Dental team from Boston University serves up smiles in Mexico

By Fred Michmershuizen, Online Editor

A team of volunteers from Boston University Henry M. Goldman School of Dental Medicine (GSDM) recently conducted an outreach trip to Teacapan, Mexico, in which more than 250 underprivileged children were screened and treated.

The outreach program is called Project Stretch.

“Dr. Schiano was a machine, providing more treatment with his partner, RN and Dental Assistant Cree Bruins, than anyone of us could fathom,” Held said. “While Dr. Schiano was reading the child’s records, Cree was preparing the child for treatment — they were a great chair-side team.”

“Robin and Ish took turns working outside, where they primarily concentrated on performing exams and atraumatic restorative treatment on deciduous teeth using hand instruments and glass ionomer filling material,” Held said. “They also took turns working inside, where they had a fully operational dental unit to complete procedures, including extractions, amalgams and composites on permanent teeth.”

“Ish worked like a real trooper through the day and Robin was always so gentle with the children,” Held said. “After an extraction one child turned to her and gave her a big hug. I was so proud of them.”

“I was so impressed with the organization of Project Stretch in Teacapan,” Schiano said. “They have made tremendous progress over the last six years, growing from a small mission providing preventive services to a near-fully equipped dental clinic offering more involved and comprehensive restorative care. Perhaps the biggest reward was seeing the successful efforts of previous teams, which helped me realize the difference we were making in the lives of these children and their families.”

Head west for the PNDC

Some 9,000 dental professionals from around the globe will convene in Seattle for the 123rd annual Pacific Northwest Dental Conference (PNDC), to be held June 17 and 18.

Readers replied

We garnered a lot of feedback from an article that ran in the No. 12 edition and which also appeared online. Take a peek to see what readers had to say about 'Where have all the periodontists gone?' by Louis Malcmacher, DDS, MAGD.

Where have all the periodontists gone?

(No photo available for this section)
Associations seek health care provider exemption from financial reform legislation

By Fred Michmershuijzen, Online Editor

As lawmakers in the nation’s capital debate proposed financial services reform legislation, the nation’s leading dental associations are asking Congress to exempt health care providers from oversight by a proposed new federal agency.

According to the American Dental Association (ADA), the Academy of General Dentistry (AGD) and other groups, the proposed Consumer Financial Protection Agency, which is part of the financial regulatory reform legislation currently under consideration in the Senate, would lead to unnecessary costs and increased administrative burdens for practitioners without any benefit to their patients.

The ADA, AGD and about 20 other associations recently sent a joint letter to key lawmakers who are working on the proposed legislation asking that they exclude their professions from the statute.

As correctly written, the Restoring American Financial Stability Act of 2010 would subject health care providers who regularly charge interest and allow patients to pay in installments to federal scrutiny.

The letter, which was sent to Sen. Christopher Dodd and Reps. Barney Frank, Spencer Bachus and Richard Shelby, reads: “Though the provisions are intended to clarify the limitations and exclusions of the bill, we believe they actually raise more questions than answers. As they may be interpreted as applying to health care practitioners who regularly charge interest and allow patients to pay in installments (subparagraph B), in addition, we remain concerned that the term ‘engaged significantly’ in subparagraph (C) is not defined and could lead lawmakers to include those providers who utilize those payment options for the benefit of their patients.”

The letter also states, “Given the scope and reach of the bill’s language, health care practitioners would, we believe, be covered by the legislation leading to unnecessary costs and increased administrative burdens for practitioners without any benefit for our patients.”

“While we recognize and thank you for including committee report language that speaks to this issue, specifically mentioning a health care provider group (dentists) as not intended to be covered; ultimately the report language falls short of ensuring that all health care providers will be exempt from the law,” the letter continues.

In addition to representatives from the ADA and AGD, also signing the letter were representatives from the American Academy of Oral & Maxillofacial Pathology, the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, the American Association of Endodontists, the American Academy of Orthodontists, the American College of Prosthodontists, the American Academy of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery, the American Academy of Periodontology, the American Association of Endodontists, the American Association of Orthodontists, the American College of Prosthodontists, the American Medical Association and the Hispanic Dental Association.

Tell us what you think!

Do you have general comments or criticism you would like to share? Is there a particular topic you would like to see more articles about? Let us know by e-mailing us at feedback@dental-tribune.com. If you would like to make any change to your subscription (name, address or to opt out), please send an e-mail to database@dental-tribune.com and be sure to include which publication you are referring to. Also, please note that subscription changes can take up to 6 weeks to process.

Financial services reform legislation being debated in Washington could hurt dental practices, according to the ADA and other dental associations. (Photo/Take McGaure)