CME credits available

Dec. 3 conference studies medical, dental link

You can learn more about the connection between medical and dental health, and earn up to six continuing education credits, by attending the Dec. 3 Systemic Health Conference at Rock Financial Showplace in Novi. The conference will bring physicians and dentists together to discuss and share ideas about this important topic.

Dentists, physicians, health care organization administrators and health care professionals are encouraged to attend. At the end of this course, participants should be able to:

- Improve their awareness of the link between oral and systemic health
- Appreciate the need for medical and dental practitioners to communicate about health care problems
- Understand the need for change in policy and medical/dental education
- Discuss and help guide future areas for research
- Appreciate the multidisciplinary nature of oral systemic health in relation to research activities and patient care

The conference is jointly sponsored by the Michigan Dental Association, Michigan State Medical Society and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan. It runs from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Registration is at 8:30 a.m., and six continuing education credits are available. The fee is $50 per person.

See the enclosed flyer for more information. To register, complete the form on the flyer, or go to the Michigan Dental Association Web site at smilemichigan.com and click on the Dental Professionals tab. Go to MDA Courses under Continuing Education and select Special Seminars.
Physician group tests new referral form

In the July issue, we told you about an initiative to encourage dentist-physician communication about conditions that affect both the medical and dental health of patients. Now we’re pleased to announce that Primary Care Physicians, P.C., has agreed to pilot the Physician to Dentist Referral Form.

This large medical group comprises approximately 150 family practice, internal medicine and pediatric physicians. The group serves patients in five southeast Michigan counties.

We recently mailed Dentist to Physician Referral Forms to a pilot group of dentists in the metropolitan Detroit area, who are also participating in the project.

Stay tuned for feedback about the project and, based upon positive results, availability of the form to more dentists and physicians.

Orthodontic payment policy realigned for maximum increases

Patients receiving orthodontic treatment may benefit from a policy change for lifetime maximums. Under the change, when an employer increases the orthodontic lifetime maximum for its members, those in active treatment can now add the amount of the increase and use it immediately.

Before this policy change, increases to the orthodontic maximum were not available to the patient unless there was a need for re-treatment.

If a patient notifies you that their employer has increased the orthodontic maximum, please submit a “status” claim for possible additional payment. On the claim, indicate:

- Bonding date
- Total treatment fee
- Number of monthly visits remaining
- Write the following in the comments section: “Please issue additional payment due to orthodontic maximum increase.”

Patients in active treatment must use the increase one-time only and within 24 months from the start of their treatment. Those who completed treatment prior to the increase are not eligible for additional money.

Please contact Provider Inquiry if you have any questions.

CAREN’s dental service now easier to use

Other options include:

- If you ask for a specific class of service, CAREN will state all the benefits in that class.
- You can say “eligibility and benefits” and then “hear all benefits,” and CAREN will tell you the patient’s complete benefits.
- You can still get the claims mailing address information or a fax of the member’s eligibility and benefits before hearing this information.

A new brochure called CAREN Dental: Navigating with ease will be available in the near future. This brochure gives step-by-step instructions for using CAREN. Obtain the brochure from your dental provider consultant or call Provider Inquiry.

It’s coming — our dental-only enrollment area

Registering with BCBSM or making changes (such as updates to address or tax ID number) is becoming easier than ever. That’s because dentists are getting their own enrollment area at BCBSM. Talk about a gift from the tooth fairy!

Here’s our new contact information:

Mail: Dental Provider Enrollment Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan P.O. Box 3966 Southfield, MI 48037 Phone: 888-334-6761 Fax: 866-738-0243

Next on our list: new, streamlined dental enrollment and change forms available online. Watch for more information in future issues of Dental Care News.
2009 Medicare Advantage individual plans cover basic dental services

We’ve all heard about research showing the connection between oral health and overall health. To demonstrate our commitment to oral health care, BCBSM’s Medicare Plus Blue individual medical plans will cover basic dental services beginning Jan. 1, 2009. Coverage includes:

• One annual exam
• One annual cleaning
• Up to four bitewing X-rays per year

Medicare Advantage individual patients can visit any dentist to receive these services. There are no special billing requirements; simply complete a 2006 or 2002, 2004 ADA claim and submit to BCBSM for payment.

A sample Medicare Advantage ID card is pictured here. Please note that the card does not display a dental coverage indicator. Call CAREN to verify eligibility for the three services outlined above.