



Volume 2, Issue 10
August 6, 2009

Coalition News

Legislative Day Reflections

- Eric Heisser, MOHC Mentorship Program Student

I was both honored and excited to receive an invitation to participate in Legislative Action Day a few weeks ago, but I must admit that I was a little intimidated at the thought of speaking face to face with senators and representatives. I felt like I might not be educated enough on the statistics of the situation, or of high enough status for my opinion to matter to them. However, having experienced Dental Public Health first-hand this summer, I knew that the needy adult population in this state and the clinics who serve them NEED dental Medicaid coverage. As an aspiring dentist with a sense of duty towards the underserved I realized that if myself, and other likeminded individuals didn't involve ourselves on the frontlines for the return of adult dental Medicaid, then no one would!

The evening before the big day I reviewed the "Talking Points and became more knowledgeable on the statistical severity of the situation. I realized that even though I am not a veteran in the field I had several personal experiences to share, and a very different point of view to bring to the table as a pre-dental student. My earlier feelings resolved to those of preparedness and an eagerness to bring what I had to the ears of the Legislature! **To continue to read Eric's reflection, please click [here](#).**

Moving Michigan in Oral Health Care Access for Patients with Special Needs

- Jill Moore, Oral Health Coordinator, MDCH

The Special Care Dentistry Conference held July 22, 2009 had such a positive impact across Michigan that oral health professionals have expressed their interest in doing the project again! The live webinar course was offered as a three-

hour webcast shown in multiple locations across Michigan. In partnership with the state of New York, the web cast included topics on treating patients with developmental disabilities, Legal and Ethical Issues and Autism. The [course](#) was recorded and will be stored for one year online free of charge. To read the complete article please click [here](#).

Become a Fan of MOHC on Facebook!

In addition to updating the MOHC website, we have also joined the ranks of social networking via Facebook!

- Get behind the scenes photos and videos
- Information on upcoming events
- Help us grow the MOHC

You will find our Facebook Page [here](#). You can also connect to our Facebook Page by logging on to www.mohc.org

2009 Member Survey; Your Opinion Counts!

The new program year is off to an exciting, and challenging start as we continue to advocate for the adult dental benefit and look to implement the new State Oral Health Plan. On behalf of the Coalition, we encourage you to complete the [2009 Member Survey](#). All responses will remain confidential and be used by our Board of Directors to set goals for the next two years. Please complete the survey by August 14, 2009. As an added bonus, all survey participants will be entered into a \$25 gift card prize drawing. If you have any questions, please contact Karlene Ketola, executive director at (517) 381-8000, Ext. 218. Thank you very much for your participation. And remember, your opinion counts!

Abuse and Neglect Prevention Project Committee Update

The first phase of the Abuse and Neglect Prevention Project Committee is wrapping up quickly! Thank you to Chris Farrell, Chair, Lynn Bozyk, Leah Krause, Teresa Spitzer, Tammy Lemmer, and Marita Inglehart. Through a Verizon Wireless grant received last fall, the committee has been able to develop three brochures. The brochures will teach oral health providers how to recognize signs of abuse and neglect in children, domestic partners, and the elderly population. Student Coordinator Becca Van Tassel has been the staff facilitator on the project and reports that the brochures will soon go to print. "I am very grateful to work with a committee that has acted with incredible diligence and dedication. Thank you for your hard work!," shared Becca. The Project Committee will meet on Aug. 11 to discuss outreach and the group's future direction. If you are

interested in learning more about this project, please contact [Karlene Ketola](#), executive director at (517) 381-8000, Ext. 218.

New Program Year Kicks Off

Membership renewals still in progress!

The membership renewal process is well underway for the Coalition. The Coalition is happy to give members new options to renew their membership! As always, you may pay your dues by fax or mail. New for 2009! We are making an online option available. Visit www.mohc.org and click on the "MOHC Online" button in the lower right hand corner. As we look ahead to our new program year, we hope you will continue your involvement in the Coalition. It will be an exciting, and challenging year as we fight to reinstate the adult dental benefit and begin to implement the new State Oral Health Plan. If you have any questions about your membership, contact [Karlene Ketola](#).

State News

Grand Rapids Press Features

Impact of Medicaid Adult Dental Cut

Disabled and unable to work, Laurel Gruchow waited Wednesday at Ferguson Dental Center for a decision about whether she would have to pay to have several damaged teeth removed to ward off infection. If she somehow managed to catch a break, she wondered how she would afford about \$1,300 for the dentures she would need. Adult dental coverage is optional under Medicaid, and many states -- including Michigan as of July 1 -- have yanked such programs to plug budget deficits. Vision, chiropractic and podiatry services also got the ax in Gov. Jennifer Granholm's executive order.

Gruchow, 51, and her longtime partner, Tony Mendoza, who accompanied her to the dentist, are among 585,000 beneficiaries 21 or older who now have to pay for dental, vision and other services. The state has 1.6 million people enrolled in Medicaid. Dropping some coverage for those 21 and older will save the state \$2.1 million this quarter and an estimated \$7.1 million in 2010, with more than \$5 million coming from dental services. But some health professionals say taxpayers will pay more in the long run as people head to emergency rooms for oral health problems. That's what happened when services were cut in 2003, they said. The benefits were restored in 2005. [See complete article.](#) **Source:** Monica Scott, The Grand Rapids Press, July 31, 2009

Treating Patients with Special Needs; Resource Guide Now Available

The State's Oral Health Program has created a resource guide of dental professionals within the State of Michigan whom are willing to treat patients with special needs in their offices. These are providers who responded that they would like to be in a reference guide through a survey that the Michigan Oral Health Coalition and the Michigan Department of Community Health ran earlier this year. Funding for the guide and survey is supported by a HRSA Workforce Grant. To view the complete guide, click [here](#).

MDCH Hosts Dental Billing 101 Training August 10 in Southfield

The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) will be offering a morning (9 a.m. to 12 p.m.) and afternoon (1 to 4 p.m.) dental billing sessions on Monday, Aug. 10 in Southfield. These sessions will cover top dental billing errors, resources available to dental providers, and demonstrations on the claims, prior authorization, and member eligibility subsystems in CHAMPS. Seating is limited and there is no fee to attend. [Register here](#).

September 18 Fast Approaching; MDCH Transitions to CHAMPS

The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) continues to make progress in the transition to the new claims processing system called the Community Health Automated Medicaid Processing System (CHAMPS). One of the first implementation activities is migrating all existing suspended claims within the current legacy system into CHAMPS. To accomplish this, a phased approach will be used to reject these claims in the legacy system and later resurrect them in CHAMPS. Providers will be able to track all claims that will be migrated in this manner by accessing their current Remittance Advice. For more information and a timeline, please click [here](#).

Michigan State Loan Repayment Program News

The Michigan State Loan Repayment Program (MSLRP) provides loan repayment assistance to medical, dental and mental health care providers who enter into MSLRP service obligations. These service obligations require participants to provide full-time, primary health care services at an eligible, non-profit practice site, located in a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) for a period of two to four years. Application forms are available on the MSLRP [website](#). For

more information, contact Ken Miller at (517) 241-9946.

Economic Hard Times and State Budget Cuts

Hit Child Well-Being in Michigan

Michigan ranked 27th among the states in a recent [Kids Count](#) report on child well-being. Rapidly rising poverty and unemployment were the most troubling trends in the report, but the state performed well in reducing the rates of teen deaths and high school dropouts.

Michigan's worst ranking (41) was for the percent of children living in families where no parent has full-time, year-round employment. In Michigan in 2007, 36 percent of children lived in those families, compared with 33 percent nationally. The state ranked No. 34 for the percent of children living in poverty (income below about \$21,000 for two adults and two children in 2007). Nearly one out of every five of Michigan's 2.4 million children lived in poverty in 2007. That rate has jumped by 36 percent since 2000. For the national report, [click here](#). For more information on Michigan, [click here](#).

National News

FDA Issues Final Regulation on Dental Amalgam

Last week, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued a final regulation classifying dental amalgam and its component parts – elemental mercury and a powder alloy—used in dental fillings. While elemental mercury has been associated with adverse health effects at high exposures, the levels released by dental amalgam fillings are not high enough to cause harm in patients.

The regulation classifies dental amalgam into Class II (moderate risk). By classifying a device into Class II, the FDA can impose special controls (in addition to general controls such as good manufacturing practices that apply to all medical devices regardless of risk) to provide reasonable assurance of the safety and effectiveness of the device. [See complete release](#).

November 1, 2009 New Deadline for FTC Red Flags Rule

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) [announced they are further delaying](#) enforcement of the Red Flags Rule until

November 1, 2009. The intent of the delay is to enable businesses to gain a better understanding of the Rule and any obligations they may have under it. The FTC is creating a special link on the [Red Flags Rule website](#) for small and low-risk entities with materials that will provide guidance and direction regarding the Rule. In addition, federal legislation has been introduced (House Resolution 2345) that would exclude health care practices with 20 or fewer employees.

Source: American Dental Association

CMS Website Lists Dentists Participating in Medicaid, CHIP

On Tuesday, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) posted a list of Children's Health Insurance Program and Medicaid participating dentists on the Insure Kids Now website at www.insurekidsnow.gov. This information is one requirement of the new Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act (CHIPRA) and is being coordinated by CMS and the Health Resources and Services Administration with the cooperation and participation of the State Medicaid and CHIP programs.

AAPD Releases New Perinatal and Infant Oral Health Guidelines

This summer, the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) [announced](#) new oral health guidelines, which call for all pregnant women to receive oral healthcare and counseling during pregnancy and infants to receive an oral health risk assessment and some form of oral care by their first birthday. These new guidelines were made with the intentions of contributing to optimal oral health for both mother and baby. Periodontal disease is associated with increased risk of preterm birth and low-birth weight, and significant differences exist between those treated for periodontal disease and those who were not treated, so incorporation of periodontal care may improve pregnancy outcomes.

Many women, and mothers, are unaware of health implications caused by poor oral health, which affect both mother and child, and these women often do not look for oral care during and after pregnancy. In addition to threatening pregnancy outcomes, women with poor oral health may increase the risk of infecting their children with oral bacteria. The AAPD guidelines also address oral care for infants and toddlers in addition to addressing oral care for expectant mothers. Simple changes in the mother's oral hygiene can ensure not only the future of their own health, but the future of health of their children.

Kaiser Foundation Reports Public Still Supportive of Health Care Reform

While Congress works through specific health reform proposals, the July Kaiser Health Tracking Poll finds a majority of the public remains supportive of taking action on health reform now, though there is some softening of support as criticisms and doubts seem to be registering.

As has been the case over the past ten months, a majority of the American people (56%) continue to believe that health reform is more important than ever despite the country's economic problems, and the public believes by a two to one margin (51% versus 23%) that the country will be better rather than worse off if Congress and the president enact health reform. More Americans think they and their family will be better off (39%) than worse off (21%) if legislation passes, with roughly a third (32%) believing it will make no difference for them or their family. [See complete release.](#)