



Coalition News

2009 Conference Wrap Up

Thank you again to everyone who participated in the 2009 Oral Health Conference! It was a fun and exciting challenge bringing it all together. I would like to personally thank MOHC's Student Coordinator, **Becca VanTassel** and the planning committee (**Susan Deming, Chris Farrell, Dr. Dennison, Dr. Stoel and Tom Kochheiser**) for helping us make the event a success. We certainly had a lot of positive feedback and it was all due to you! I would also like to thank our many speakers for providing the Coalition with such informative pieces providing relevant and on-target presentations. I hope your networking and learning experience prove to hold a productive year for you and your organization. As always, the Coalition is here to support our members. Call or email any time!—Sincerely, Mel Christensen, Project Coordinator

Thank You to Outgoing Board Chair Lantz and Board Member Kochheiser

The board of directors, staff and membership of the Michigan Oral Health Coalition wishes to thank outgoing Board Chair Rick Lantz of Delta Dental for his service over the past year. Rick's leadership has enabled us to increase the Coalition's visibility and enhance our services. As an outgoing board member, we also thank Tom Kochheiser of Michigan Dental Association for his tenure of service. Next month, Patti Ulrich, independent oral health consultant will begin her term as our new Board Chair. Patti was officially installed at the Annual Meeting on June 11.

Action Needed! Contact Your Legislators to Support Reinstatement of the Medicaid Adult Dental Benefit

The Michigan Oral Health Coalition is encouraging all dental professionals and their patients to contact legislators to urge their support for restoring the Medicaid adult dental benefit. Elimination of this benefit is scheduled to take effect July 1 per Gov. Jennifer Granholm's Executive Order.

In October 2003, the Medicaid adult dental benefit was eliminated in an attempt to save the state money. During the first six months following elimination, Medicaid oral health-related emergency room visits increased by 11%, compared to the same six-month period in the previous year. A supplemental budget bill (HB 4310) is awaiting movement in the House following passage by the House Appropriations Committee on June 3. The supplemental calls for restoring funding in the fiscal year 2009 budget for the Medicaid adult dental benefit, in addition to other optional Medicaid services including podiatric services, optometric services, chiropractic services, and hearing aids.

Action Needed! contd.

Through collaborative efforts with Michigan Primary Care Association and Michigan Dental Association, the Coalition is pleased to provide members with the following tools to contact their legislators.

1. Online Action Center: Visit www.mohc.org and click on "Take Action." Next, register as a new user or login. You will then have access to a web alert and a customizable e-mail template asking your state legislators to support reinstatement.

2. Postcards: Thanks to our collaboration with the Michigan Dental Association and Michigan Primary Care Association, MOHC has a supply of postcards which coalition members, patients, staff, board members and community members can send to their state legislators asking for support of reinstatement. To request a supply of postcards, contact me at kketola@mohc.org or 517.381.8000.

3. Talking Points: Use these [talking points](#) to engage in discussions with your elected officials and local media about the critical need to reinstate the Medicaid adult dental benefit. Our efforts are not going unnoticed. Last week, the Dowagiac area newspaper *The Daily News* picked up our call for action on the issue. To read the complete article, click [here](#).

Thank you for your efforts in contacting your local legislators. We will continue to keep you updated.

Coalition Needs Stories of Dental Patients

If pictures are worth a thousand words, then personal stories are worth a million. **To appeal for reinstatement of the Medicaid adult dental benefit, it is critical that we have patient stories to share with the media and state legislators.** While data is important, it is the experiences of real people that really make a difference. To that end, we are looking for dental patients who are willing to share their story with us. If you have stories on-hand, please e-mail them to Karlene Ketola at kketola@mohc.org. If you have the names and contact information of patients who would be willing to talk about how the Medicaid adult dental benefit has improved their health, or how elimination of the benefit back in 2003 caused their health to deteriorate, we at the Coalition would be happy to contact the patients directly. Time is of the essence. Elimination of the benefit for fiscal year 2009 is scheduled to take effect on July 1, and elimination is likely to be included in the fiscal year 2010 state budget. So...please share today!

Membership RenewalsNew Program Year Begins July 1

The Michigan Oral Health Coalition is currently in its membership renewal process for the upcoming program year beginning July 1. We are excited to give our members new options for the renewal process! We are now accepting dues online. Just visit www.mohc.org and click on the online community button in the upper right hand corner. From there you will be able to renew online making the process easier than ever! Your membership is extremely important to us in order to impact the quality of oral health in Michigan. Thank you for your efforts in making the Coalition powerful enough to make a difference! If you have any questions about your membership please contact Rebecca Van Tassel at 517.381.8000 ext. 219 or rvantassel@mohc.org.

State News

Michigan Tobacco Quit Line to Re-Open After Brief Hiatus

The Michigan Tobacco Quit Line phones are back in service after they were shut down for nearly three months due to a high volume of calls and limited funding. Most of the quit-line services shut down in mid-March after an unprecedented amount of callers - more than 65,000 in five days and 92,000 in March - flooded the lines when nicotine replacement products, including nicotine patches, gum and lozenges were offered free of charge to callers. The high number of callers caused a budget constraint forcing the quit line to serve only Medicaid beneficiaries. The quit line was to resume service in October, however, the line opened earlier after funding became available for the program. The nicotine replacement products currently are not offered to callers.

When Michigan residents enroll with the quit line, they will receive a personal coach who will assist them in setting a quit date and making an individualized quit plan. The personal coach also will provide on-going support with up to five telephone coaching sessions around the caller's quit date, allowing the caller to gain confidence and retain motivation throughout the process of quitting. The Michigan Tobacco Quit Line has received tens of thousands of calls since it was launched in October 2003. The quit line offers both English and Spanish-speaking counselors as well as interpretive services for a wide variety of languages. For more information, call 1-800-QUIT-NOW or go to www.michigan.gov/tobacco

Report Outlines Michigan's Success in Meeting Healthy People 2010 Targets

This April, the Michigan Department of Community Health distributed *Comparison of Michigan Critical Health Indicators Report & Healthy People 2010 Targets*. The report presents a variety of data about each indicator that is represented in both the Critical Health Indicator report as well as the Healthy People 2010 Report. Also included is the state that ranked first in each indicator as well as where Michigan stands among the states. Last, there is a trend graph that shows how Michigan has fared for the past ten years against the HP 2010 target. See complete [Report](#).

Jobless Rate Continues to Climb

Michigan's unemployment rate reached 14.1% in May, according to Department of Energy, Labor and Economic Development statistics. This is a significant jump from April's rate of 12.9% and the highest unemployment rate Michigan has experienced since July 1983.

Unpaid furlough days will save state almost \$22 million, help balance state budget

Last month, the Department of Management and Budget announced that most Michigan state government offices will be closed for six days this summer to accommodate the temporary, unpaid furlough of state employees. Last Friday was the first official furlough day. State offices will also be closed on July 6, July 24, August 7, August 21 and September 4. The unpaid furlough days will save the state \$21.7 million before September 30, the end of the state's fiscal year.

MDCH Reaches Settlement in Health Records Disposal Case

The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) recently announced an agreement to settle a civil lawsuit against Southfield psychiatrist for the improper disposal of medical records from the Greater Detroit Hospital in Detroit. On May, 14, 2009, the Honorable Rosemarie B. Aquilina issued a settlement agreement and injunctive order. Under the agreement, the provider has to pay the state a \$350,000 fine for burning piles of records on his Salem Township property. The order states that the defendants are prohibited from burning, dumping or abandoning medical records, x-rays, microfiche, or other materials related to the treatment of patients, which is in violation of the public health code and privacy laws. The defendant will have to hire a contractor to dispose of any remaining medical records.

National News

West Virginia School of Dentistry Studies Link between Oral Health and Memory

Keeping your teeth brushed and flossed can cut down on gum disease, drastically reducing risk of heart attack and stroke, dentists have warned for years. Now researchers at West Virginia University have found a clean mouth may also help preserve memory. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has awarded a \$1.3 million grant over four years to further build on studies linking gum disease and mild to moderate memory loss.

"Older people might want to know there's more reason to keep their mouths clean -- to brush and floss -- than ever," said Richard Crout, D.M.D., Ph.D., an expert on gum disease and associate dean for research in the WVU School of Dentistry. "You'll not only be more likely to keep your teeth, but you'll also reduce your risk of heart attack, stroke and memory loss."

Crout will share the grant with gerontologist Bei Wu, Ph.D., formerly of WVU and now a researcher at the University of North Carolina; Brenda L. Plassman, Ph.D., of Duke University, a nationally recognized scientist in the field of memory research; and Jersey Liang, Ph.D., a professor at the University of Michigan. Wu is the principal investigator. For more information, click [here](#).

HRSA Now Accepting New Applications to Support Loan Repayment at NHSC Sites

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) is now accepting new applications to support loan repayment for bonafide educational debt for primary care medical, dental and certain behavioral/mental health clinicians who want to work at National Health Service Corps (NHSC) sites. In exchange for the loan repayment assistance, clinicians serve for two years with the Corps. The new funds, totaling almost \$200 million, are expected to support about 3,300 clinicians that will serve in health centers, rural health clinics and other health outpatient/ambulatory care sites that care for uninsured and underserved people.

HRSA is encouraging fully trained primary health care clinicians who are dedicated to working with the underserved and have qualifying educational loans to apply for this opportunity. In addition to an initial award of up to \$50,000 for loan repayment, each clinician receives a competitive salary and a chance to have a significant impact on a community. Primary health care clinicians interested in applying for the NHSC loan repayment program should visit <http://nhsc.bhpr.hrsa.gov/loanrepayment/>.

New Oral Health Curriculum Available from American Academy of Pediatrics

The American Academy of Pediatrics is pleased to announce the launch of Protecting All Children's Teeth (PACT): A Pediatric Oral Health Training Program. This 13-chapter module aims to educate pediatricians, pediatricians in training, and others interested in infant, child, and adolescent health about the important role oral health plays in the overall health of patients. PACT features topics such as dental development, fluoride, and oral injury and includes interactive tools such as roll over definitions, chapter photo galleries, and self-assessment pages. The American Academy of Pediatrics is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education to provide continuing medical education for physicians. The AAP designates this educational activity for a maximum of 11.0 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™. Physicians should only claim credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity. Learn more about this free online training at <http://www.aap.org/oralhealth/pact.cfm>

The Michigan Oral Health Coalition's mission is to improve oral health in Michigan by focusing on prevention, health promotion, oral health data, access and the link between oral health and overall health.

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