

WATER FLUORIDATION – WHERE TO TURN FOR SUPPORTIVE INFORMATION

Over 60 years ago the U.S. Public Health Service recommended adding controlled doses of fluoride to municipal water, and today the subject is just as controversial now as it was back then. It is easy to understand the reasons for community resistance to water fluoridation. There have been vague and misleading headlines in the news, and this is all a patient needs to form an opinion.



If your patients ask questions regarding the safety and efficacy of water fluoridation, be sure to have all the facts. One recommended website is ilikemyteeth.org, which is run by the Campaign for Dental Health (CDH). The CDH is a broad network of healthcare advocates, healthcare professionals, family health organizations and scientists who work together to protect our nation's oral health. The CDH is comprised of more than 120 partner organizations such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Association for Community Dental Programs, the American Association of Public Health and many more.

You and your patients can view anti-fluoridation claims on the webpage ilikemyteeth.org/fluoridation/dangers-of-fluoride. Environmentalists, anti-fluoridation and pseudoscientific groups claim that "fluoride causes thyroid cancer", or "fluoride is a by-product of the phosphate fertilizer industry". On the website you will see that following each claim is a list of facts that help to paint a complete story. It is the responsibility of the dental health community to understand water fluoridation and its effect on the general public, and to educate patients with the proper facts.

Reference: Cathy Hester Seckman, RDH

OFFICE OF THE QUARTER

Dr. Richard Smook Hicksville, New York Congratulations!

A special thank you to Dr. Richard Smook and staff for their ongoing commitment to patient care and service. Dr. Smook has been a participating provider with Healthplex for over 20 years with no record of member complaints. We appreciate the consistent and excellent services Dr. Smook has provided to our members.

Offices chosen are voted upon by the various departments interacting with providers. An office gift and a plaque were presented to the office.



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EFFECTIVE CHAIR-SIDE COMMUNICATION

Effective chair-side communication with your patients is an important key in building a successful practice. Effective communication starts with listening, which opens the door to better understanding of your patients. There are factors that can either enhance or inhibit communication with your patients.

Here are some key points that enhance communication:

- Devote 100% of your focus to your patient. Sit on the edge of your seat in a relaxed position and orient your shoulders and legs toward the patient while keeping your arms in a relaxed position (uncrossed). (Eye contact is the key to effective communication.)
- Listen to what your patient is saying and show interest by providing feedback (paraphrase and summarize back to the patient). Pay close attention to your patient’s body language!
- Make your message simple, brief and direct. Enunciate your words clearly and repeat the most important parts of the message. Clarity is essential to effective communication.
- Keep the atmosphere friendly and light. Laughter stimulates endorphin release which helps to reduce anxiety. Smile and laugh more with your patients!
- Using models, radiographs and other printed materials with pictures can help engage your patients into conversations regarding their health.
- Respect cultural differences.

Factors that inhibit communication:

- Offering your patients false reassurances. A critical component of the dental profession is veracity and informed consent.
- Being defensive or judgmental. Remember, some patients often neglect to take responsibility for their poor oral health. You are the solution and here to guide them.
- Using difficult words and concepts. Remember to slow your speaking pace so your message is delivered.

Miscommunication can cause a great deal of stress to the patient, doctor and even the practice. Effective communication is the building block of business success for the dental profession, and requires effort, patience, humility and understanding that there is room for improvement. Successful communicators are individuals who have developed a keen sensitivity to the people with whom they are communicating. The goal of effective communication is to empower your patients with the knowledge to make informed decisions about their oral health. Take the time to speak with your patients clearly and at a level that they understand.

HEALTHPLEX CONTACTS

www.healthplex.com

Phone Numbers

Provider Hotline..... 888-468-2183
(Options)

- 1: Eligibility
- 2: Urgent Referrals
- 3: Website Support
- 4: Claims Automated System
- 5: Contracting (Commercial Programs)
- 6: Contracting (Government Programs)
- 7: Panel Participation

UM Clinical Review..... 888-468-5182

Internet Support..... 888-468-5171

Fax Numbers (516 area code)

Claims..... 542-2614

Credentialing..... 228-9568

Customer Service..... 227-1143

Government..... 228-9576

Provider Relations..... 228-9571

Referral Authorization..... 228-5025

E-Mail

ProviderRelations@healthplex.com

Info@healthplex.com

Claims@healthplex.com

Referrals@healthplex.com



STOPPING INFORMATION LOSS: BACK-UP YOUR INFORMATION

Hardware fails, devices are lost or misplaced, viruses and other threats corrupt information — these events can all lead to lost information (sometimes irreplaceably). What would you do if your office and patient information was not accessible? It is critical that computer based information you need to run your office is always available. How can you ensure this?

One method for minimizing the possibility of losing your information is to back-up your computer. This should be done on a regular schedule to ensure that, if information loss occurs, only a small amount of information is impacted. Back-up your information to devices, such as external hard drives or cloud based services, that are not always connected to your computer. If these external devices are always connected, an issue which impacts your computer will most likely impact your back-up device.

Maintain more than one generation of your data back-ups, at least two generations is recommended. This will ensure that if your last back-up is impacted along with your computer, you can recover data using a slightly older version of your information. For example, if you back-up once a week, always have at least the prior two weeks' back-ups available.

Finally, if you back-up to physical devices, such as an external hard drive, do not store it with your computer. A physical issue (i.e., theft, fire, spilled coffee, etc.) may impact both your computer and your back-up device.



FRAUD AND ABUSE - PREVENTION MATTERS

Fraud and Abuse

Prevention and detection of fraud and abuse is in everyone's best interest. Preventing fraudulent activities can help lower costs, form a better provider network and create higher overall satisfaction for providers, their patients and employers. The U.S. government estimates that \$68 billion is lost to health care fraud annually.



What is dental fraud and abuse?

Fraud is any act of intentional deception or misrepresentation of any fact made for the purpose or likelihood of gaining an unauthorized benefit. Acts of dental fraud involve three defining features: intent, deception and unlawful gain.

What does an act of dental fraud look like?

- Performing services not clinically necessary or justified.
- Waiver of copayment or deductible. This results in a change in fees charged by the dentist, inconsistent with what the insurance carrier believes is being charged.
- Unlicensed personnel performing procedures (assistants, hygienists, etc).
- Unbundling of claims by submitting several procedures separately to receive higher reimbursements.
- Billing for services not performed or not completed.
- Altering records or claims for the purpose of enhancing billing.
- Misrepresentation of services (performing a cosmetic service but billing for a covered service).
- Misrepresentation of dates of service.
- Up-coding of dental procedures by submitting a claim for a procedure that is more complex than the one actually performed.

Healthplex SIU

Healthplex has provided an electronic mailbox for its Special Investigation Unit (SIU), to which either grievances or matters of suspected dental fraud and abuse can be forwarded. Please email us at Webcomplianceoffice@healthplex.com, or call the **Compliance Hotline** at **(888) 468-5180** if you suspect fraudulent activity or have any questions about our fraud and abuse program. Please visit our website at www.healthplex.com for more information on dental fraud and prevention. **With your help, we can all benefit from prevention of fraud and abuse.**

CHECK IT OUT

Web-Based Data Verification

You will notice a link on our website (www.healthplex.com) requesting verification of your provider office data. Please click on the link and respond accordingly. This will help us maintain up-to-date data on an on-going basis, ensuring timely and accurate claims processing.

Participation Calls

We will be calling you! Healthplex Provider Relations conducts “secret shopper” provider participation calls. The purpose of these calls is to ensure that provider office staff recognizes the plans with which your office participates. Please ensure your staff is properly educated. Not only will this help your office pass the surveys, it will ensure that your potential patients can schedule timely appointments for dental care.

The Greater New York Dental Meeting

We have the pleasure of attending the 91st annual Holiday Exhibition from November 29 to December 2. Come visit us at booth 3930, and see what Healthplex has to offer!

Bits & Pieces: “Start by doing what’s necessary; then do what’s possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible.” —Francis of Assisi!

