The Oral Health Risk Assessment program was funded as part of Delta Dental's overall oral health education, community outreach and philanthropic program, which is focused primarily in the area of oral health education and prevention.

Special Edition is published for participating dentists. Article ideas and questions from readers are welcome. **Publisher:** Delta Dental of Minnesota. **Send questions or comments to:** Heather Hofmeister, Editor, Public Affairs, Delta Dental of Minnesota, 3560 Delta Dental Drive, Eagan, MN 55122, E-mail: hhofmeister@deltadentalmn.org.

DDMN.008.05

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