



The Delta Dental of Colorado

UPDATE

Quarterly newsletter for providers

SPRING 2018

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US!

Delta Dental of Colorado Celebrates 60 Years

Delta Dental of Colorado is 60! This past January, we celebrated our 60th anniversary with all the pomp and circumstance deserving of a **Diamond** anniversary!

We celebrated 60 years of healthy smiles, and we are grateful to all our partners and staff who helped us reach this important milestone. We are excited and as committed as ever to our mission of improving the oral health of the communities we serve. We hope we can continue to count on you, our providers, to stay with us on the journey. To 60 more!



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DELTA DENTAL

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OPIATES VS. OPIOIDS — DISTINGUISHING THE DIFFERENCE

DDCO Partnering with CDPHE to Create Education Campaign

This is the second in a series of articles with a goal to raise the level of awareness about the national crisis surrounding addiction to opioid pain relievers. When discussing this topic recently among Delta Dental leadership and staff, we searched for a clear definition of the terms—opiate or opioid. While the terms are often used interchangeably, they mean two distinctly different things.

Opiate

- (Noun) Any of various analgesic, narcotic drugs derived from the opium poppy, such as morphine or codeine. Something that dulls the senses and induces relaxation and/or a state of physical or mental inactivity, or lethargy.
- (Adjective) Containing opium or any of its derivatives; inducing sleep or sedation; causing dullness or apathy.

Opioid

- Substances that act on opioid receptors to produce morphine-like effects. Opioids include synthetics such as Hydrocodone, found in common prescriptions like Percocet, Vicodin, and Oxycodone.

Medically, opioids are primarily used for pain relief, as anesthetics, and for cough suppression, among other uses. The use of opioids as pain relievers, is often thought of as a means for users to "get hooked," as opioids may also be used for their euphoric effects or to treat the symptoms of withdrawal.

Historically, the use of opiates in the United States dates back to the arrival of the Mayflower in 1620. Laudanum (from the poppy plant) was an effective pain reliever for diseases like smallpox, cholera, and dysentery, and was at times used as a sleep aid. By the middle of the 19th century, recreational opiate use was more common, and over-the-counter remedies contained additives such as opium and cocaine to treat conditions like toothaches, coughs, and menstrual cramps. Cocaine at one time was an additive in Coca-Cola.

With the passage of laws and restrictions on the use of opiates, drugs became a matter of law enforcement rather than a public health matter. The same holds true today and is at the heart of the addiction crisis in our nation.

2018 is a landmark year in Colorado for programs aimed at education, treatment, understanding, and removing the stigma attached to patients who are addicted to opiate pain relievers. [Delta Dental is working collaboratively with the Colorado Dental Association on a continuing education seminar on Safe Prescribing for Dentistry with a tentative date of August 17, 2018.](#) Please mark your calendars as we finalize the details for this important workshop and distribute invitations to the dental community as well as our partners in medicine.

LAND OF SMILES

Bringing Laughs and Smiles to Colorado Students



The Land of Smiles is a 30-minute play presented in an assembly setting for kindergarten through third-grade students. The performance features Tooth Wizard and PlaqueMan, who use humor to demonstrate the importance of caring for your teeth.

The program meets Colorado State Standards requirements for:

- Physical and Personal Wellness in Health
- Drama and Theater Arts
- 21st-Century Skills and Readiness Competencies

Of the teachers and administrators who saw the Land of Smiles show, 90% strongly agree that it increased their student's knowledge about oral health! To learn more about Land of Smiles, visit landofsmiles.org

2018 ROCKY MOUNTAIN DENTAL CONVENTION

An Opportunity to Meet and Learn More

The Rocky Mountain Dental Convention held in January, was a great success! We were excited to be able to meet face to face with providers, staff, and other vendors to address concerns personally and provide hands-on experience with our exciting practice enhancements including Dentalytics, DDS Enroll, and our Hypertension Identification Program (HIP). We were able to learn more about some of your practices and took away insightful information that will help us in further developing programs and tools to assist you better. Our Amazon Echo giveaway was also a hit. Congratulations to the lucky winner! We look forward to participating at the next one!



From left: Danette Goldhammer, Kristie Richardson, Nicole Miller, Nicolas Krueger, and Jeri Steen

CHP+ UPDATES

CHP+ is Reauthorized for 6 Years

The Children's Health Insurance Program (also known as CHIP or CHP+ in Colorado) was reauthorized for federal funding for an additional six years earlier this year, after several months of inaction from Congress. The six-year funding extension provides stable funding for states to continue their CHP+ coverage. The program provides dental coverage for more than 75,000 children in Colorado and is seen as an important asset to ensuring medical and dental access to vulnerable populations.

In addition to CHP+ authorization, congress also suspended the medical device tax for two years. This tax, which was imposed in 2013 under the Affordable Care Act, taxed the sale of medical devices at 2.3 percent.

The tax included items such as restorative materials, instruments, impression materials, and equipment.

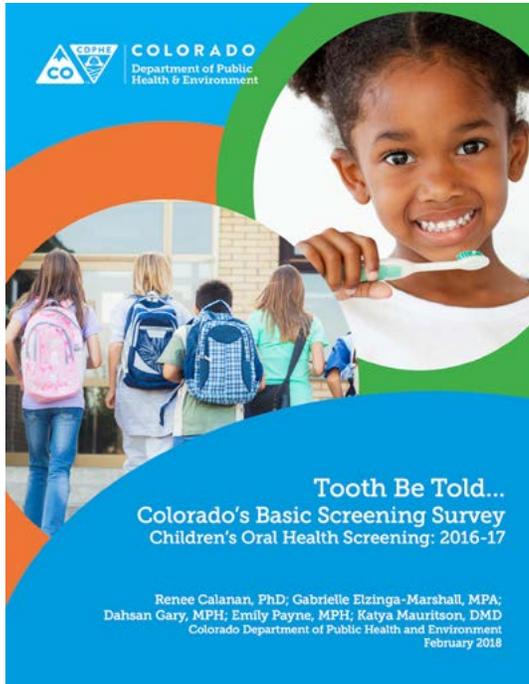
UNCLAIMED FUNDS FOR DENTISTS

Claim Your Money

There's a simple, cost-free way of checking for outstanding money due to you from an insurance company (or any party). Rather than using costly consultants, you can visit colorado.findyourunclaimedproperty.com/app/claim-search. Simply enter your name and Zip code and follow the process outlined on the site to get those funds. Although Delta Dental of Colorado has a process in place to look at returned checks every day, there are still many that remain in our system as unclaimed. After five years, we then transfer those funds to the state. Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) can help you avoid the potential of having unclaimed funds. Contact your DDCO provider advocate at provideradvocate@ddpco.com for help in getting that set up or download the [Direct Deposit](#) form from our website.

CDPHE REPORT

Fewer Colorado Kids Have Cavities than a Decade Ago



A report released in February by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) revealed that fewer kids in Colorado have cavities now than they did 10 years ago because of earlier preventive dental care.

This is great news, but there are still challenges and opportunities for improvement. Nearly one in three Colorado kindergartners and half of all Colorado third-graders have had at least one cavity. Students at low-income schools suffer higher rates of untreated tooth decay than children at other schools. Furthermore, minority children, specifically African American and Latino, are more likely to have experienced cavities and are less likely to have access to dental care.

Poor oral health leads to poor overall health and can affect the academic performance of students with untreated cavities. Colorado children miss thousands of hours of school every year because of complications with cavities. In addition, children with toothaches have a hard time eating, concentrating in class, or engaging in school activities.

Click [here](#) to read the full report.

ANNUAL MEMBER DENTIST MEETING

Important Updates for our Providers

On, Friday, March 16, Delta Dental of Colorado held our Annual Member Dentist Meeting. President and CEO Helen Drexler kicked off the meeting, announcing the results of the board elections (see [page 5](#)) and introducing the DDCO management team members on the call, including Chief Clinical Officer Dr. Cheryl Lerner, Vice President of Marketing and Customer Relations Kathy Jacoby, Director of Clinical Management Emilee Langer, Director of Network Management Kristie Richardson, and Director of Compliance and Associate General Counsel Matt Cassady.

During the course of the meeting, staff members provided information on:

- Voice of the Customer surveys
- Increased provider outreach
- Improved provider credentialing process
- New provider seminars
- Fee strategy
- New codes and policies
- Our stance on DIY ortho
- EFT/ERA and single sign on
- A save the date for our upcoming opiate seminar
- And recently passed and pending legislation

If you'd like additional information or have questions about topics discussed on the call, feel free to email or call your network management team at provideradvocate@ddpco.com or call 303-889-8677.

AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION AND DDCO PARTNER

Bridging the Gap Between Oral Health and Heart Health

Did you know that people with gum disease have nearly double the risk for heart disease as those with healthy gums?

LIFE Smile

CHANGE AWARD



Delta Dental of Colorado and the American Heart Association understand the important connection between oral health and overall health. That's why we've partnered to bring you the **LifeSmile Change Award**.

This award is presented annually to a deserving individual(s) who has made the commitment to make positive changes to improve their quality of life and overall health. They may have lost weight, started to eat better, improved their cholesterol through exercise and diet, made a commitment to preventive care, or something else that has put them on the road to better health. The recipient is chosen to inspire others to also improve their health.

Do you know a coworker, family member, or friend whose health has greatly improved as a result of making long-term lifestyle changes? If you do, please share their story with us. How has this impacted their health and how have they stayed on track doing it? Did they inspire you or others? Or nominate yourself! Visit heart.org/lifesmile to complete your nomination today.

The winner will be introduced at the **2018 Denver Heart & Stroke Walk on Saturday, June 2, at Broncos Stadium** so get your walking shoes ready and save the date. This is the American Heart Association's premiere event for raising funds to save lives from this country's No. 1 and No. 5 killers—heart disease and stroke. Designed to promote physical activity and heart-healthy living, the Heart Walk creates an environment that's fun and rewarding. We invite you to create a team or join the Delta Dental of Colorado team as we walk to fight cardiovascular diseases and stroke.

Interested in walking on June 2? Want to know more about the LifeSmile Change Award? Contact Andrea Miller, community engagement manager at amiller@ddpco.com or 303-889-8614.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Voting Results Announced at Annual Meeting

Thank you to everyone who voted for new board members. Dr. Ann Somers and Ms. Ann Block were elected to the board of trustees to serve a first term effective January 1, 2018, in adherence to the formal governance process outlined in our bylaws. In addition, Dr. Walt Vogl and Mr. Mark Wehrle were re-elected to the board of trustees to serve a new three-year term commencing January 1, 2018. For 2018, the board has 15 trustees, including six licensed dentists, one licensed physician, and eight community members.

SINGLE SIGN ON LIVE

National Electronic Remittance Advice Now Available Via Single Sign On

You may now get Electronic Remittance Advice through single sign on to the **Delta Dental of Colorado website**. This means that your DDCO username and password will work across all member companies participating in the national ERA project. You may have received an email a few weeks back letting you know that an authorization code was needed to log in to your account in order to get to your ERA. If you have not yet received that authorization code, please log in to your account, where you will be redirected to the national DDPA website and prompted to enter your authorization code. You can also call 303-889-8677 or 1-800-610-0201 to get your authorization code.

DDCO FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES NEW MISSION

Expanding Focus to Oral Health Equity

At Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation, we think about oral health every day. It's a window into individual and community well-being.

Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation Executive Director Allison Cusick explains our commitment to oral health equity and the foundation's focus moving forward in this video:



The foundation's **new mission** is to elevate the well-being of Coloradans by improving oral health equity.

Why are we changing our mission?

For more than 20 years, Delta Dental of Colorado Foundation has worked to improve Colorado's oral health by eradicating childhood tooth decay. We're proud of the achievements to that mission through the efforts of our grantees and the partnerships we've established with organizations.

We're expanding our focus now because oral health impacts Coloradans of all ages. We're strengthening our work with communities to create opportunities for people that have historically been overlooked.

Through this journey, we're fostering an open dialogue for everyone to share their views and ideas on advancing oral health equity. We're committed to partnering with communities so more people have healthier smiles.

How we will focus funding?

We plan to provide funding to organizations working toward achieving identified goals including:

- Access to care—All Coloradans have affordable, accessible, and comprehensive oral health care.
- Prevention of tooth decay—Effective programs are available for prevention and early intervention of tooth decay.
- Connections to overall health—Oral health is included as a vital part of overall health.

Our first funding opportunity for individual organizations will be announced in late 2018. If you know or serve a community interested in partnering with the foundation, email hello@ddpco.com.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

The *Delta Dental Update* is designed to provide useful information for providers and staff. We would love to hear your ideas, suggestions, and comments. Simply email us at communications@ddpco.com.