

April 9, 2020

Dear Colleague:

On behalf of our 163,000 members, the American Dental Association (ADA) recognizes the unprecedented and extraordinary circumstances dentists and their patients face. The ADA is proud to be leading the profession through this pandemic. We thank you for your support as we navigated issues related to coding and billing, specifically your support of a benefit for problem focused evaluations conducted using telecommunication technology.

As we prepare for recovery from these circumstances, we urge you as administrators of dental benefit plans to consider the following issues important to our dentists and the patients we serve:

- **Temporary procedures:** Many patients receive temporary or palliative care during the physical distancing mandates. We urge payers to not bundle the fee for the temporary procedure with the payment for the permanent procedure that may be submitted in future.
- **Out-of-network Benefits:** Many patients may receive care from out-of-network providers due to closures of primary dental care sites. We urge payers to allow benefits for these patients equivalent to when care may have been sought in-network.
- **Infection Control Expenditures:** Almost all dental practices may have to adhere to higher infection control standards and increasing prices for personal protective equipment to protect our patients and care providers. We urge payers to consider these circumstances when reviewing fee schedules for contracted providers.
- **Frequency Limitations:** Many patients have not received required preventive care and may suffer from progressive disease as a consequence. We urge payers to consider removing any arbitrary frequency limitations on periodontal maintenance, topical fluoride and sealant applications to mitigate adverse consequences of lack of preventive oral care.
- **Tele-communication Technology:** Moving forward, the ADA recognizes that telecommunication technology can continue to be leveraged to support dental care. We urge payers to consider benefits for appropriate use of telecommunication technology as an integral part of a dental practice to provide triage and evaluations as needed.
- **COVID Testing:** As point-of-care testing for COVID-19 improves, it will be vitally important for dentists, their staff and patients to have access to testing along with appropriate benefit and reimbursement for on-site testing. While state practice acts would determine the ability for dentists to perform such tests, we urge payers to begin to consider related coverage issues.

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We look forward to working with you to support dental patients and our communities.

Sincerely,



Chad P. Gehani, D.D.S.  
President



Kathleen T. O'Loughlin, D.M.D., M.P.H.  
Executive Director

cc: Dr. Daniel Klemmedson, president-elect  
Council on Dental Benefit Programs  
Dr. Dave Preble, senior vice-president, Practice Institute  
Dr. Krishna Aravamudhan, senior director, Center for Dental Benefits, Coding  
and Quality