



For Immediate Release

Dental and Medical Organizations Appeal for Oral Health Care Benefits for Adults

Owings Mills, MD (July 13, 2010). In a most impressive show of solidarity, twelve organizations have joined arms to appeal to the nation's governors to include dental benefits for their state's adult population. The collaboration of dentists, physicians, dental hygienists, nurses, academicians and administrators today launched the *30 Days & 30 Nights: Understanding the Inclusion of Dental Medicine in a Reformed Health Care System – The Invaluable Importance of Adult Dental Coverage*. The initiative is presented in the form of a spiral bound booklet with sometime striking images of what the patient public and the dental profession can experience from day to day. This campaign, organized by The Maryland Children's Oral Health Institute, includes the American Association of Public Health Dentistry, American Dental Education Association, American Dental Hygiene Association, Hispanic Dental Association, Maryland Dental Society, Maryland State Dental Association, National Dental Association, Student National Dental Association, Society of American Indian Dentists, National Medical Association and National Dental Hygiene Association. The groups began exchanging dialogue after the Health Care Reform Bill was passed last year without dental benefits for adults.

The request by the collaboration comes on the heels of the 102nd National Governor's Association Meeting as states begin the task of preparing to develop and implement their new health care plans. The initiative offers the opportunity to show state leaders the magnitude of failing to cover oral health care for adults is vitally important to the profession of dental medicine and comes at a most critical time in our nation's history. Oral health leaders, providers and educators want governors to clearly see what a lack dental coverage means not only to the families without coverage but also to their state economy. Advocates can predict with certainty that without meaningful adult oral health benefits, there will be more casualties from untreated dental diseases in both children and adults that some states sadly already know all too well.

The take home message from the *30 Days & 30 Nights: Understanding the Inclusion of Dental Medicine in a Reformed Health Care System – The Invaluable Importance of Adult Dental Coverage* publication is for every governor in this great country to see and better understand the pain and suffering tooth decay and oral cancer imposes on their state's most vulnerable citizens. This booklet helps explain why providing dental coverage for adults can relieve many of the liabilities placed on state governments. Unemployment, missed school days, emergency room visits and incarnations are just some of the unfortunate circumstances that may be a direct result of the menagerie of oral health problems that are so often preventable.

While these organizations know that our nation's governors realize the importance of dental benefits, they hope the leaders will no longer allow it to be acceptable to design and implement a health care plan for their state that excludes oral health coverage for adults. The collaboration of advocates for dental medicine is eager to work with governors to be a part of the deliberations of building truly comprehensive health care plans for the country.

To download a copy or to read about the "30 Days & 30 Nights" initiative, visit The Maryland Children's Oral Health Institute at www.mycohi.org. To learn more about the collaborating organization visit their websites: www.aaphd.org · www.adea.org · www.adha.org · www.hdassoc.org · www.themds.org · www.msda.com www.ndaonline.org · www.ndhaonline.org · www.nmanet.org · http://societyofamericanindiandentists.org · www.sndanet.org ·

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