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The mission of the Pennsylvania Dental Journal is to serve PDA members by providing information about topics and issues that affect dentists practicing in Pennsylvania. The Journal also will report membership-related activities of the leadership of the association, proceedings of the House of Delegates at the annual session and status of PDA programs.

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By Amber Wickard, Communications Coordinator

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By Amber Wickard, Communications Coordinator
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I have heard of other patients traveling to Costa Rica, Thailand or Mexico. Patient’s testimonials often reflect happy patients with few complications. Only a few cases have been reported online or in the newspapers. Typically only the problem cases are newsworthy. Most patients are lured by extremely low cost when compared with similar procedures in the United States.

Last year I was touring with my family in Italy. We hired a guide for a full day in Florence. Bill, our guide, was from Maine, but moved nearly 25 years ago to Italy and never left. When he first started talking, I heard a strange clicking noise. I didn’t know what it was at first. The more he spoke the more he clicked. Eventually it occurred to me that the noise came from his dentures. Of course I didn’t say anything. As we left the hotel to walk to our first stop, he asked what I did for a living. I told him I was a dentist. He immediately smiled from ear to ear and said, “What do you think about these teeth?” He had just come back from Budapest with a new set of dentures. I said that they looked nice. He was so happy with them and the cost, about $200 for upper and lower dentures. Clearly he had no idea of what a good fit should be.

As costs rise in the U.S. for dental services, patients are opting for lower cost alternatives. Bridges that cost $5,000 in the U.S. can cost $1,500 in Costa Rica. With the treatment also comes a resort style vacation. Beaches, swimming pools, resorts, what could be better? Dental implants with crowns can cost as little as $1,800 in Mazatlan, Mexico.

Are we pricing ourselves out of business? Possibly. American businesses can’t compete with businesses in other counties. Expenses like rent, staff, utilities and insurance, as well as goods and supplies are simply too high when compared with countries like Mexico, Costa Rica or the Czech Republic. So, from a pure cost standpoint we can’t compete. Since we are a society of cost conscious individuals, we can easily be steered toward cheaper alternatives. We all do it anyway. Do you buy the most expensive T.V. or car? Probably not.

We all look for a good deal when we can. We shop for affordable health care plans and our patients shop for cheaper dentists all the time. But we are still a nation of domestic pride. “Made in the USA” may be more expensive, but is better than made elsewhere. When it comes to health care we still feel that the U.S. is superior to other countries. Most people are still afraid to travel abroad for dental services. While we are safe now, it could change rapidly. As costs continue to rise and more satisfied patients return from overseas with good outcomes from treatment, we may begin to see a migration in dental care like we have seen with manufacturing.

Some patients will get substandard care outside the U.S. and not even notice the difference, while others will get normal dental care within our boarders from a reputable dentist and complain about the treatment outcome. That would be “cognitive dissonance” and bad luck for the U.S. dentist.

Since most dental vacation patients are satisfied with their treatment outside U.S. it may be hard for U.S. dentists to claim superiority much longer. We have long held to the argument that our level of dental care is superior to elsewhere around the world, especially when compared to developing countries. Images of sidewalk sales of dentures in Thailand make our delivery of care seem light years ahead. But, the reality is that great dental care is not as much a function of where it is performed as who performs it. A caring, conscientious, educated dentist can be from Harrisburg, Pa., or from San Juan, Costa Rica.

—BRT
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We are expecting more than 100 members, spouses and dental students in attendance for PDA’s annual Day on the Hill on June 5 to talk to lawmakers about PDA’s advocacy goals. It is a crucial time for PDA as the two-year legislative session winds down. Once the budget passes at the end of June and the legislature adjourns for the summer, there are only a few short months in the fall to pass our bills. Naturally, lawmakers’ attention will be divided between the elections and the business at hand and, as voting constituents, we must continue to raise awareness of our issues and make clear our goals.

If you do not have the chance to attend Day on the Hill, remember to visit your legislators during Legislative Checkup Week, scheduled for September 10-14. They will be in your hometowns that week and it will be your last chance to meet with them before they return to Harrisburg to finish the legislative session. Why not have them return to the Capitol with PDA’s issues fresh on their minds? For more information about Legislative Checkup Week, log on to PDA’s website at www.pidental.org and check out the Advocacy section. Or contact Marisa Swarney at (800) 223-0016 or mss@padental.org.

Mid-Year Assessment

Non-Covered Services Legislation (SB 1144 & HB 1537)

In March, PDA was called to a meeting with staff representing several Senate leaders and lobbyists and representatives from Highmark, Delta Dental and the Insurance Federation. Senate staff explained that their bosses would like to pass non-covered services legislation for the dental community, but that they wanted a bill that all parties could agree to either support or stay neutral and not actively oppose.

The Senate staff asked PDA and the dental insurers to each accept a compromise that would entail amending the definition of “covered dental services” with some language asked for by the dental insurers, but not all the language requested, out of deference to PDA. The amended definition reads, “Dental services for which any reimbursement is available under an insured’s policy, regardless of whether the reimbursement is contractually limited by a deductible, copayment, coinsurance, waiting period, annual or lifetime maximum, frequency limitation or alternative benefit payment.”

In exchange for PDA accepting this definition, the dental insurers would accept not including “and any other limitation,” which essentially opens the door wide open for the insurers to exploit. If all parties agreed to this compromise, the Senate staff indicated that their bosses would vote SB 1144 out of the Banking and Insurance Committee to the Senate floor for a vote. Mr. Jeff Album, an executive at Delta Dental, indicated that not only would it stop opposing SB1144, Delta would actively support an amended bill in order to bring uniformity with other states’ definitions in non-covered services legislation.

PDA’s Board of Trustees carefully deliberated on whether to support such a compromise, understanding that not doing so would end any chance of passing non-covered services legislation through the General Assembly. Other factors taken into consideration were how other states with laws define “covered dental services” and the provisions in participating providers’ existing contracts, which read essentially the same as the Senate staff’s proposed amendment. Of the 26 states with non-covered services laws, 25 adopted definitions similar or the same to what PDA was asked to accept.

PDA is working to ensure that all parties understand the agreed upon definition of “alternative benefit payment,” as currently defined by Delta and other insurers. For example, if a patient is in need of a three unit bridge but the patient decides on an implant (a service not covered by the patient’s plan), the insurer would pay the provider the cost of the crown, which was the covered service. However, the dentist may balance bill the patient for the cost of the implant, up to the amount set by the insurer. Most insurers already allow for this and it is a commonly-used definition of “alternative benefit payment.”

With this assurance, the board ultimately decided to support the amendment so that the non-covered services bill has a chance to become law in Pennsylvania. In April, SB 1144 passed out of the Banking and Insurance Committee. In early May, the Senate passed SB 1144 with a vote of 46-0. SB 1144 is now assigned to the House Insurance Committee for a vote.

Insurance Coverage for General Anesthesia (HB 532)

In March, PDA learned that House Majority Mike Turzai followed through on his promise to do his part to pass HB 532, legislation requiring insurance companies to cover the associated costs of administering general anesthesia to children seven years of age and younger and special needs patients of any age. Rep. Turzai expressed his desire that HB 532 move out of committee to the House floor to Rep. Nicholas Miccuzie, chair of the House Insurance Committee.

Prior to the vote, then president Dr. Bill Spruill and then president-elect Dr. Bernie Dishler accompanied PDA’s lobbyists on visits to each committee member, requesting a “yes” vote on HB 532. Members who are constituents of committee members were asked to respond to PDA’s action alert and contact their legislators. PDA also involved other stakeholders supporting the bill so that lawmakers heard from other constituents outside of the
dental profession.

We thank all of you who took the time to advocate for HB 532. Your help is crucial to passing HB 532 through the legislature to the Governor for his signature.

Assessment of Benefits (HB 1536)

PDA is committed to passing assessment-of-benefits legislation, requiring insurers to assign benefits directly to non-participating providers. However, because there is legislative support and momentum for passing non-covered services this session, PDA’s lobbyists are advising against “asking for too much” at the same time. PDA will continue to educate lawmakers about the issue and will lobby Rep. Nicholas Micozzi, chair of the House Insurance Committee, to schedule a vote on HB 1536 after the General Assembly passes the non-covered services legislation through the General Assembly.

We need your help communicating the importance of HB 1536 to lawmakers, many of whom have taken the position that dentists should become part of a network if they want benefits assigned directly to them. It is our job to educate them about patient choice, and the pitfalls of never receiving payment for services rendered and how that impacts the financial stability of a dental practice. The fact that other states have laws that require assignment of benefits provides further disincentive for dentists to practice in Pennsylvania. Please take the time to meet with your legislator and discuss this issue. We expect heavy opposition from the insurance industry next session, so beginning the personal contact with lawmakers is an essential step for any chance of success.

Foreign-Trained Dental School Faculty (HB 2268)

Rep. Tony Payton (D-Philadelphia) introduced HB 2268, legislation that would change the licensure requirements for foreign-trained dentists teaching in the dental schools. Currently, it is often difficult for these dentists to comply with the requirement in Act 160 that they obtain a Pennsylvania license within four years of teaching at the dental school. At the request of the deans of Pennsylvania’s dental schools, HB 2268 would allow most foreign-trained dentists an unlimited renewal of their restricted teaching license until such time they obtained a regular Pennsylvania license.

PDA agrees with the dental school deans that the concept of allowing most foreign-trained dentists more time to obtain a Pennsylvania license (or to just maintain a restricted teaching license) will help recruit and retain qualified faculty, so long as consumer protections remain a priority. For example, PDA supports HB 2268 so long as the requirement is that dentists must have graduated from a CODA-approved program. PDA is working with the State Board of Dentistry
and other stakeholders to reach an agreement that maintains the integrity of licensure standards in Pennsylvania.

**Malpractice Insurance Mandate (SB 388)**

PDA continues to monitor Sen. Patricia Vance’s (R-Cumberland) legislation requiring most dentists to purchase malpractice insurance in order to hold an active license in Pennsylvania. Most licensees would have to maintain insurance in the minimum amount of one million dollars per occurrence or claim and three million dollars per annual aggregate. The State Board of Dentistry would accept the following forms of insurance:

- Personally purchased malpractice insurance.
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There is some question about how SB 388 would apply to dentists who maintain an active license but do not actively practice. PDA believes that the bill’s requirement to be “licensed and practicing” will allow the State Board of Dentistry to develop a mechanism in which dentists may attest they are not practicing and only have to purchase the insurance if and when they do decide to practice. PDA is working with legislators and staff to resolve this issue as SB 388 moves through the legislative process.
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PDA Personnel: Your Second Staff

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PDA prides itself in offering members excellent customer service through our staff. Some members don’t fully utilize the services and resources that PDA staff offer. For example, did you know the membership department can assist you with more than just dues payment? They are available to provide statistics and demographic information; provide support for events, meetings or continuing education programs within your district or local dental society; assist with finding you the right practice opportunity; give a one-on-one personal tutorial of how to log in and use the Social Network; help to make sure you’ve covered all the bases if you’ve personally or professionally moved to a new location; match you with a mentor who can help you get better acquainted with or introduce you to your colleagues; and provide a list or sheet of labels, based on your request, for your next big mailing.

The government relations department exists to provide updates on legislative activities; collect and monitor insurance contracts submitted to ADA’s legal department for review and analysis; help with hosting a local PADPAC fundraising event; refer to PDA counsel to answer your important legal questions; explain in clear language State Board of Dentistry regulations; and let’s not forget advocate every day on your behalf at the state Capitol!

The administrative department will help you with any continuing education questions you may have, including how to keep track of credits earned; issue and explain radiology certificates; refer patients through the Senior Dental Care Program; and direct patient inquiries appropriately.

Staff in the communications department can advise on proper ADA and PDA logo usage; provide library or NCDHM materials; assist with website navigation; coach you on an upcoming public speaking engagement; showcase your community efforts by promoting your pro-bono work; and feature your local meeting or social function in the main events calendar.

Let’s not forget about PDA’s for-profit business, PDAIS, which offers highly competitive insurance products on just about anything that could be insured for your home, auto and office, both personal and professional coverage, available for your family and staff, as well. If you don’t already have at least one insurance product from PDAIS, take the time to call (877) 732-4748 and get a quote from one of their helpful, knowledgeable representatives.

In addition to all of the in-house support PDA staff offers, any of the staff is ready and willing to travel to your next society meeting for a presentation or for a Q&A on association activities. No question is too big or too small, so please, next time you have a need for your PDA staff, don’t hesitate to pick up the phone and call (800) 223-0016. You won’t get the automated recording run-around; you’ll actually speak with a live person!

PDA personnel: yet another benefit of your membership.
Welcome New Members!

Following is a listing of members who have recently joined PDA, along with the dental schools from which they graduated and their hometowns.

Thomas K. Bachstein, DMD  
University of Pennsylvania ‘94  
Berwyn

Holly H. Do, DMD  
Temple University ‘11  
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Alyssa A. Donaldson, DMD  
University of Pennsylvania ‘11  
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Vanessa I. Matos, DDS  
University of Maryland ‘94  
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Alex H. Millan, DMD  
Temple University ‘11  
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Debbie M. Parnes, DMD, MS  
University of Pennsylvania ‘09  
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Jigna A. Patel, DDS  
New York University ‘08  
Lancaster

Kristen N. Sullivan, DMD  
Temple University ‘11  
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Priyanka Vaddi, DMD  
University of Pennsylvania ‘08  
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Rock your healthy smile, America!
Camryn Eveler, a third grader at Dallastown Elementary in Dallastown, won first place in this year’s poster contest with “Rock Your Smile, America,” depicting a young girl playing a toothbrush shaped guitar in front of the American flag.

ADA’s rambunctious sets of twins, Flossy and Buck McGrinn and Den and Gen Smiley, rocked their way into Pennsylvania classrooms to promote National Children’s Dental Health Month (NCDHM) this year. Complete with a keyboard, drum kit, guitars and a microphone, the twins formed their own garage band to sing a loud message to kids to get active, eat healthy and to “rock your smile.”

More than 3,000 schools received the PDA distributed lesson plan kits. The kits include instructions for engaging students in hands-on science experiments and interactive games. A classroom “Rock your Smile” poster was included in the kit along with educational activity sheets featuring the ADA characters.
Third-Grade Poster Contest

Also included in the lesson plan kit were instructions for entering the PDA-sponsored, third-grade poster contest. PDA annually awards $850 in monetary prizes to the students who design the top three posters. The winning poster is reproduced on bookmarks and distributed to public libraries across the state. PDA district chairs sent more than 60 posters to the Central Office for judging.

Camryn Eveler, a third-grader at Dallastown Elementary in Dallastown, won first place in this year’s poster contest. Her winning poster, “Rock Your Smile, America,” depicts a young girl playing a toothbrush shaped guitar on a stage in front of the American flag. Camryn will receive a check for $500. She will receive the check and her framed poster and bookmark during a school assembly later this year. Her teacher and school will each receive $250.

“Attack the Plaque: Be a Super Brusher,” is the theme of second-place winner, Gracie Ehresman’s poster. Gracie, a third-grader at Calvary Christian Academy in Huntingdon, drew a superhero tooth attacking a slimy green plaque monster. Gracie will receive a check for $250.

The third place-winner is Meghan DelPierre of Linglestown Elementary in Harrisburg. With the slogan, “You Don’t Have to Look in the Ocean to Find Your Pearly Whites,” Meghan drew a fish in the sea and a pearly white tooth inside a clamshell. Meghan will receive $100.

NCDHM Events

The success of our NCDHM efforts relies on our member dentists who reach out to children and their parents in our communities. District and local dental societies, dental offices, community organizations and elementary schools sponsored a wide variety of events and activities aimed at educating children about the importance of oral health.

“NCDHM is a great opportunity to educate children and their parents about the importance of dental health not only for good oral hygiene, but also for their overall health and well being,” said Dr. Stephanie Hanyon, NCDHM co-chair of the Scranton District Dental Society. The following are just a few examples of the many ways that PDA member dentists contributed to the 2012 NCDHM program.

Second District

• The Valley Forge Dental Association and the Montgomery Bucks Dental Society partnered with the Abington Police Athletic League to sponsor a free local teeth screening and sealant day for children on February 25.
• Dr. Richard Tanzilli II visited the St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Education Center for an oral health presentation to 25 students. Together, the children and Dr. Tanzilli read Dudley Visits the Dentist, learned proper brushing techniques and discussed orthodontics. Children received goodie bags containing a color-
ing book, bookmark, toothpaste and a toothbrush.

- Dr. Jennifer Udis and dental residents from Abington Memorial Hospital, Drs. Amy Farrell, Christie Chavez and Jonny Amazan, visited four kindergarten classes at McKinley Elementary. They taught the students about the importance of good oral health using puppets to illustrate the lesson. Children received a goodie bag containing a PDA bookmark, a coloring book, stickers, toothpaste and a toothbrush.

**Third District**

- The Scranton District Dental Society (SDDS) presented a silver, engraved tooth fairy box to the parents of the first baby born in February at the Moses Taylor Hospital. Dr. Jessica Falk made the presentation to the proud mother.
- Tooth Fairy Day was held at the Lackawanna County Children’s Library, sponsored by SDDS. The event was open to children of all ages and included a magic presentation by Dr. Brian Kerr, a visit from the Tooth Fairy, face painting and storytelling. Children received a free gift if they checked out at least three library items that day. More than 60 children were in attendance.
- SDDS hosted events at three local McDonald’s restaurants in February. Children were treated to a visit from costumed McDonald’s characters and a visit from the Tooth Fairy. Children went home with goodie bags filled with coupons and toothbrushes. Drs. Matt Zale, Jessica Falk, Stephanie Hanyon, Chris Kotchick, Kristin Paoli and Frederick Lally attended the McDonald’s events.
- SDDS members visited schools in Lackawanna County to give oral health presentations and to distribute goodie bags of oral health products. Nearly 6,000 bags were distributed during visits this year.

“NCDHM was a tremendous success for us in the greater Scranton area this year. We are very grateful for the wonderful response we received at all our events, school visitations and media coverage. We look forward to making next February an even larger success,” said Dr. Jessica Falk, SDDS NCDHM co-chair.

- The Luzerne County Dental Society (LCDS) held its annual NCDHM event at the Wyoming Valley Mall in Wilkes-Barre. Held on February 25, the free community event attracted more than 300 children. LCDS dentists, Drs. John Evans, Samantha Abod, Elizabeth Joseph and Ann McDonough provided complimentary exams. Dental hygiene students from Luzerne County Community College provided activities for children including a coloring contest, balloon and prize giveaways and photos with the Tooth Fairy. Children took home coupons and donations from local restaurants, dental companies and other

**National Children’s Dental Health Month Rocks Pennsylvania**

**Attending the SDDS Tunkhannock McDonald’s event were Dr. Matt Zale, Dr. Stephanie Hanyon, Tooth Fairy Lisa Reeves, Duckie, Ronald, Dr. Frederick Lally, and Dr. Chris Kotchick.**

**Meghan DelPierre, age 8 of Linglestown Elementary, Harrisburg, was our third place winner.**

**Patient Camryn Lehr gets a bright smile at the Dental Art Images GKAS Day in Cleona.**
The crew from Luzerne County Community College, headed by Dr. Jeanne Farrell, spent the day at the Luzerne County Dental Society NCDHM mall event.

Dr. Richard Tanzilli II visits a classroom at St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Education Center for an oral health presentation.

Dr. Jennifer Davis treats a patient during the Dental Art Images GKAS Day in Cleona.

Kids were treated to a Kids Zumba class at Dr. Stephanie Kobil’s NCDHM open house.

Dr. Jessica Falk speaks to an interested class at The Geneva School in Olyphant, PA.

The kids enjoy the coloring activities and prizes at the Luzerne County mall event.

A smiling young patient waits patiently by the healthy snack table at Dr. Stephanie Kobil’s NCDHM open house.

Two Pitt students pose for a picture during a cleaning.

Back row (l-r): Dr. Sharon Davis, Karen White, Megan from Henry Schein, Donna Byers from Henry Schein, Dr. Ali Manesh. Front row (l-r): Dr. Marsha Albright and Dr. MaryAnn Davis at the DSWP GKAS day.

A young boy smiles in the dental chair at the University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine GKAS day.

Dr. Brian Kerr does everyone’s favorite, “disappearing milk” trick with an unsuspecting victim at the Children’s Library in Scranton, PA.
local community organizations. “It seems as if this event gets bigger and better each year. I have been coordinating it for several years and enjoy seeing the happy looks on the kids (and parents) faces,” said Dr. John Evans, LCDS NCDHM chair.

• Dr. Joyce Perih sent oral health kits to schools in the Scranton area. The kits contained a teacher bag with lesson plans, a sports bag to raffle to the children, toothbrushes, toothpaste and letters to parents about the danger of sugary drinks.

• Daiphin Borer, hygienist for Dr. James Definnis, visited schools in Wilkes Barre to educate children about the importance of oral health. Each child in attendance was given a goodie bag filled with a toothbrush, floss and stickers.

• Dr. Frank Glushefski contributed an article on NCDHM and proper brushing techniques to Panorama Community Magazine.

Fifth District

• Dr. Robert Berstecher spoke to 240 third graders in the Eastern Lancaster County School District. His presentation included games using cardboard costume cutouts, how to decide between healthy and unhealthy snacks and a Dudley video. Children received goodie bags filled with a toothbrush, floss, NCDHM bookmark and a pamphlet on healthy snacks.

• The Alliance to the Lancaster County Dental Society packed dental health kits to distribute to local shelters, missions and homes. The ladies were assisted in packing the bags by Boy Scout Troop 99, Cub Scout Pack 93 and Girl Scout Troops 71049 and 70591. Through fundraising and donations, the group was able to donate more than 5,000 items including toothbrushes, toothpaste, floss and mouthwash. Alliance members, Margaret Phillips, Darlene Howard, Mindy Georgelis, Cherisse Feddock, Colleen Funk, Stephanie Grambau, Deb Eckhart, Brenda Coffin, Pam Berg, Melissa Voler and Beth Silvaggio and Dr. Sara Lamichane were in attendance.

• The York County Dental Society participated in the 26th Annual “Doctors with a Heart” event in February. Members provided in-office dental services including exams, cleanings, X-rays and fillings to both children and adults.

Sixth District

• Lori Smith, a hygienist from Dr. Robert Place’s office visited the Bradford County Library for story time. In addition to reading Dr. Seuss’ The Tooth Book and Bear’s Loose Tooth, she taught children about healthy foods and how to brush their teeth.
Seventh District

- Drs. Donald Oakman and Andrew Wilson gave oral health presentations to second graders in the Huntingdon Area School District.
- Dr. Donald Oakman presented a $25 check from the Huntingdon County Dental Society to third-grader Eric Itinger, the Huntingdon Area School District winner of the third-grade poster contest at Southside Elementary. A $10 check was presented to the second-place winner, Sydney Houck at Standing Stone Elementary.
- Dr. Nicole Oravec visited students at Gallitzin Head Start and Westmont Elementary to give an oral health presentation.

Ninth District

- Dr. Thomas Patton visited the pre-school and pre-kindergarten classes at Little Treasures Learning Center to give a presentation on oral health. Dr. Patton explained to the children that they will soon lose their baby teeth to make way for “big teeth” and stressed the importance of keeping their teeth healthy. Children received a goodie bag with a toothbrush, toothpaste and stickers.

Tenth District

- Dr. Stephanie Kobil closed her office on February 2 to hold a NCDHM open house. Preschool students and the public were invited to take a tour of the office and participate in a variety of oral health activities. There were activity stations for children including a story room, a video, arts and crafts, a good food/bad food demonstration and Kids Zumba. The local fire department was on hand to give children a look at the fire engines.

Children received healthy snacks and bottled water and went home with samples donated by dental vendors. More than 75 children and parents were in attendance.

Pitt Student Chapter of AAPD President, Courtney Walters, and Dr. R. Donald Hoffman (Faculty member SDM and Pennsylvania Dental Association Treasurer) pose for a picture with the GKAS day poster. Dr. Hoffman recommended to the FDA Board of Trustees that a grant of $1,000 be given to each of the three Pennsylvania dental schools to support their GKAS outreach activities.
In addition to National Children’s Dental Health Month, many PDA members chose to donate their time to Give Kids a Smile®, ADA’s national program which provides access to care to low-income families. Although GKAS is traditionally celebrated the first Friday in February, GKAS events occur throughout the year.
The Dental Society of Western PA (DSWP) held its GKAS days on February 1-4, at the Children’s Museum in Pittsburgh. As part of the Healthy Smiles Program hosted by the museum, DSWP provided dental screenings for pre-school children who visited the museum. Children were treated to a visit by the Tooth Fairy and received a backpack full of “goodies” to take home. Parents received advice about their children’s dental care along with handouts and information on local dental clinics, as needed. Drs. Linda Hamerski, Ali Manesh, Marsha Albright, Donald Stoner, Alex George and Mary Lee Conicella attended the event that was spearheaded by DSWP NCDHM co-chairs, Dr. MaryAnn Davis and Dr. Sharon Davis. Dental students from University of Pittsburgh also lent a hand to the event.

Also in Pittsburgh, the University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine hosted its 10th Annual GKAS day on February 3. The student driven event was coordinated by the student chapter of the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, the American Student Dental Association, pediatric dental residents, dental students and dental hygiene students and provided underserved children in the Pittsburgh area with a wide range of dental services. Sixty-eight patients had their teeth examined, cleaned and radiographed if necessary. Patients who required additional treatment returned on March 16 for the second GKAS day.

“For the past four years, we have expanded our services to two days of free dental care. Our first day we focus on preventative services and the second is geared toward dental restorations and more advanced care. Thanks to the efforts of Dr. R. Donald Hoffman, PDA treasurer and SDM faculty member, the PDA Foundation generously donated $1,000 to help fund GKAS day services. Through their support, we were able to provide over $7,700 in free dental care on the first day. The student chapter of the AAPD is proud to host this great event that has such a positive impact on the community, and we look forward to many more GKAS days in the future,” said Courtney Walter, Pitt student and AAPD student chapter president.

Drs. Jennifer Davis and Frederick Johnson of Cleona held their third annual GKAS day on February 25. After giving oral health screenings in their local school district, letters were sent home to children who had decay inviting them to attend the GKAS event. The event also was advertised on a local radio station, prompting listeners to call and schedule a free appointment for their children. If a child had a dental need that could not be addressed on the GKAS date, the treatment was scheduled for a later date at no charge to the parents.

“Thanks to the generosity of our dental team, we were able to provide more than $3,200 in dental services to area children in need,” said Dr. Jennifer Davis.
THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING

PDA would like to thank its members who generously supported this year’s NCDHM program. No matter how big or small, every contribution made a difference in the oral health of Pennsylvania’s children. It is through your continued efforts that care has become increasingly accessible to those in need.

We would like to thank the following individuals for volunteering as either district or local chairs during the 2012 NCDHM campaign. These positions are crucial to the program’s success.

Statewide Chair
Dr. Constance Wilson

District 1
Dr. Michael Koumaras

District 2
Dr. David Igleswicz
Montgomery Bucks Dental Society
Dr. Christine Landes

District 3
Dr. Jessica Guy
Hazleton Area Dental Society
Dr. John J. Brady
Luzerne County Dental Society
Dr. John Evans
Scranton Area District Dental Society
Drs. Stephanie Hanyon and Jessica Falk

District 4
Dr. Laura Snyder

District 5
Dr. Michael Wolter
Harrisburg Area Dental Society
Dr. Bruce Spivak
Cumberland Valley Dental Society
Dr. Michael Wolter

District 6
Dr. Constance Wilson
Valley Dental Society
Dr. Catherine Dailey

District 7
Dr. G. Matthew Kremser
Huntingdon County Dental Society
Dr. Donald Oakman

District 8
Dr. Jason Nedzinski

District 9
Dr. John Haudy
Crawford County Dental Society
Dr. Douglas Smith
Erie County Dental Society
Dr. Drew Carlin

District 10
Dr. Sharon Davis
Indiana County Dental Society
Dr. Brian Petras
Dental Society of Western PA
Dr. MaryAnn Davis


Penn Dental Medicine

Osteology Foundation

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Public Relations Update: Community Water Fluoridation

Over the past few months, we have seen an uptick in media interest about the topics of fluoride and community water fluoridation. There have been numerous reports of towns and boroughs reconsidering the value of water fluoridation in their communities.

Communications staff members, along with our public relations consultant, Sean Connolly and The Bravo Group, are continuing to inform media outlets about the facts on this important issue. We have been very pleased that in cases where we called upon you, the members of PDA, to discuss these issues with reporters or community officials, you have done a very effective job.

Recently, in Shippensburg, the borough authority was considering ending its fluoridation program, but decided to continue community water fluoridation after receiving letters and emails from the dental community. Several members of the authority stated that the valuable input from dental professionals was the determining factor in their decision to support fluoridation.

We anticipate that during these very difficult economic times, where municipalities and water companies continue to look for ways to save money wherever they can, fluoridation will remain in the spotlight.

We ask that you keep your eyes and ears open and let us know about any areas of the state where fluoridation is under the gun. Many times, we do not hear about stories unless and until members notify us. This is vital.

Contact Rob Pugliese at rap@padental.org or Marisa Swarney at mss@padental.org if you hear of any community water fluoridation activity.
At the time this article went to print, the United States Supreme Court had not yet issued its ruling on whether certain clauses in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 are constitutional; there also remained the possible outcome that the entire law could be thrown out. Regardless of the Supreme Court’s ruling, there is also a possibility that the Act would be repealed, depending on the outcome of the presidential election in November.

The Act faces considerable resistance across the nation. Fourteen states have passed laws rejecting the individual mandate, and four more states will consider the measure in November. Thirty-three governors have petitioned the federal government for more flexibility and autonomy to administer Medicaid. Just 15 states have passed legislation to set up state-based exchanges. Any state with an exchange is in for a rude awakening come 2015, when federal monies are depleted and the states must become self-sufficient.

Nonetheless, more states are moving forward passing legislation to establish a state-run health insurance exchange in order to meet the January 1, 2014, deadline established by the federal government. Organized dentistry is now an active participant in discussions at the state and federal levels related to the operation of health insurance exchanges, to ensure that dentistry’s small business perspective is taken into account and that the essential benefit packages offered in the exchange include adequate oral health benefits.

PDA is engaged with other stakeholders who wish to impact all legislative and regulatory activity related to the exchange. In early 2012, the Pennsylvania Department of Insurance (PID) released its draft legislation establishing a state-run exchange; however, the legislature has been slow to act on this, or other legislation.

There is still time to pass legislation this year, and most experts agree that the legislature will do so in order to meet the January 2014 deadline.

While policymakers continue to debate the finer operational details of an exchange, PDA is working with other advocacy organizations to make sure that these policymakers understand that the core function of the exchange is to improve the health delivery system, especially for children. To that end, PDA was asked to support a set of principles that were originally adopted by the Pennsylvania Health Law Project, Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children and the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics and others. In April, PDA’s Board of Trustees voted to support the Principles for Development and Implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act in Pennsylvania, which has as its basis the following four principles:

➢ Develop and implement an exchange that is efficient, easy to access and utilize, and meets the comprehensive health care needs of children.

➢ Design an enrollment and renewal system to assure maximum participation by all eligible children in Medicaid, CHIP, or other subsidized and unsubsidized coverage in the exchange.

➢ Ensure coverage is high quality, appropriately financed and accountable to the public.

➢ Design benefits and access to care that ensures children receive all necessary medical services, maximize continuity and coordination of care, and assures treatment is readily accessible.

Supporters of these guiding principles may use this document when conversing with policymakers, to illustrate the broad support of many organizations representing providers, children, the disabled, insurers and others.

Additionally, PDA sent a letter to Michael Considine, commissioner of the Department of Insurance, requesting that we be part of any advisory committee or board tasked with offering recommendations to the state regarding the exchange itself and the essential oral health benefits package that must be offered for children.

Insurance Frequently Asked Questions

Answers to some questions often asked by members

Q: What are a dentist’s obligations under an “Alternate Benefit Provision” (ABP) of an insurance contract?

A: Most group contracts apply an Alternate Benefit Provision (ABP) if a dental condition can be treated by means of a professionally acceptable procedure that is less costly than the treatment recommended by the dentist. The ABP does not commit the member to the less costly treatment. However, if the member and dentist choose the more expensive treatment, the member is responsible for the additional charges beyond those allowed for the ABP. For example, an amalgam or resin restoration may be allowed in lieu of a crown. A signed consent form from the patient detailing the additional cost that she or he is responsible for should be included in the record.
Q: Can I limit the number of Medical Assistance (MA) patients I treat in my practice?
A: It is within the MA provider’s right to limit the number of MA patients they accept into the office due to operational costs and manpower. Pennsylvania’s MA statute permits providers to choose or limit who they serve, as long as they only do so fairly and on a non-discriminatory basis; i.e., that a provider does not discriminate based on any factors prohibited under Civil Rights laws, and applies their policy equally and fairly to all patients served regardless of whether they are MA recipients, covered under commercial insurance, self-pay, etc. The Department of Public Welfare (DPW) does not exercise jurisdiction over Civil Rights laws and cannot “approve” or guarantee that any arrangement a provider enters into will be free from discrimination challenge/allegations, or that the provider will prevail if challenged. DPW strongly recommend that providers opting to apply such policies post the policies in an open and conspicuous manner (such as the waiting room), and inform all of their patients of the policies in advance.

**Considering whether to participate with an insurance carrier?**

Tips for knowing if it’s the right decision for you:

➢ Find out the percentage of your patient base with insurance. Track the percentage covered by Medical Assistance, CHIP, other insurance and no insurance.

➢ Factor in the number of other dentists practicing in your area and whether they accept insurance. Consider your geography and “competition.”

➢ Track charges versus payments versus expenses.

➢ Consider whether you want your name listed on the carrier’s listings for consumers.

➢ Consider your personal business and professional philosophy.

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Temple Launches Historical Collection Online

Temple University’s Kornberg School of Dentistry is pleased to announce its new online database housing the Historical Dental Museum Collection, from the early days of the Philadelphia Dental College (established 1863) to the most recent additions to the dental school.

The online database is free and available publicly. It displays a unique and comprehensive collection of dental artifacts, as well as the history of dentistry in America dating back to the 18th century. As the largest online dental collection in the world, it contains dental instruments, appliances, furniture, prostheses and photographs, which can be downloaded and used for teaching or research.

Please visit Kornberg’s new dental museum online collection at temple.pastperfect-online.com.
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Administrative Secretary
(412) 648-8370

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Recognition and Management of Complications During Minimal and Moderate Sedation — Part 2
Hands-On
(Registration Deadline: April 1)
Dr. James C. Phero, DMD
Dr. Joseph A. Giovannitti Jr.

*Please note: A ten-lesson online course offered through the adaconeonline.org must be completed prior to taking Part 2.

June 8 -9
Recognition and Management of Complications During Minimal and Moderate Sedation — Part 2
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Dr. James C. Phero, DMD
Dr. Joseph A. Giovannitti Jr.

*Please note: A ten-lesson online course offered through the adaconeonline.org must be completed prior to taking Part 2.

May 24
Porcelain Veneers: The Prep vs. No-Prep Controversy...The Whole Story
Dr. Steven Weinberg

Johnstown

October 17
Issues on Treating Patients with Cardiovascular Disease
Dr. James Lichon

November 15
ABCs of Pediatric Dentistry
Dr. Mary Beth Dunn

Pittsburgh VAMC

June 13
Update on Caries and Restorative Options
Dr. Jan K. Mitchell

Temple University

Contact: Nicole Carreno
(215) 707-7541/7006
(215) 707-7107 (Fax)
Register at www.temple.edu/dentistry/ce

September 15
Implementing Evidence-Based Dentistry in Practice (HANDS-ON)
Richard Neiderman, DMD

September 29
Telescopic Retainers – Universal Solution for the Restoration of the Deteriorated Dentition
Joseph B. Breitman, DMD, FACP

October 13
Harmonizing Dental and Facial Esthetics: How to Examine, Diagnose and Treat to a Predictably Successful Outcome
Joseph R. Greenberg, DMD, FAGD
Timothy M. Greco, MD, FACS

October 17
Review of Removable Partial Denture Design Fundamentals
David C. Appleby, DMD, MS, FACP, Professor Emeritus

November 2
2nd Annual Straumann Distinguished Speaker Lecture: Current Trends and Techniques in Planning and Restoring Implants in the Esthetically Demanding Patient
Will Martin, DMD, MS

December 8
Advanced Lawsuit Protection and Tax Reduction Strategies
G.K. Mangelson, CFP, Author, Senior Advisor

Chambersburg

Contact: Rebecca Von Nieda, PDA
(800) 223-0016, ext. 117

September 7
The Orchards Restaurant
Update on Local Anesthetics and Analgesics for the Dental Professional - Old Drugs and New Drugs
Dr. Elliot V. Hersh

October 12
The Orchards Restaurant
Clinical Operating Microscopes: They’re Not Just for Endodontists Anymore
Dr. John B. Nase

November 16
The Chambersburg Country Club
Update in Esthetic Restorative Dentistry
Dr. Terence E. Donovan

Temple University

Contact: Nicole Carreno
(215) 707-7541/7006
(215) 707-7107 (Fax)
Register at www.temple.edu/dentistry/ce

September 15
Implementing Evidence-Based Dentistry in Practice (HANDS-ON)
Richard Neiderman, DMD

September 29
Telescopic Retainers – Universal Solution for the Restoration of the Deteriorated Dentition
Joseph B. Breitman, DMD, FACP

October 13
Harmonizing Dental and Facial Esthetics: How to Examine, Diagnose and Treat to a Predictably Successful Outcome
Joseph R. Greenberg, DMD, FAGD
Timothy M. Greco, MD, FACS

October 17
Review of Removable Partial Denture Design Fundamentals
David C. Appleby, DMD, MS, FACP, Professor Emeritus

November 2
2nd Annual Straumann Distinguished Speaker Lecture: Current Trends and Techniques in Planning and Restoring Implants in the Esthetically Demanding Patient
Will Martin, DMD, MS

December 8
Advanced Lawsuit Protection and Tax Reduction Strategies
G.K. Mangelson, CFP, Author, Senior Advisor

University of Pittsburgh

Contact: Lori Burkette
Administrative Secretary
(412) 648-8370

June 8 -9
Recognition and Management of Complications During Minimal and Moderate Sedation — Part 2
Hands-On
(Registration Deadline: April 1)
Dr. James C. Phero, DMD
Dr. Joseph A. Giovannitti Jr.

*Please note: A ten-lesson online course offered through the adaconeonline.org must be completed prior to taking Part 2.

May 24
Porcelain Veneers: The Prep vs. No-Prep Controversy...The Whole Story
Dr. Steven Weinberg

Johnstown

October 17
Issues on Treating Patients with Cardiovascular Disease
Dr. James Lichon

November 15
ABCs of Pediatric Dentistry
Dr. Mary Beth Dunn

Pittsburgh VAMC

June 13
Update on Caries and Restorative Options
Dr. Jan K. Mitchell

Temple University

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Chambersburg

Contact: Rebecca Von Nieda, PDA
(800) 223-0016, ext. 117

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Pennsylvania College of Technology

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September 21
Best Western Premier Central Hotel & Conference Center
(Formerly the Four Points Sheraton)
800 East Park Drive, Harrisburg
Innovative Periodontics For Today’s Dental Practice
Samuel B. Low, DDS

Eastern Dental Society

Contact: Dr. Michael Salin
(215) 322-7810
info@Eastern-Dental.org

May 18
The Buck Hotel, Feasterville
A Sound Recession Proof Restorative/Hygiene Practice; Integrating the Team and Creating the Value
Dr. Lou Graham

Contact: Teresa F. Ravert
Executive Director
(215) 925-6050
Fax (215) 925-6998
e-mail: philcodent@aol.com or visit the web site at www.philcodent.org

October 3
Advancing Your Vision in Restorative Dentistry
Dr. Lou Graham
(in cooperation with Dental Team Concepts: GC America)

December 7
Possibilities in Dentistry: Cosmetic, Restorative, Implant Dentistry & How to Implement Them into Your Practice
Dr. David Little
(in cooperation with Caulk/Dentsply)

Fifth District Dental Society

Contact: Dr. Steven Parrett
(717) 263-3123
drp@embarqmail.com

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