New and Renewing Groups

Following is a small sampling of some of the new and renewing groups with a Premera Blue Cross dental plan:

- Advanced H20, LLC
- B.E. Meyers & Co., Inc.
- Ben Bridge Jeweler
- Cancer Research and Biostatistics
- Community Health Center of Snohomish County
- Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation
- Gray & Osborne, Inc.
- Green Diamond Resource Company
- JC & BC, Inc DBA Lyle Pearson Premier Motorcars
- Kaye Smith
- KXLY Broadcast Group
- McCarthy Finance, Inc.
- McCurley Integrity Dealerships, LLC & McCurley Integrity Auto, LLC
- Motors and Controls Corp
- Outdoor Research
- Pace International, LLC
- Signature Landscape Services, Inc.
- Silver Cloud Inns & Hotels
- Simpson Investment Company
- Span Alaska Transportation, Inc.
- TMS West Coast, Inc.
- Trident Seafoods Corporation
- Visible Technologies, Inc.
- Walla Walla Union Bulletin
Helpful Tips When Submitting Dental Claims to Premera as Secondary

Here are some tips to help us expedite the handling of your claims when Premera is the secondary insurance plan:

› Line item charges should not be reduced to the participating provider fee.
› Line item charges should not be removed, even if paid in full by the primary insurance carrier.
› Include the primary explanation of benefits. Please be sure that you have the correct primary insurance explanation of benefits that matches the date of service and services as the dental claim that you are submitting.

If there is a discrepancy between your submitted claim and the primary insurance explanation of benefits, your claim will be denied or sent back for corrected or additional information.

Revisiting Dental Utilization Review of Periodontal Maintenance

The dental utilization review team met with our dental consultants and determined that requiring current periodontal charting to review pocket depth for this procedure code every time a dentist or periodontist submits periodontal maintenance is not only administratively cumbersome but not necessary. Through this process, we’ve determined that this chart review requirement isn’t necessary given that most Premera dental plans have specific contract language that limits the frequency of periodontal maintenance to either once every three months or four times in a benefit period as long as the patient has had periodontal therapy. These limitations are consistent with what is dentally necessary to help maintain patients with periodontal disease; however you may treat a patient that is an exception due to the severity of periodontal disease, in which the patient may need more of such treatment. These exceptions may require your office to send additional documentation such as current periodontal charting and a narrative.

As a result, effective immediately, Premera Blue Cross will no longer require periodontal charting when your office submits periodontal maintenance (D4910). We will continue to require a narrative detailing the date of last periodontal therapy (D4341, D4342, D4240, D4241, D4260, and D4261).

The ADA approved descriptor for periodontal maintenance not only includes site specific periodontal scaling and root planing, but also includes removal of plaque and calculus that is also included in the descriptor of a dental prophylaxis. Our dental consultant will review claims submitted for a patient who is seen for both routine prophylaxis and periodontal maintenance more than four times in a benefit period.

Provider Returned Mail Process

If correspondence we mail to your office is returned as undeliverable, Premera will make every effort to obtain the correct mailing address. Once we have a valid address, we will forward a scanned copy of the original piece of correspondence to your office.

Along with the scanned piece of correspondence, Premera will include information that explains that we have received undeliverable mail and have updated our records with the correct mailing address.

Important reminder, if you have a change to your current mailing or location address, please notify us in advance of the change by calling Physician and Provider Relations at 877-342-5258, option 4.
Some months ago, while volunteering at a children’s clinic, I met a recently-retired dentist. He gave me his professional business card for a dental prosthetic laboratory that he represents as a dental consultant. I asked why a dental prosthetic laboratory would need a dentist as a dental consultant. In his answer, the dentist explained that the dental prosthetic laboratory was forwarding all crown and bridge impressions received from their client dentists to China for fabrication. The dental prosthetic laboratory needed a dentist to oversee the process and communicate with their client dentists on their prosthetic needs.

This surprising revelation led to a discussion with my own long time dental technician, who operates a small dental laboratory. He acknowledged he knew this was happening, as more and more dentists are choosing less expensive dental prosthetic laboratories for their prosthetic needs and many are unaware of where their prescribed crowns are actually being fabricated. A dentist may believe he is sending a prescription to one dental prosthetic laboratory, only to have the actual work fabricated in another dental prosthetic laboratory in another country. My dental lab technician’s primary concerns were the dentist’s inability to verify the type and quality of materials in the fabrication process and the general lack of dental prosthetic laboratory expertise in less dentally advanced countries.

When reviewing dental claims, there appears to be an increase of failing and fractured porcelain crowns in recent years. There can be many reasons for this increase, but one reason could be the quality of the fabrication process.

The fact that dental prosthetics are fabricated in another country, does not in itself, indicate that the final product may be defective. Even in this country, many states only require dental prosthetic laboratories to have a simple business license and do not have professional Department of Health oversight. The responsibility for the success of the dental prosthetic rests solely with the treating dentist. This is why I urge all dental practitioners to “get the facts” and discuss their concerns regarding quality assurance procedures with their chosen dental prosthetic laboratory. Your patients and Premera’s members deserve the best restorative outcome.
2010 Inland Northwest Dental Conference

Thank you everyone who stopped by the Premera Blue Cross booth, at this year’s Inland Northwest Dental conference held May 6 and 7 in Spokane. Premera received more than 450 entries for the drawing to win 1 of 2 $50.00 visa gift cards. Congratulations to our two lucky winners:

- **Wendy Colville** - From the office of Dr. Kevin King and Dr. Andrew Wurtz – North Spokane
- **Patsy McVey** - From the office of Dr. Gary Kelly and Dr. Eric Schuermers – South Spokane

We look forward to seeing you again next year.

2010 Pacific Northwest Dental Conference

Premera was pleased to participate as an exhibitor at the June 17 & 18 Pacific Northwest Dental Conference (PNDC) for the ninth consecutive year. Nearly 7,000 dental professionals and staff attended the 123rd annual conference which is recognized as one of the premier dental conferences in the country. Sponsored by the Washington State Dental Association the conference offered two days of continuing dental education and the exhibit hall featured more than 300 exhibiting companies with the latest in dental technology, materials and services to deliver the best care for your patients.

We appreciate everyone who stopped by our booth to say hello, pick up Premera promotion gift items and enter to win our giveaway. What a terrific opportunity to meet members of the dental community and it was a pleasure to see so many familiar faces from Washington and Alaska.

This year Premera held a drawing for two $50 Visa gift cards. We received 896 entries for our annual drawing at the PNDC. Congratulations to our lucky winners; **Anisa Felt**, dental assistant for Albright Family Dental office in Everett, WA and **Kristina Schriever, RDH**.

Kristina has worked at this White Center location for two years, first for Dr. Steven Lockett and now for Dr. Bryan Brenner who bought the practice last year.

We look forward to seeing you next year at the 124th annual PNDC held in Seattle June 16 & 17, 2011.
Dental Managers Advisory Board Held in June

The Dental Advisory board meetings took place during late June in Western and Eastern Washington.

Speakers at this meeting brought up some very timely topics.

Sheela Tallman is Manager of Legislative Policy for Premera Blue Cross. In this position in Congressional and Legislative Affairs at Premera, Sheela is responsible for managing the tracking and analysis of legislation in our markets, developing positions on various legislative topics, and working with the Association of Washington Healthcare Plans. Sheela brought the Advisory Board up to date on Healthcare Reform when it became law and changes or amendments since that time. Sheela emphasized that healthcare reform will be a work in progress for quite some time.

Jaja Okigwe is Vice President of Strategic Development for Premera Blue Cross spoke in Western Washington meeting. Jaja oversees Premera’s corporate development function, which includes strategy formulation, strategic initiative development, program management, and vendor management. Jaja also oversees the program office of Premera’s strategy, and innovation approach. He gave the board some high-level thinking about Healthcare reform and the Premera plan for the future. The current economic climate and the, yet undefined reform package, has affected all of us. Employers are finding it difficult to afford dental and medical, small groups are dropping some dental plans as costs increase. Jaja asked for feedback from the board on how the current economic conditions are affecting their practices and how can Premera help in this changing climate. After mentioning the Horizon 2015 goals he indicated Premera is already working on the next ten years. Jaja added Premera will be a player in the new age for healthcare and it is a matter of leveraging the opportunities to help shape that future for our members.

Rebecca Houck is a Senior Internal Consultant on Jaja’s team. Rebecca is responsible for strategy formulation and strategic initiative development. She has been with Premera Blue Cross for more than ten years, holding various positions leading strategic planning and analysis, as well as corporate budget and management activities. Speaking at both meetings, Rebecca presented Premera’s strategy and innovation approach and solicited the Advisory Board for some feedback on how they felt healthcare reform would impact their offices. Explaining Premera’s current structure as a core business of medical surrounded by self-funded groups, dental, ancillary, and administrative services or plans. As discussion ensued, it became apparent that the economic climate and healthcare reform were blurring the lines between these components and having a rippling effect on the status quo. Dental and Medical, as well as self funded, will become more of a comprehensive package and there will be some stand alone products that are sold that can remain outside the healthcare reform arena.

The next Board Meetings will be held in the fall.

Summer/Fall Fun

Summer/Fall Dental Crossword Puzzle

Across
2) Part of the tooth which holds the tooth in the socket.
4) The imaginary division of the mouth into four parts (one half of an arch)
5) A pointed round eminence on the crown of the tooth.
7) The hardest substance in the body which covers the crown of the tooth.

Down
1) Part of the tooth covered with enamel and normally visible in the mouth.
3) Lower jawbone; the only moveable bone in the skull.
6) Nerves and blood vessels of the tooth.
8) The arrangement of teeth.

Answers on Page 6
Please post or circulate this newsletter in your office

Network News

Back issues of Network News are on our website at premera.com/provider in the Library under Communications.

Crossword puzzle: Answers to Summer/Fall Fun

Across
1) Crown
3) Mandible
4) Quadrants
6) Pulp
7) Enamel
8) Arch
9) Pulp

Down
1) Crown
2) Root
5) Cup
6) Enamel
7) Enamel