



General Dentistry for Kids and Parents!

December 9, 2009

Dear Distinguished Members of the Appropriations Committee:

We are writing to you today to respectfully urge your support to maintain funding for adult dental coverage which under Governor Rell's budget proposal would be eliminated.

By way of background, as a result of the settlement conditions of the longstanding Carr vs. Wilson – Coker dental lawsuit, the State agreed to remove all HUSKY dental services from the managed care system and provide dental services under the management of a single plan by an Administrative Services Organization. Effective September 1, 2008, all participants with HUSKY A and B, Title XIX fee for service and State Administered General Assistance (SAGA) programs will receive their dental services through the State's newly created Dental Health Partnership. Under this new partnership, the Department of Social Services has strongly urged providers to consider enrolling the parents of HUSKY children to help with the continuity of care with families and support the primary care dentist model.

Kool Smiles on June 1<sup>st</sup> of this year opened two new offices in Connecticut, in New Britain and New Haven and anticipates opening two new offices in Waterbury and Bridgeport in January and February, respectively, of 2010. We have made a significant investment on these state of the art dental facilities and have created 30 new positions to Connecticut's employment rolls from Dentist to hygienist and office support personnel.

Kool Smiles was founded in 2002 to align with the SCHIP and Medicaid vision of providing high quality dental care to children who might not otherwise have access. Recently because of several positive factors associated with providing a dental home for children we have changed our practice model to include adult coverage. Providing dental care to our children's parents and guardians as well as other adults fits perfectly with Connecticut's goal of providing care for families. This family concept addresses the issues of the difficulties associated with maintaining appointments and follow up visits for our patients and we believe is an integral and "necessary for success" part of the entire dental program.

Unlike providers who will not see, or will only see a small number of underserved patients; Kool Smiles uniquely pursues patients that each state's SCHIP and Medicaid program aims to serve. This unique mission allows Kool Smiles to serve communities in a pioneering way and offer best-in-class service that exceeds professional standards. Kool Smiles is proud of its work; creating smiles on kids' and parents' faces alike. Kool Smiles' premise of care begins with the assumption that good preventative dental care

lasts a lifetime and is more affordable for both the patient and the healthcare system in the long term. We respectfully submit that elimination of dental coverage for adults not only will lead to higher and compounded medical expenses in the future but will negatively impact our ability to serve their children. Lack of access to dental services causes needless pain and suffering to thousands of children and adults, produces millions of dollars in waste for extensive and costly services in emergency and inpatient hospital settings, negatively impacts the health of children and families, and has a significant effect on our workforce and business community. Studies have shown the long-term cost of eliminating adult dental care is 2.5 times more than the cost of providing care. For all these reasons we respectfully and strongly request your support in preserving adult dental coverage.

Should you have any questions, or would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact our Connecticut lobbyists at Brown Rudnick: Tom Ritter, Tracy Persico, Tim Shea or Lori Samele-Bates at 860-509-6500.

Thank you for your support.

Dr. David Vieth  
Executive Dental Director  
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