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July 18, 2018

Mr. Dennis Leonard
President
Dental Service of Massachusetts, Inc.
465 Medford Street, #150
Boston, MA 02129

RE: Docket No. G2018-01 & Assignment of Benefits Request

Dear Mr. Leonard,

The Massachusetts Dental Society (MDS) and its members have been at odds with Dental Service of Massachusetts, Inc. (Delta Dental) for more than a decade. This relationship hit its lowest point in late 2016 when your company formed the PPO/Premier network under the for-profit Delta Dental. As a result, the MDS Board of Trustees rigorously pursued every avenue possible to challenge and prevent the creation of this network.

The course of actions in late 2016 and throughout 2017 have led the MDS and Delta Dental to where we are now. Today, our organizations have a mutual understanding that neither dental benefits corporations nor providers can separately improve patient care or prevent rising health care costs. This is evident by the MDS Board of Trustees' decision to support Delta Dental's proposed fee methodology and to testify on its behalf. This was not an easy decision for the MDS to make, but the proposal offers a better alternative to the Chapter 175 PPO product and ensures Division of Insurance (DOI) oversight on any future fee changes.

Ongoing efforts will require discussion and compromise if we are to have any real and long-lasting impact on the dental profession. Based on our conversations around the new fee methodology proposal before the DOI, I am hopeful that the lines of communication will remain open as each party develops and considers new ideas to improve patient care.

As a matter of goodwill, the MDS urges Delta Dental to join the other major dental benefits corporations and allow patients to assign benefits to nonparticipating providers. The MDS recognizes that there is limited regulatory authority to mandate Delta Dental to assign benefits to nonparticipating providers. Including this provision as part of all contracts will directly help patients by limiting immediate out-of-pocket expenses and give them more flexibility in choosing their dental providers. Further, it ensures the continuum of care with their dental home regardless of participating provider status. The MDS strongly urges Delta Dental to add this provision to all of your contracts.

I look forward to your timely response and consideration of the assignment of benefits provision request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'David Lustbader', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Lustbader, DMD
Immediate Past President
Massachusetts Dental Society