The Importance of Access

Robert E. Boose, EdD MDS Executive Director

Welcome to the premiere issue of MDS Access Update, a new quarterly publication from the Massachusetts Dental Society. Providing the latest information related to dentistry and the activities of the Society is a major function of our Communications Department.

MDS ACCESS UPDATE is designed with a focus on keeping you abreast of the Society's efforts to promote successful initiatives that are designed to expand access to care. We want to highlight our members, who have continued to volunteer for *MassDentists CARE*, provide care on the MDS Foundation Mobile Access to Care (MAC) Van, or become providers for MassHealth and take referrals from that program.

We are realigning our resources to be more aggressive in the public policy and governmental affairs arenas. MDS ACCESS UPDATE is a part of the strategy to keep you informed of the progress we are making in communicating to both the public and policymakers that the MDS is the leader in oral health care issues in Massachusetts. In order to strengthen that leadership position, we need to keep you aware of our successes within each of our dental districts, the state, and the nation.

I look forward to your comments and suggestions as to how we can provide information to you on access to care and other emerging issues. Organized dentistry needs strong members. Keeping you aware and informed strengthens us as a Society, but more importantly, it assists in projecting you as the oral health care leaders you are.



With a grant from the MetroWest Community Health Care Foundation, the MDS Foundation Mobile Access to Care (MAC) Van traveled to the town of Milford in late February to provide second-grade students attending Brookside Elementary School and Memorial Elementary School with dental sealants.

"This sealant program has benefited these children tremendously." The sealant initiative specifically targeted all second graders in Milford who are enrolled in the schools' reduced-lunch program. According to the most recent printed census information, of the 25 commu-

nities that the MetroWest Community Health Care Foundation assists, Milford residents have the lowest median household income, with nearly 14 percent of residents living below the poverty level.

According to Judy Dagnese, RN, school nurse for both elementary schools, Milford has a large number of families in need. "Many of the students I see at school suffer from tooth decay because their families can't afford any profes-

sional care," says Dagnese. "This sealant program has benefited these children tremendously."

Thank you to **Drs. William Dennis** and **Barbara Kay**, hygienist **Cherrie Westcott**, and dental assistants **Kelly Ober**, **Kathy Stake**, and **Kim Waitkevich** for volunteering their time for this initiative.



"Can I have an extra toothbrush for my sister so we don't have to share with my mom?"

—A 9-year-old girl treated on the MAC Van in March 2007



OCA



In this issue, MDS ACCESS UPDATE features a Q&A with an MDS member dentist on his experiences with the access-to-care issue in Massachusetts as a MassHealth provider.

- Q. How long have you been a participating MassHealth provider?
- A. I have been a MassHealth provider for more than 23 years.
- Q. Why do you participate in MassHealth?
- A. When I first started practicing in Massachusetts, the dentist I associated with and whose practice I purchased introduced me to the MassHealth program as a way to give back to the community and to help those in need. The majority of my MassHealth patients are children or developmentally and physically disabled adults. This is a population with an acute need for access to dental care and I am glad that I can provide it.

- Q. In your opinion, how has the MassHealth program improved?
- A. The program is going through a significant transition at this time. The program is no longer going to be administered by a state agency; it is now administered by Doral Dental, which is a subsidiary of Delta Dental of Massachusetts. This organization administers Medicaid programs in 16 other states, and it is hoped that the program will run in a manner similar to that of a commercial insurance company.
- Q. What would you say to dentists who do not participate in MassHealth to convince them to join the program?
- A. Unlike in the past, participants in the program are now able to limit the number of MassHealth patients they take into their practice. If everyone accepts only a small number of patients, they will be able to participate in the program without significantly

- affecting their practice. Most importantly, participation by more dentists will go a long way to solving the access-to-care problem in this state.
- Q. What do you think is the biggest misconception dentists have with the MassHealth program?
- A. The biggest misconception is the idea that by participating in this program, dentists will give up significant control of their practice. While there are certain regulations governing this program, the practitioner still maintains control of what occurs in the office.
- Q. How has participation in the MassHealth program affected you both professionally and personally?
- A. Participating in this program has allowed me to transform the lives of many people who otherwise would not have been able to maintain optimal oral health.

MAC Van Update for February/March

On February 5, 2007, the MDS Foundation Mobile Access to Care (MAC) Van officially began providing dental services. During the months of February and March, the MAC Van treated children at the following locations:

- Normandin Elementary School, New Bedford
- Fall River Boys & Girls Club
- Somerville Head Start
- Memorial School, Milford
- Brookside School, Milford (temporarily located at Milford High School)
- Boys & Girls Club of Lynn
- Gerald & Darlene Jordan Club, Chelsea
- Gene Mack Clubhouse, Medford
- Boys & Girls Club of Leominster



For the months of February and March, the MAC Van treated nearly 300 patients and provided approximately \$50,000 worth of services. Services performed varied by location but included: sealants, screenings, comprehensive exams, prophylaxis, fluoride treatments, bitewing X-rays, extractions, composites, and amalgams. The average production per patient to date is \$200. Please note that the MAC Van was not operational during February school vacation week and only operates approximately three days per week.

Service Schedule*

Week	Location	
May 7, 2007	Quinsigamond Community College—Kid Seal Program	
May 14, 2007	Quinsigamond Community College—Kid Seal Program	
May 21, 2007	Worcester Boys & Girls Club and Quinsigamond Community College—Kid Seal Program	
May 28, 2007	Quinsigamond Community College—Kid Seal Program	
June 4, 2007	Southeastern District/TBA	
June 11, 2007	Middlesex District/TBA	
June 18, 2007	Metropolitan District/TBA	
June 25, 2007	Berkshire District/TBA	
*Visit www.mdsfoundation are for schedule undates		

*Visit www.mdsfoundation.org for schedule updates.

Calling All Volunteers

In order for the MAC Van to have the impact required, we need MDS members to step forward and rally behind this very worthy mission.

If you are interested in volunteering on the MAC Van or providing patients with a dental home, contact Ellen Factor, Project Manager, at (800) 342-8747, ext. 228, or email *efactor@massdental.org*.



MassHealth and Doral Form Partnership

By Debbie A. Hartman

Dental Services of Massachusetts, Inc. (DSM), is the third-party administrator for the MassHealth Dental Program. DSM has subcontracted with Doral Dental USA, LLC, to administer the MassHealth Dental Program beginning February 1, 2007.



Doral Dental is the largest multistate administrator for government dental programs in the

United States. In Massachusetts, Doral is streamlining systems for providers and members. Key improvements in the program—such as the new caseload capacity feature, which allows you to limit the number of MassHealth patients you treat—will foster a healthy partnership between MassHealth and the dental community to increase access to care. New services for providers include the following:

- Recruitment to expand the MassHealth network
- Caseload capacity
- · Provider Quick Reference Directory
- Streamlined authorization process
- Dental Office Reference Manual
- Direct referral process

- Interactive voice response system available 24/7 in both English and Spanish
- Provider education sessions and newsletters
- Broken appointment reduction initiative
- · A full-service Web site with access training
- Email correspondence specialist

Representatives are available to handle questions and ensure a smooth transition. Doral has an Intervention Specialist Team to assist with issues that move beyond the Customer Service level, and these staff resources will nurture positive relationships between members and providers. An Outreach Coordinator promotes member dental access statewide.

Doral's Massachusetts-based team will assist providers and members and will support and advocate for expanded dental access in the state. MassHealth inquiries can be sent to Doral at MassHealth Dental, 12121 N. Corporate Parkway, Mequon, WI 53092. Contact Doral Customer Service at (800) 207-5019 or visit www.masshealth-dental.net.

Ms. Hartman is Outreach Coordinator for Doral/MassHealth. Reach her at (617) 886-1724 or email dahartman@doralusa.com.

Donations Drive MDS Foundation MAC VAN PROGRAM

The MDS Foundation Mobile Access to Care (MAC) Van Program provides dental care to underserved children across the state. This program is designed to bring care right where it is needed most, and has the potential to serve thousands of children a year. All care on the MAC Van is performed free of charge.

The MAC Van Program was made available through the generous donations of many organizations from all areas of the profession. On behalf of the MAC Van, the MDS Foundation has received the following grants and commitments thus far:

- \$250,000 grant from Procter & Gamble to purchase the van, dental education literature and DVDs, and "goody bags" for patients
- * \$250,000 commitment per year for three years by Dental Services of Massachusetts (d/b/a Delta Dental of MA) to offset operating expenses and van staff salaries
- \$150,000 in state-of-the-art equipment donations from Dentrix, A-Dec, Air Techniques, and other manufacturers
- \$130,000 commitment (dispersed over four years) from The Robert F. Stoico/ FIRSTFED Charitable Foundation

- \$100,000 donation per year for five years from the Massachusetts Dental Society
- ❖ \$20,000 donation from Gentle Dental Associates
- ❖ \$15,000 pledge from American Dental Industries
- \$15,000 donation from the University of Massachusetts, Worcester
- * \$3,207.75 grant from MetroWest Community Health Care Foundation for dental sealants on the Van
- *\$3,200 grant from the Foundation of the Pierre Fauchard Academy for dental health literature produced in English, Spanish, and Portuguese

Donate to the MDS Foundation

Help the MDS Foundation raise money to assist in the access-to-care crisis. There are four easy ways:

Online: www.mdsfoundation.org
By Phone: Call Tara Brady

(800) 342-8747, ext. 269

By Mail: MDS Foundation Two Willow Street, Suite 200

Southborough, MA 01745

Dues: Via MDS membership dues

statement

Press Corner



The MDS Foundation Mobile Access to Care (MAC) Van began treating underserved children in early February 2007. This groundbreaking program received extensive press coverage in February and March:

Electronic Media

WCVB-TV (Channel 5) Boston New England Cable News (NECN) WWLP-TV (Channel 22) Springfield Waltham Community Access Television New Bedford Cable Television WBZ Radio (1030-AM) Boston

Print Media

Springfield Republican Springfield Reminder Berkshire Eagle Worcester Telegram and Gazette Fall River Herald News New Bedford Standard Times Marblehead Reporter Cape Cod Times Upper Cape Codder Yarmouthport Register Mashpee Enterprise Falmouth Enterprise Sandwich Enterprise Bourne Enterprise MetroWest Daily News Milford Daily News Medford Transcript Wakefield Daily Item Waltham News-Tribune Somerville Journal Lynn Daily Item ADA News

Online versions of articles were also available on most newspapers' Web sites.

Thank-You Ads

The MDS has also placed "Thank-You" advertisements in the following newspapers to acknowledge those MDS member dentists and their staffs who so generously donated their time and expertise on the MAC Van during February and March:

New Bedford Standard Times
Fall River Herald News
Milford Daily News
Lynn Daily Item
Chelsea Record
Medford Transcript
Sentinel and Enterprise (Fitchburg)



Spotlight on Volunteers

The following MDS member dentists and staff generously donated their services and time to help make a difference in children's lives on the Mobile Access to Care (MAC) Van during February and March 2007.

Dentists

Dr. Mario G. Aboujaoude

Dr. Bonnie Bower

Dr. Lisa Carvalho

Dr. William R. Dennis

Dr. John Fisher

Dr. John Leo Gentuso

Dr. Michael Gouveia

Dr. Mary Jane Hanlon-Rogers

Dr. James Jervinis

Dr. Stanley Joe

Dr. Michel Jusseaume

Dr. Barbara Kay

Dr. Jeffrey Kravitz

Dr. Joon Lee

Dr. John McDonald

Dr. George Orfaly

Dr. Nicholas Perrotta

Dr. Ralph Pollack

Dr. Paul Raymond

Dr. Philip Robitaille Dr. David Steinhof

Dr. Jared Stubbs

Dental Assistants

Debra Borge
Nancy Bowden
Cara Carideo
Anna Costa
Joy Fisher
Sabrina Jacinto
Lesley Keene
Dianne Leal
Cindy Mullins
Kelly Ober
Marta Pacheco
Mirela Pronjari
Danielle Rudyk
Kathy Stake
Kim Waitkevich
Joann Wolstencroft

Dental Hygienists

Rosanna Alworth Sharon Enos Karlene Johnson Mary Ann Lamontagne Kathleen Smietana Cherrie Westcott

Other Volunteers

Cristina Aguiar Carolyn Alcantara Leland Boutilier Judy Dagnese Linda Gouveia Ann Magalhaes Yolitisa Paulino Karen Regan and staff

Access Success

Hoping to Make a Big Difference— Real-Life MAC Van Experience

In mid-March, Billy*, a 12-year-old boy from the Lynn Boys & Girls Club, was treated on the MAC Van. The child approached the Van with great trepidation. While sitting on the Van, Billy shared his story.

Late last year, Billy woke up, complaining of a tremendous pain in his mouth. Billy's mother, a single parent raising four children, worked during the day and her schedule was not flexible, but she found a dentist who could see Billy in the evening the following week. By the time of his appointment, Billy's pain had escalated. The dentist determined that Billy needed an amalgam, but for unknown reasons the dentist had great difficulty administering the Novocain injections, resulting in three failed attempts before he was successful, causing Billy much discomfort and duress.

While examining Billy, the dentist determined that braces were required to fix large gaps between the boy's teeth. Billy was referred to an orthodontist. After the orthodontic consultation, braces were fitted on Billy's teeth. However, shortly thereafter, Billy's mother lost her job and with it, her limited dental insurance, rendering her unable to afford the payments on the braces. Two months later, the braces were removed from Billy's teeth.

While on the MAC Van, Billy once again experienced pain in his mouth during treatment, but he chose not to tell any of the volunteer dentists or staff on the Van for fear of having a similar experience and not wanting to burden his mother with



yet another dental expense. When the volunteer dentist examined Billy and noted that Billy had three teeth that required amalgams, the boy became hysterical and inconsolable. His mother was contacted, informed of his behavior, and consulted on how to proceed.

Billy's mother then shared her story with us. She no longer had the means to pay for dental care, she was just worried about feeding her kids and trying to keep her apartment. "Please help him! He needs to get the care on the Van. Otherwise, I don't know what to do," she pleaded. This information was shared with the volunteer dentist on the Van, who had great difficulty convincing Billy to receive treatment. But with perseverance and patience, he was able to fill one of Billy's cavities. Billy bolted from the MAC Van at treatment's completion.

The next day, Billy returned to the Van to complete his treatment. While still in fear, he was no longer hysterical. When he sat in the dental chair, his sobs of the previous day were replaced with small tears as the dentist completed the necessary procedures. Billy left with a growing smile on his face and even asked when the MAC Van would be returning.

*The patient's name has been changed to protect anonymity.

Massachusetts Dental Society

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www.massdental.org

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