



# CHECK UP

**Winter 2006**

## **In This Issue**

- ◆ Announcing a Great New Benefit - Dental Implant Coverage
- ◆ Online Enrollment is Here!
- ◆ The Results Are In — Satisfaction Survey Results
- ◆ A New Look, A New Logo
- ◆ Marketplace News
- ◆ Evergreen Contract Renewals
- ◆ Dental Health Advice from Dr. Doyle Williams, Dental Director

## **Announcing A Great New Benefit - Dental Implant Coverage**

As the leader in oral health innovation, Delta Dental of Massachusetts' first priority is to provide you and your employees with coverage for the most appropriate evidence-based dental care. We are pleased to announce the addition of a valuable benefit to all of our DeltaPremier, DeltaPreferred Option and DeltaPreferred Option USA Plus dental plans at no additional cost to you or our members. Effective, January 1, 2006, single tooth implants will now be a covered Type III benefit when used in place of a conventional bridge.

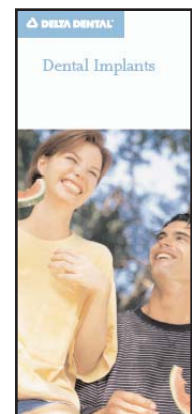
### Implants are:

- Now used routinely in the practice of restorative dentistry due to the availability of user friendly implant systems.
- An ideal option for people in good general oral health who have lost a tooth due to decay, an injury, or for some other reason.

Typically when someone loses a tooth, a conventional bridge is performed to replace it. A conventional bridge requires that the teeth on either side of the space be cut down and crowned to support the bridge. However, when the teeth on either side of the space are in good health, an implant may now be used. The implant is the most conservative means of replacing the missing tooth because the healthy adjacent teeth do not have to be sacrificed to restore the missing tooth.

For additional information on implants, please visit [www.deltamass.com](http://www.deltamass.com) under the Oral Health Literature section. You may also request a supply of Dental Implants brochures for your employees by contacting our literature fulfillment vendor, J.J. Daly at [jsullivan@jkdaly.com](mailto:jsullivan@jkdaly.com) and requesting part number SP386.

We look forward to working with you to improve and enhance the oral health and overall health of your employees. If you have any questions about your dental plan, please contact your Account Executive at 1-800-451-1249.



# A New Look, A New Logo



Over the last few months, you may have noticed a new look to some of our publications, including a new treatment of the Delta Dental logo. We have dropped the word "Plan" from what formerly was Delta Dental Plan of Massachusetts. This new design and name change reflect a national branding effort implemented by the Delta Dental Plans Association.

The new logo now in use by all Delta Dental member companies throughout the United States is intended to establish a distinctive,

nationally recognized brand for Delta Dental products and services.

Application of the new logo will be phased into all of our materials throughout the remainder of this year and into 2006. In that period, you will likely see our Web site change to reflect the new identity, as well as all of our member and marketing materials, including the Check-Up newsletter.

Below is an example of the new Delta Dental logo. The main change is that the logo will now be in a black or colored rectangle and won't have a state identifier as part of the logo design.



## Evergreen Contracts

Our Fully Insured credible accounts (typically 50 lives or more) will receive a new contract on their anniversary date. This will become effective for clients renewing in February 2006 and beyond. The new Fully Insured contracts will continue to be in place until such time as a product or plan design change is implemented. There will no longer be a requirement to sign the Attachment A (the portion of the contract that provides premium rates and benefit riders) annually.

Accounts will continue to receive annual renewals which include utilization data and renewal rate information. If you have any questions about your contract, please contact your Account Executive at 1-800-451-1249.



## Delta Dental of MA Satisfaction Survey Results

Delta Dental of Massachusetts conducts an annual Satisfaction Survey. The survey and methodology meet standards set by the National Committee of Quality Assurance (NCQA) for health plans. The survey is mailed by a third party vendor under Delta Dental of Massachusetts cover to a random sample of subscriber households who have used a participating Delta Dental dentist in the past six months. In 2005, a total of 1,044 members responded. Following please find the results.

### Accounts:

- 93% of accounts are satisfied with Delta Dental.
- 95% of accounts rated service "good or better".

### Members:

- 9 out of 10 of members are satisfied with Delta Dental.
- 97% of members are satisfied with their dentists.
- 98% of members are satisfied with their dental care.
- 95% of members would recommend Delta Dental.

### Dentists:

- 95% of dentists are satisfied with Delta Dental.
- 96% of dentists rated our service "good or better".





## Advice from Dr. Doyle Williams—Dental Director

Please share this important information from our Dental Director

### Reasons to Visit the Dentist Regularly



Delta's Dental Director  
Dr. Doyle Williams

Good oral health is an essential part of good overall health according to the Surgeon General. Many studies show that poor oral health contributes to lower performance at home, school and work. Children who suffer from tooth decay find it harder to study or concentrate

at school due to pain in their teeth. When decay involves the front teeth, many children have lower self esteem and may be considered unhappy because of their reluctance to smile. These habits can follow children into adulthood and cause them to miss work and perform below their potential at their jobs.

Regular dental check-ups are often covered by dental plans with just a small patient coinsurance. In a regular dental visit you can expect your dentist to not only clean your teeth but to also screen for signs of oral cancer, detect early signs of dental disease, provide prevention advice for decay and gum disease as well as a treatment plan to maintain your oral health.

There are signs for more than 100 diseases that show up in the mouth. Some of these diseases could have significant health risks such as oral cancer and diabetes. Your dentist will refer you to the appropriate health professional if they find signs of health problems. Many dentists may also provide help with smoking cessation. Tooth decay and gum disease normally progress slowly which makes them hard to detect in our own mouths. Regular dental check-ups can find oral health problems before they need to be treated, or early enough that treatment can be minimized. We urge you to have regular dental check-ups to improve your overall health.